

The No-Show Reduction Checklist

Five checks worth running before you spend on more marketing to replace the patients a no-show already cost you.

1 Pull your actual no-show rate, by day of week

Most practices know they have a no-show problem but not when it happens. Pull the last 60 days from your scheduling system and break it out by weekday and appointment type. A pattern almost always shows up (Mondays, post-holiday weeks, or a specific hygienist's afternoon block).

Why it matters: you can't fix a pattern you haven't looked at directly.

2 Send more than one reminder, on different channels

A single reminder call or text the day before catches people who were already going to show up. Add a reminder further out (3-4 days ahead) so a patient can reschedule instead of no-showing, plus a same-day confirmation for anyone who hasn't responded.

Why it matters: a reschedule protects the slot; a no-show wastes it.

3 Make rescheduling a one-step action, not a phone tag

If confirming or moving an appointment requires calling back during business hours, some patients simply won't. A reply-to-confirm text or a one-click reschedule link removes the friction that turns "I need to move this" into a silent no-show.

Why it matters: friction is what turns an intention to reschedule into a no-show instead.

4 Follow up on every no-show within 24 hours

A missed appointment that never gets a follow-up call or message quietly becomes a lost patient. A short, non-judgmental follow-up ("we missed you, let's get you rebooked") recovers a meaningful share of these before the patient reschedules somewhere else, or not at all.

Why it matters: the 24 hours after a no-show is the highest-leverage moment to recover it.

5 Re-check the pattern after 30 days, not just once

Whatever you change, go back to step 1's data after a month. If the same day/time pattern is still showing up, the fix isn't reaching the actual cause yet, and it's worth looking at whether the real issue is reminder timing, scheduling policy, or something specific to one part of the schedule.

Why it matters: a fix that isn't re-measured is just a guess that felt like progress.