

● DELIVERABILITY

The inbox deliverability checklist

The best flow in the world earns nothing in the spam folder. Work through this list to make sure your emails actually reach the inbox, and stay there.

0.3%

Gmail's spam complaint ceiling for bulk senders. Aim for under 0.1%.

2 days

The window to honor unsubscribes under Gmail and Yahoo's rules.

102 KB

The email size where Gmail clips your message.

1 Authentication

Proves to inboxes that your emails really come from you.

- ☐ **SPF record** on your sending domain includes your email platform.
- ☐ **DKIM signing** uses your own domain, not your platform's shared one. In Klaviyo, that's a branded sending domain.
- ☐ **DMARC record** is published. Start at p=none to monitor, then tighten to quarantine once reports look clean.
- ☐ **From address aligns** with your authenticated domain (no sending as yourbrand.com through an unaligned domain).
- ☐ **Dedicated sending subdomain** (like send.yourbrand.com) so marketing reputation doesn't touch your team's inboxes.

2 Gmail and Yahoo sender rules

Required since 2024 for brands sending 5,000+ emails a day to Gmail. Follow them at any size.

- ☐ **SPF, DKIM and DMARC** all in place (section 1).
- ☐ **One-click unsubscribe** header on every marketing email, plus a visible unsubscribe link.
- ☐ **Unsubscribes honored within 2 days.**
- ☐ **Spam complaint rate under 0.3%**, and ideally under 0.1%, checked in Google Postmaster Tools.

3 List health

Who you send to matters more than what you send.

- ☐ **Every subscriber opted in.** Never buy, rent or scrape a list.
- ☐ **Hard bounces are suppressed automatically**, and your bounce rate stays under 2%.
- ☐ **A sunset flow prunes unengaged subscribers** (no clicks or site activity in 90 to 120 days).
- ☐ **Sign-up forms block bots** with a hidden honeypot field or captcha.
- ☐ **Double opt-in** for low-quality sources like giveaways and contests.

4 Sending habits

Inbox providers watch patterns, not just single emails.

- ☐ **Send most to engaged subscribers** (clicked or visited in the last 30 to 90 days), and mail the rest less often.
- ☐ **Keep a steady cadence.** Avoid sudden volume spikes, like mailing your whole list for the first time in months on Black Friday.
- ☐ **Warm up new domains gradually**, starting with your most engaged subscribers.
- ☐ **Use a real reply-to address** that a person actually reads.

5 Content

Small details that keep filters happy.

- ☐ **No image-only emails.** Every email has real text and alt text on images.
- ☐ **Keep emails under 102 KB** so Gmail doesn't clip them (and hide your unsubscribe link).
- ☐ **No link shorteners**, and a reasonable number of links per email.
- ☐ **Subject lines match the content.** Bait-and-switch drives complaints.

6 Monitoring

You can't fix what you don't watch.

- ☐ **Google Postmaster Tools** is set up for your sending domain.
- ☐ **Spam complaints, bounces and unsubscribes** are reviewed weekly.
- ☐ **Revenue per recipient is tracked**, not just opens. Apple Mail inflates open rates.

Not sure where you stand?

Book a free 30-minute strategy session and we'll check your setup against this list, plus show you the revenue your list should be producing.

[Book at shorebreak.digital](https://shorebreak.digital)

Inbox provider requirements change. Always confirm current rules with Google and Yahoo's sender guidelines.