



# Free listings on the Shopping tab

An optimisation guide for retailers

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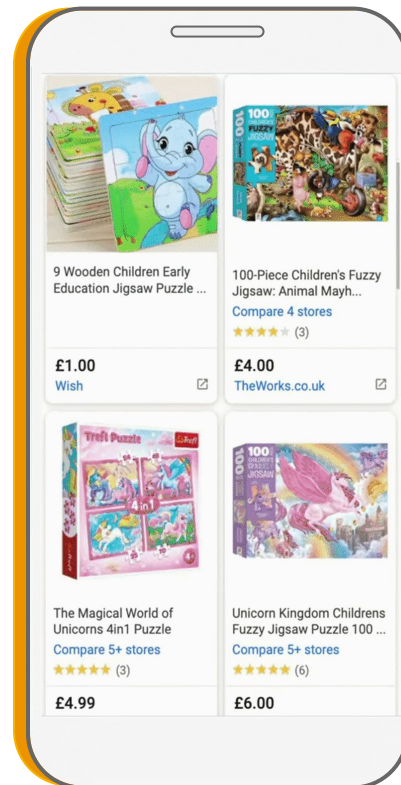
# Introduction to free listings on the Shopping tab

We've made it free for retailers to list their products on the Shopping tab, where search results will consist primarily of free listings.

The Shopping tab, found at the top of Google Search, is a page dedicated to helping Shoppers search and filter results for the products they're looking for.

At the top of the page we have a carousel with Shopping ads.

Free Listings appear under this carousel, and flow down the page as shoppers scroll and browse.



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## Getting started

Retailers are eligible to use free listings, regardless of whether or not they run paid ads with us. To get started, all you need is:

1. A [Merchant Center account](#), where you can [opt in](#) to participate in free listings
2. A [product feed](#) with data about the products you're selling



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If you're an advertiser running Shopping ads, you can use your existing product feed to power your free listings.

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### Comparison Shopping Services

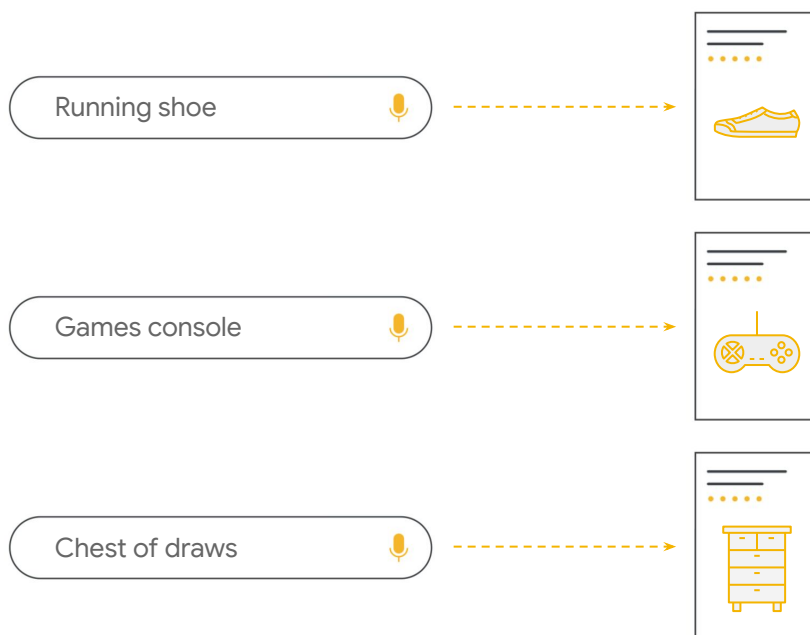
In the European Economic Area and Switzerland you participate in free listings on the Shopping tab through a Comparison Shopping Service. If you are using multiple CSSs to place Shopping ads, you can select only one for free listings.

You can change the CSS selected for free listings at any time via the [CSS dashboard](#) in Merchant Center.

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# How free listings on the Shopping tab works

Free listings on the Shopping tab will appear, on desktop or mobile, when a user makes a search, also known as a query. We match that query with the listings that are most relevant to what the user of the Shopping tab is searching for.



We will show listings that best match the user's search criteria, by looking at the [data provided by retailers](#). We pull this data from a [product feed](#), a file made up of a list of a retailer's individual products.

