

For everyone

Reviews and ratings policy

Who can review, what we publish, when we remove one, and how ratings are worked out.

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IN SHORT

- Only a homeowner who actually hired through ToolBox can review that job.
- We publish reviews as written. A bad review is not removed because the tradesperson asked.
- Every tradesperson gets a right of reply, published underneath.
- Paying for a review, or paying to have one taken down, ends accounts on both sides.

A plain summary to orient you. The sections below are the agreement.

1. Why reviews matter here

A verification badge tells you somebody is who they say they are. A review tells you what it was like to have them in your house. Homeowners need both, and the second is only worth anything if it is honest, which is why this policy is strict in both directions.

2. Who can leave a review

- The homeowner who hired the tradesperson for that job on ToolBox.
- One review per job.
- After the work is marked complete, or after the job's expected end date has passed.

You cannot review a tradesperson you did not hire, a quote you did not accept, or a job that ran entirely off the platform. Every review carries a marker showing it came from a job on ToolBox, because that is what makes it worth reading.

3. What makes a fair review

Do:

- Describe your own experience of that job.

- Be specific: what you asked for, what happened, what the work is like now.
- Say if something went wrong and was then put right. That is often the most useful review there is.
- Rate honestly. A four is not an insult.

Do not:

- Review work somebody else had done, or repeat something you heard.
- Include personal information about the tradesperson, their family or their employees, beyond the business name they trade under.
- Accuse someone of a crime unless you have reported it. Say what happened instead, and tell us separately.
- Use abusive, discriminatory or obscene language.
- Advertise anything, including a competing business.
- Threaten a review, or the rating you will give, to get a discount or a free extra. That is extortion and it is a ground for removing your account.

4. What we check

Every review is screened before it is published. We check that the reviewer hired that tradesperson for that job, we check the language against this policy, and we use automated tools to flag patterns that suggest reviews are not genuine. Anything flagged is read by a person before anything happens to it.

We may contact you to confirm a review is yours.

5. What we do not do

- We do not remove a review because it is negative.
- We do not let anyone pay to have a review removed, hidden or reordered.
- We do not edit what you meant. We may fix obvious spelling or punctuation, nothing more.
- We do not let a tradesperson choose which of their reviews are shown.

A tradesperson cannot buy their way out of a bad review

Not through a subscription, not through a payment, not by asking nicely, and not by making a repair conditional on it coming down. That last one is among the most serious breaches on this platform and it normally ends the account. If a tradesperson does it to you, report it to complaints@toolbox.africa.

6. When we will remove a review

We remove a review, or refuse to publish it, if it:

- Was not from the homeowner who hired for that job.
- Contains personal information about someone who did not agree to it.
- Is abusive, discriminatory, obscene or threatening.
- Is defamatory, or accuses someone of a crime with nothing behind it.
- Was bought, rewarded or written under pressure from either side.
- Advertises something.
- Is about a matter with nothing to do with the work, such as a tradesperson's politics or their private life.
- Relates to a job that we establish never happened.

A tradesperson can ask us to look at a review under any of these. We assess it against the policy, we may ask both of you for more, and we tell you both the outcome and the reason. Disagreeing with a review is not a ground. If the tradesperson's position is that the customer is wrong about what happened, the answer is a reply, not a removal.

7. The right of reply

Every tradesperson may reply once to every review, published directly underneath it. Replies follow the same rules: no abuse, no personal information about the customer, no revealing where they live.

A good reply acknowledges what happened and says what will be done about it. Homeowners read replies closely, and a thoughtful one on a poor review does a business more good than the review does harm.

8. How the rating is worked out

- The overall rating is the average of the ratings on published reviews.
- Recent work counts for more than old work, because a business changes.
- Reviews we have removed do not count.
- We show the total number of reviews next to the rating, so you can see how much a number is worth. A 5.0 from two jobs is not a 4.7 from ninety.
- Where a tradesperson has too few reviews to be meaningful, we say so rather than showing a number that misleads.

9. Changing or removing your own review

You can edit your review within 30 days of posting it, for example if the tradesperson came back and fixed the problem. After that, ask us at help@toolbox.africa and tell us why.

You can ask for your review to be removed at any time, and we will remove it. We will not ask you to justify it. But please do not remove a fair review because a tradesperson pressured you into it. Tell us instead.

10. Where reviews appear

Reviews are published on the tradesperson's ToolBox profile and may appear in ToolBox search results and in material promoting the platform. We show your display name and your suburb, never your full name, your street address or your contact details.

We may show a tradesperson the reviews written about them, including the reviewer's display name, so that they can reply and so that they can identify the job. What we share, and what we keep, is set out in the **Privacy policy** (toolbox.africa/legal/privacy).

11. If you think a review is unlawful

Two routes, and they are different.

If a review breaks this policy, ask us to look at it under section 6. That is the ordinary case, it needs no formality, and it is fast.

If a review is unlawful, meaning it defames you, publishes your personal information, or infringes a right you can name, use the **Takedown notices** (toolbox.africa/legal/takedown) procedure. It follows section 77 of the Electronic Communications and Transactions Act, which prescribes exactly what a notice must contain, and it is the route that carries legal weight for both of us. We act on a complete notice within 2 business days, we tell the reviewer, and we keep the record.

A truthful account of a bad experience is not defamation, and a takedown notice does not change that. Where the dispute is genuinely about whose version of events is right, we will say so, and the answer is your right of reply under section 7, or a court.

If anything here is unclear, ask before you rely on it. We would rather explain a clause than argue about it later.