

FREE GUIDE · 2026

# The Shopify Checkout & **Cart-Recovery** Checklist

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Stop losing ~70% of your carts. 12 checkout fixes, the 7 real reasons buyers bail, and a 3-message recovery flow you can ship this week.

**Virexo Media** is an ecommerce growth agency for D2C & Shopify brands. We design stores, optimize checkout, and build the email/SMS flows that turn browsers into buyers. This guide is for founders and marketers who see plenty of "add to cart" but not enough "order placed" — and want to fix it without guesswork.

## START HERE

# You don't have a traffic problem. You have a leak.

Across 50 studies, the average online cart is abandoned **70.22%** of the time. The good news: most of that is fixable design and friction — not lost demand. Plug the leaks before you spend another dollar on ads.

**70%**

of carts are abandoned, on average — stable for ~20 years

**~35%**

potential conversion lift from fixing checkout UX issues

**\$260B**

recoverable in the US + EU through better checkout

Source: Baymard Institute — cart-abandonment research (50 studies) & large-scale checkout-UX testing, 2026.

## DIAGNOSE

# 01 The 7 real reasons buyers bail — and the fix

When Baymard asked shoppers why they abandoned, the top answers were rarely "I changed my mind." They were friction. Here's each one, with the move that fixes it.

WHY THEY LEAVE		WHAT TO DO INSTEAD
<b>Surprise extra costs</b> shipping, tax, fees at the end	<b>~48%</b>	Show shipping & tax early; add a free-shipping threshold; no surprises at the final step.
<b>Forced to create an account</b>	<b>~25%</b>	Turn on guest checkout (Shopify → Settings → Checkout). Offer account creation <i>after</i> purchase.
<b>Slow / unclear delivery</b>	<b>~24%</b>	Show delivery dates and an ETA on the product and cart page — certainty beats speed.
<b>Long, complicated checkout</b>	—	Cut fields to the essentials, enable address autocomplete, use one-page checkout.
<b>Don't trust the site with card details</b>	—	Add trust badges, a visible returns policy, reviews, and known payment logos near the pay button.
<b>Can't see the total / no preferred payment</b>	—	Show the order total early; offer Shop Pay, Apple/Google Pay, PayPal and a BNPL option.
<b>Site or mobile too slow / buggy</b>	—	Compress images, trim apps & scripts, and test on a real phone on cellular data.

Percentages: Baymard Institute checkout survey; shoppers select multiple reasons, so they total >100%.

## AUDIT

# 02 The 12-point checkout audit

Open your store on your phone and walk your own checkout. Check off every box. Each unchecked item is money on the floor.

- ✓ **Free-shipping threshold** shown in cart ("You're \$14 away")
- ✓ **Shipping & tax estimate** visible before the final step
- ✓ **Guest checkout** enabled — no forced account
- ✓ **Express wallets** up top (Shop Pay, Apple/Google Pay, PayPal)
- ✓ **One-page, single-column** checkout flow
- ✓ **Address autocomplete** turned on
- ✓ **Minimal fields**; numeric keypad for number inputs on mobile
- ✓ **Trust signals** beside the pay button (secure, returns)
- ✓ **Cart editable** in place — qty, remove, promo
- ✓ **Discount field present** but not so loud it sends people code-hunting
- ✓ **Inline, human errors** ("Card number looks short")
- ✓ **Mobile-first**: thumb-friendly, fast, sticky "Pay" button

Rule of thumb: every extra field, click, and surprise between "Add to cart" and "Pay" costs you orders. Remove, don't add.

## RECOVER

# 03 The 3-message cart-recovery flow

For the carts that still slip through, a simple sequence brings a share of them back. Lead with helpfulness, not discounts — protect your margin.

### Email 1 · ~1 hour **"You left something behind"**

Friendly nudge with the product image and a one-click link straight back to the cart. No discount yet — many people just got interrupted.

### Email 2 · ~24 hours **Handle the objection**

Answer the silent "why not": shipping, easy returns, security, and a couple of real reviews. Add a modest incentive only if your margins allow it.

### Email 3 · ~48–72 hours **Last call**

Light, honest urgency (cart expiring / low stock if true) and your single strongest reason to buy. Add an SMS for opted-in subscribers to lift recovery.

Recovery flows recapture a meaningful share of abandoned carts; the exact lift depends on your traffic, margin and offer — measure your own.

## SHIP TODAY

### Quick wins (one afternoon)

- ✓ Turn on **guest checkout** (5 minutes)
- ✓ Add a **free-shipping bar**
- ✓ Enable **Shop Pay / Apple Pay** in checkout
- ✓ Add a **3-badge trust strip** under the buy button
- ✓ Set up **Email 1** of the recovery flow
- ✓ **Test checkout on your phone** on cellular data

## AVOID

### Common mistakes

- ✗ Hiding shipping cost until the final step
- ✗ Forcing account creation to buy
- ✗ A giant discount field that trains people to leave and hunt for codes
- ✗ Stacking upsells & pop-ups between cart and pay
- ✗ Slow, image-heavy mobile pages
- ✗ No recovery email at all — the biggest miss

## BENCHMARK

### 04 What "good" looks like

#### ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE — NOT A CLIENT RESULT

A store doing **\$40k/month** at a **1.8%** conversion rate has surprise shipping, no guest checkout, and no recovery emails. They make three changes: show shipping early + a free-ship threshold, turn on guest checkout and Shop Pay, and launch the 3-email recovery flow.

Baymard's testing shows checkout-UX fixes can lift conversion by up to ~35%. Even a fraction of that compounds across every future visitor — and the recovered carts are revenue you already paid to acquire. The point isn't the exact number; it's that you **measure your own before/after** and keep the wins.

Figures above are a hypothetical model for illustration. Conversion-lift range: Baymard Institute. Use real, approved numbers only when reporting your own results.

## V VIREXO MEDIA

### Want this done for you?

Virexo Media designs and optimizes Shopify checkouts and builds the email & SMS recovery flows that win back lost revenue — for D2C and Shopify brands. Send us your store and we'll point out the leaks costing you orders.

**Get a free checkout audit → [virexomedia.com](https://virexomedia.com)**

or book a quick call to talk through your store

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