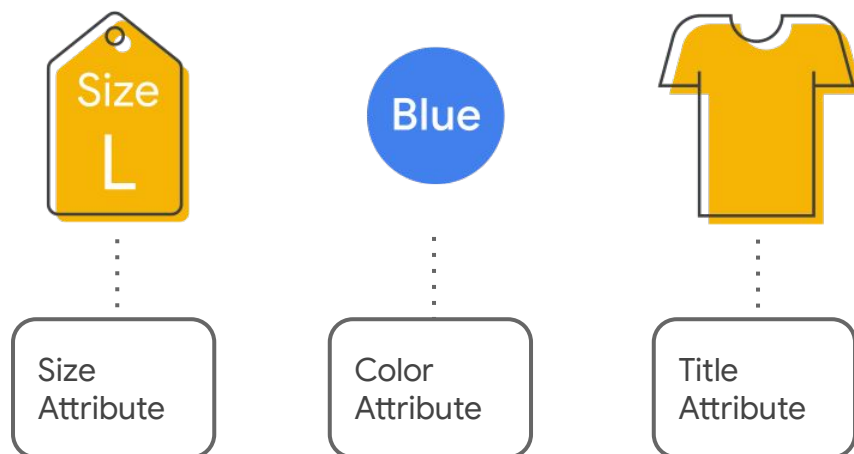
This helps us to distinguish between your different products, and correctly match them to the relevant query.

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## Product feeds and attributes

Feeds contain information on products through the use of attributes. An [attribute](#) is a piece of information that helps us identify the product. And we match these product attributes to the user's search query.

For example, if a user searches for '**large blue t-shirt**', we'll show listings that best match the search criteria, by looking at the data provided, for the attributes **size**, **color** and **title**.



Using attributes helps us to distinguish between your different products, and correctly match them to the query. This ensures that the user sees the most relevant results, to help them find what they're looking for.

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# Creating your feed for free listings

If you're using Shopping ads already, you can use your existing feeds for free listings. But if you're new to Merchant Center, you'll need to [create a feed](#).

## How to build your feed

### Option 1:

You can [build the feed](#) yourself in Merchant Center.

### Option 2:

You can use an [API](#), which lets you programmatically manage the structured data items you upload to Google.

### Option 3:

You can make use of a third party platform like Shopify, WooCommerce, or BigCommerce.

Once you've decided on your feed setup, the next step is to submit your data. To be eligible to use free listings, you'll need to meet the [minimum data criteria](#).

You will also need to [comply with our policies](#) for free listings. For example we don't allow retailers to advertise certain products, and have requirements around landing pages and checkout, that must be followed. All the policies that apply to Shopping ads also apply to free listings.

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## Minimum data requirements for free listings on the Shopping tab

As a minimum, for all products, you will need to include the following [data and attributes](#) in your feed:



### ID

Use a unique ID for each different product. The ID is required to help distinguish between each product in your feed.



### Title

Clearly identify the product you're selling. A specific and accurate title will help us show your product to the right users.



### Price

Tell users how much you're charging for your product. It must match the price and currency on your landing page.





### Description

Describe the details of your product. Include your product's most relevant features and visual attributes.



### Availability

Tell users and Google whether you have a product in stock. You will need to change this attribute if the product is out of stock.



### Link

The URL for the landing page on your website that users are sent to, when they click on your product.



### Image\_link

The URL for your main product image. This image appears to potential customers in the free listing for your product.

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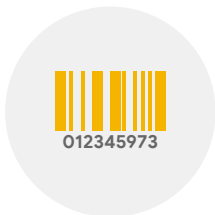
## Ensure your products are identifiable with brand & GTINs or MPN attributes

As a minimum, for all products, you will need to include [unique product identifiers](#) GTIN or MPN, as well as the brand, if relevant:



### Brand

Used to indicate the product's brand name. The brand is used to help identify your product and will be shown to users.



### GTIN

A GTIN uniquely identifies your product. This specific number helps us make your unpaid listing easier for users to find.



### MPN

An alternative to GTIN, MPNs are used to uniquely identify a specific product among all products from the same manufacturer.

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## Additional attribute requirements for specific retail categories

For some retail categories, like apparel or refurbished items, additional attributes are needed to help identify the product.

### Apparel

[Color](#) - This information helps create accurate filters, which users can use to narrow search results.

[Size](#) - Use the size attribute to describe the size of your product, which can appear in results that are filtered by size.

[Age\\_group](#) - Use this attribute to set the age group that your product is designed for, which can appear in filtered results.

