

THE UNBLOCK GOOGLE KIT

The 5 accidental blockers, how to find them in Search Console, and the fix for each

A page Google cannot open, or is not allowed to list, never shows up in search. Most of these blocks are accidental: a leftover setting, a checkbox, a login wall. Here are the five, where Search Console shows each one, and the fix. Every quote comes from Google's and WordPress's own help pages, checked October 8, 2026. Educational only. Not affiliated with Google or WordPress.

HOW TO CHECK IN 2 MINUTES

- Open Google Search Console (search.google.com/search-console) > Indexing > Pages.
- Google: "Why pages aren't indexed table shows issues that prevented URLs from being indexed on your site. Click a row to see a details page that shows URLs affected by this issue and your site's history with this issue."
- Read the Reason column. The five reasons on the next pages are the accidental ones.
- Or check one page: paste its full address into the inspection bar at the top of any Search Console screen (the URL Inspection tool) and read the "Indexing allowed?" line.
- Google: "You should not expect all URLs on your site to be indexed, only the canonical pages". Copies of other pages, and pages you hid on purpose, are fine to leave out.

THE 5 ACCIDENTAL BLOCKERS

- 1. A noindex tag. Search Console reason: "URL marked 'noindex'" (page 2).
- 2. A robots.txt block. Search Console reason: "URL blocked by robots.txt" (page 2).
- 3. The WordPress "Discourage search engines" checkbox. Shows up in Search Console as noindex (page 2).
- 4. Login or password pages. Search Console reasons: "Blocked due to unauthorized request (401)" and "Blocked due to access forbidden (403)" (page 3).
- 5. Links Google can't follow. No reason listed, because the page was never discovered at all (page 3).

BLOCKER 1: NOINDEX

Search Console reason: URL marked 'noindex'

Google: "When Google tried to index the page it encountered a 'noindex' directive and therefore did not index it. If you do not want this page indexed, congratulations! If you do want this page to be indexed, you should remove the 'noindex' directive."

- Fix: find the tag `<meta name="robots" content="noindex">` in the page's HTML (or an X-Robots-Tag header sent by the server) and remove it.
- Then open the page in URL Inspection, click Test live URL, and click Request indexing.

BLOCKER 2: ROBOTS.TXT

Search Console reason: URL blocked by robots.txt

Google: "This page was blocked by your site's robots.txt file. You can verify this using the robots.txt tester. Note that this does not guarantee that the page won't be indexed through some other means."

- Fix: open `yoursite.com/robots.txt` in a browser. A line like "Disallow: /" under "User-agent: *" blocks everything.
- Remove the Disallow lines for pages you want found.
- Use noindex, not robots.txt, for pages you want kept out. Google: "To ensure that a page is not indexed by Google, remove the robots.txt block and use a 'noindex' directive."

BLOCKER 3: THE WORDPRESS CHECKBOX

WordPress.org, Settings > Reading screen

WordPress.org: "Check the Discourage search engines from indexing this site box to ask search engines not to index this site. When the option is checked, the following happens: (Since Version 5.3) Causes "<meta name='robots' content='noindex,nofollow' />" to be generated into the <head> </head> section (if wp_head is used) of your site's source, causing search engine spiders to ignore your site."

- Fix: WordPress admin > Settings > Reading > Search engine visibility. Make sure the box is NOT ticked, then click Save Changes.
- It is often left on from when the site was being built. Afterwards, inspect your home page in URL Inspection and request indexing.

BLOCKER 4: LOGIN AND PASSWORD PAGES

Search Console reason: Blocked due to unauthorized request (401)

Google: "The page was blocked to Googlebot by a request for authorization (401 response). If you do want Googlebot to be able to index this page, either remove authorization requirements for this page, or else allow Googlebot to access your pages by verifying its identity."

Search Console reason: Blocked due to access forbidden (403)

Google: "HTTP 403 means that the user agent provided credentials, but was not granted access. However, Googlebot never provides credentials, so your server is returning this error incorrectly. The page will not be indexed."

- Fix: anything you want found must open without a login. Test it in a private browser window where you are logged out.
- Keep members-only content behind the login, and link to a public page about it instead. That public page is what Google can list.

BLOCKER 5: LINKS GOOGLE CAN'T FOLLOW

Google Search Central, SEO link best practices

Google: "Generally, Google can only crawl your link if it's an `<a>` HTML element (also known as anchor element) with an href attribute. Most links in other formats won't be parsed and extracted by Google's crawlers."

Link formats Google lists as not recommended (a page builder or web designer may have used one):

- `<a routerLink="products/category">`
- `<span href="https://example.com">`
- `<a onclick="goto('https://example.com')">`
- Fix: every page you care about gets a normal link, an `<a href="...">` link, from at least one other page on your site (a menu, a footer or a related-pages list all count).
- Submit a sitemap in Search Console > Sitemaps as a backstop, so Google hears about the page even before it follows a link.
- Google: "Every page you care about should have a link from at least one other page on your site."

AFTER THE FIX

- One page: open it in URL Inspection, click Test live URL, confirm "Indexing allowed? Yes", then click Request indexing.
- Many pages: fix them all, then open the issue in the Page indexing report and click Validate fix. Google re-checks the affected pages for you.
- Google: "Validation typically takes up to about two weeks, but in some cases can take much longer, so please be patient."
- Google: "Requesting a crawl does not guarantee that inclusion in search results will happen instantly or even at all." Ask once, write it in the log, then wait.

THE BLOCKER LOG

Page	Blocker found	Fixed on	Requested	Status 2 weeks later

WHERE THIS COMES FROM

- [Search Console Help: Page indexing report](#)
- [Search Console Help: URL Inspection tool](#)
- [Google Search Central: SEO link best practices](#)
- [WordPress.org: Settings Reading screen](#)

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