

Website brief

Fill this in before you ask a studio or a freelancer for a quote, or before you build the site yourself. Send the same copy to every contractor.

Answer in plain words, as you would explain it to a new employee. If something is not decided, write “not decided” and who will decide. A short honest answer is more useful than a long vague one.

1. The business and its visitors

The business in two sentences

What you sell, to whom and where. No slogans.

Who the site is for and what they want to do on it

One or two kinds of visitor. For each: what they came to find out or get done.

The one main action the site must lead to

A call, a booking, an order, a request for a quote. Choose one.

2. What the site consists of

Pages and sections needed

List them. Underline the ones that must be ready on launch day.

Content you already have, and what must be written or shot

Texts, photos, video, price list, reviews you have permission to publish.

Sites you like, sites you dislike, and why

Two or three addresses of each. Name the exact thing: menu, photos, tone, speed.

Functions

Forms, booking, payments, languages, links to a CRM, email or stock system.

Page type	What to prepare	Often forgotten
Home	What you do and for whom, in one sentence; the main action; your best photo	How the first screen looks on a phone
About	A short history, who is behind the business, real photos of the people and the place	Registration details, if you publish them
Services or catalogue	The list of services or products, grouped the way customers ask for them	The order: what comes first
Single service or product	Description, price or “from” price, photos, terms, answers to frequent questions	What the price does not include
Prices	The current price list and the date it was last checked	Who updates it when prices change
Work, cases, reviews	Photos of finished work, short stories, reviews with written permission	Clients' consent to show names and photos
Contact	Address, phone, hours, map, messaging apps, a form with as few fields as possible	Who answers requests and how fast
Legal pages	Privacy policy, terms, cookie notice, seller details	Who writes them: agree this before the start

3. Terms of the work

Who will update the site after launch

A name, how often, and what changes: prices, news, photos.

Deadline and what it depends on

A date and the reason for it: a season, an opening, the start of advertising.

Budget range

From and to. Say whether it covers texts, photos, domain and hosting.

How success will be judged

What you will count three months after launch: requests, bookings, orders.

Who approves the work and how many revision rounds are expected

One person with the final word. Rounds per stage: structure, design, texts.

4. What to hand over to the contractor

Hand these over once you have chosen the contractor, not together with the brief. Where the service allows it, give access through a separate login and do not send passwords in a chat.

- ☐ Logo as a vector file (SVG, AI, EPS or PDF), plus brand colours and fonts if you have them
- ☐ Texts for every page in one document, already approved

- ☐ Photos and video in original size, and the right to use them
- ☐ Domain: where it is registered and who holds the account. Keep it in your own name
- ☐ Hosting: a separate login for the contractor, or a decision to move to new hosting
- ☐ Access to analytics and the search console, if the old site had them
- ☐ Admin access to the old site and a list of pages that must not be lost
- ☐ Accounts the site has to connect to: CRM, payments, booking, mailing list

EXAMPLE (FICTIONAL BUSINESS, MADE-UP FIGURES)

Business: a bike repair workshop with two mechanics; customers live or work within a fifteen-minute ride. Visitors: commuters whose bike has broken down; they want to see the price and book a slot. Main action: book a repair slot. Pages: Home, Services and prices, Booking, About, Contact. Content: the price list exists; texts must be written and the workshop photographed. Like: a local cafe's site, with the hours and the menu on the first screen. Dislike: sites that hide the price behind a form. Functions: booking form with a choice of date; one language; no online payment. Updates: the owner, prices twice a year. Deadline: 1 March, before the spring season; depends on the photo shoot. Budget: \$2,500–4,000 including texts (a made-up figure, not a market price). Success: bookings per week made through the site. Approval: the owner alone, two revision rounds per stage.

Three common mistakes. No single decision-maker: several people approve, each asks for something different, and the rounds do not end. Name one person. "Like the competitor, but better": this does not say what to build. Name the exact things you like and what must be different. Content left for last: the design is drawn for texts and photos that do not exist, then redone when they arrive. Collect the content before the design starts, or put it in the quote as a separate line.