[Gender](#) - Specify the gender your product is designed for. With this information users can accurately filter products by gender.

### Refurbished

[Condition](#) - Tell users about the condition of the product you're selling. We use this information to refine search results.

### Multipack

[Multipack](#) - Indicate grouped identical products for sale as one item to distinguish multipacks, bundles, and other products.

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## Bundle

[Is bundle](#) - For main products that you've grouped with other, different products, sold together as a package for a single price.

## Variants

[Item group id](#) - Identify products with variants that only differ from one another by product details like size, color, material, etc.

## Shipping

[Shipping](#) - Use this attribute when shipping settings for your item are not defined in Merchant Center or to override settings.

## Tax

[Tax](#) - Use this attribute when you need to override the tax settings that you set up in Merchant Center.

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# Optimise for free listings on the Shopping tab

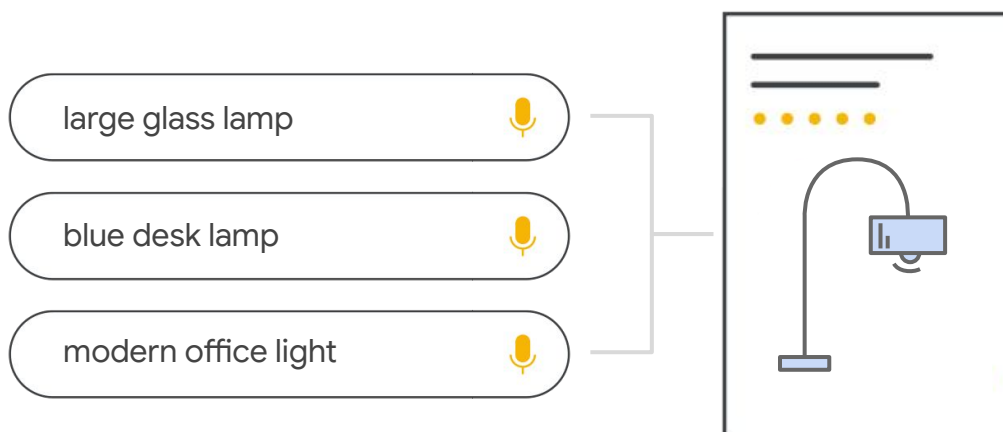
There are a few ways in which retailers can influence performance of free listings on the Shopping tab. These are:

1. Providing as much feed and attribute data as possible
2. Ensuring your landing pages have a good user experience
3. Using Google Customer Reviews

## Optimise with additional feed and attribute data

[Optimising feed data](#) may improve performance. Use all relevant attributes for your feed, not just the ones that are required, to include additional useful information about your products.

For example attributes like size or color are optional, if you're not selling clothing. However, this information may still be helpful to include for other categories of product. You can also utilise the description attribute, to list details like the product's material, pattern, texture, technical specifications or special features.



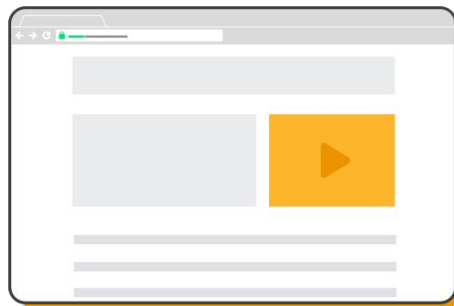
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## Review landing page speed and experience

To improve performance beyond feeds, make sure your website landing pages offer a good user experience for shoppers visiting your online store. We factor that in into the algorithm that runs free listings.

You can measure this by looking at metrics like:

- Bounce rate - to assess if users are leaving your site rather than proceeding to browse or buy
- Page load time - the speed at which the site loads, which if too slow could cause users to leave your site
- Other metrics and reporting tools outlined in the [Chrome User Experience Report](#)



## Use Google Customer Reviews

You can also use [Google Customer Reviews](#), to highlight to shoppers the quality of your store. The program is a free service that enables Google to collect valuable feedback from customers who've made a purchase on your site.



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# Measuring free listings on the Shopping tab

Once you're all set up, you'll be able to track performance via Merchant Center and Analytics.

