

SIGNAGE & STOREFRONT 101

Why this matters: Most people decide whether to walk into your shop in about 3 seconds — before they read a single word. Your storefront is doing that selling, not your website or your social media. This guide covers the basics that make people stop.

01.

CAN PEOPLE TELL WHAT YOU SELL?

Someone walking by for the first time should know what you sell without going in. If your sign only has your business name, add a line underneath saying what you do (e.g., "Fresh Bakery," "Tailoring & Alterations").

02.

IS YOUR SIGN EASY TO READ FROM THE SIDEWALK & THE STREET?

- Use large, bold lettering — aim for letters at least 4–6 inches tall for street-facing signs.
- Stick to 2 colours max. Too many colours are harder to read fast.
- Avoid script/cursive fonts for your main sign — save those for accents.

03.

IS YOUR WINDOW WORKING FOR YOU OR AGAINST YOU?

- Clear window displays draw people in. Cluttered or empty windows do the opposite.
- Rotate what's in the window every few weeks — regulars notice when it changes.
- Keep at least one clear sightline into the store. If someone can't see inside at all, they may assume you're closed.

04.

LIGHTING MATTERS, DAY AND NIGHT

- Turn window/sign lighting on even during the day if your storefront is shaded or set back.
- If you're open evenings, exterior lighting isn't optional — a dark storefront reads as closed.

05.

THE "5-SECOND WALK-BY TEST"

Stand across the street and look at your shop for 5 seconds. Ask yourself:

- Do I know what this store sells?
- Do I know if it's open?
- Would I want to walk in?

IF THE ANSWER TO ANY OF THESE IS "NOT SURE," THAT'S YOUR STARTING POINT.

06.

QUICK WINS CHECKLIST

- ☐ Business name + what you sell, both visible from the sidewalk
- ☐ Sign lettering large enough to read from across the street
- ☐ Window display refreshed in the last month
- ☐ Lights on during business hours
- ☐ "Open" sign visible and accurate for your actual hours