

METHODOLOGY

How Vouch Rate ratings work

Every constant in the formula, written out. A rating you cannot check is just a number someone chose — so here is everything that goes into ours.

The formula

$$\text{rating} = (\sum \text{stars} \times \text{weight} + 3.7 \times 8) \div (\sum \text{weight} + 8)$$
$$\text{weight} = \text{verification} \times \text{recency} \times \text{authenticity}$$

Each review's stars are multiplied by a weight, and the result is pulled toward a platform average of **3.7** with the strength of **8 reviews**. That stops a new profile claiming a perfect score on almost no evidence: two 5-star reviews from verified email accounts produce **3.9**, not 5.0. The pull fades as genuine reviews accumulate.

Six levels of verification

LEVEL	WHAT IT MEANS	BADGE SHOWS	WEIGHT
0	Anyone can write a review. It is published, and counts for least.	Unverified	× 0.60
1	The reviewer confirmed their email address.	Email verified	× 0.80
2	A record the business supplied matches the reviewer.	Verified Experience Customer relationship verified	× 1.00
3	A connected sales system confirmed the order itself.	Verified Experience Transaction verified	× 1.15
4	The reviewer's identity was checked.	Verified Experience Transaction and identity verified	× 1.20
5	Several independent signals agree.	Verified Experience Independently corroborated	× 1.25

The line between levels 2 and 3 matters most. At level 2 the business says the person was a customer; at level 3 its own sales system confirmed the order. Many platforms show both with one badge. We do not.

Recency

A review's weight halves every **18 months**, down to a floor of **35%**. Old reviews stay on the profile in full; they simply stop outvoting what customers say now. Profiles also show 12-month and 30-day averages separately.

New review

100%

18 months

50%

36 months and older

35%

Authenticity

Every review is checked for signs of fabrication. Reviews that look suspicious count for less; reviews a moderator confirms as fraudulent are removed from the calculation entirely, rather than merely down-weighted.

The Evidence Score

Separate from the star rating, each profile carries an Evidence Score out of 100: how well evidenced its rating is. It combines verified experiences, review authenticity, pattern integrity, business identity and accountability. A business with genuine, well-evidenced one-star reviews can score highly — it measures the evidence, not whether the business is good.

Exceptional evidence

Strong evidence

Reasonable evidence

Limited evidence

Not enough evidence yet

Moderation and appeals

- Most reviews publish straight away. Anything flagged is shown publicly as “Under review” while a moderator looks — it is not hidden.
- A moderator decides against published guidelines, records the reasoning and cites the rule relied on.
- Anyone can appeal. A different moderator reviews it, and the outcome comes with an explanation.
- Removals and overturned decisions are counted in quarterly transparency reports.

The live methodology, including any changes since this document was produced, is always at www.vouchrate.com/transparency.

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