## Merchant Center

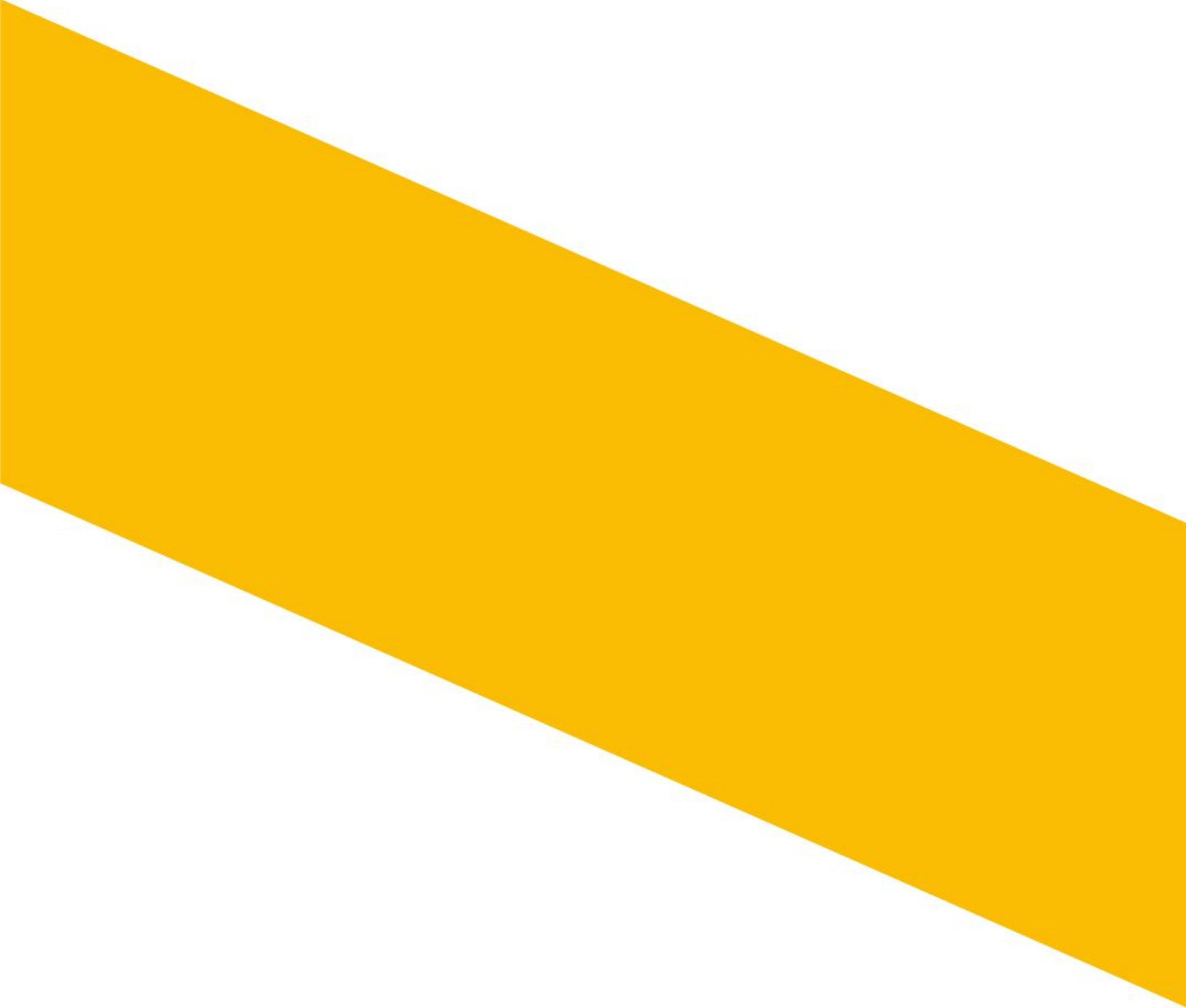
Traffic from free listings will automatically show in Merchant Center. You can find these under the performance tab. Segment views by clicking by product, by category, and by brand at the bottom of the report, next to the prompt 'Segment traffic'.

You can also utilise Report Editor, where you can view performance metrics across paid and free shopping activity side by side. With Report Editor you can create custom [reports](#) and [dashboards](#) to better assess your performance.

## Google Analytics

You can also track free clicks outside of Merchant Center with Google Analytics and other 3P web analytics tools. You may do so by implementing a tracking setup on your website.

If you're an advertiser, this implementation also allows you to verify that the split between Google Ads traffic and traffic from free listings is reported accurately. You can find detailed instructions and best practices web analytics tools in our [Help Center](#).



Google for Retail