

The Missed-Call Playbook

For plumbers, HVAC, electricians, roofers and other home-service businesses. From TradesReceptionist.com, October 2026.

1. Missed-call cost checklist

- Pull last month's call log. Count inbound calls and unanswered/voicemail calls.
- Note when misses happen: after hours, weekends, lunch, while on a job.
- Estimate what % of missed callers would have booked (be conservative).
- Find your average job value from invoices.
- $\text{Monthly cost} = \text{weekly calls} \times \% \text{ missed} \times \% \text{ would book} \times \text{avg job value} \times 52/12.$
- Online version: tradesreceptionist.com/tools/missed-call-calculator/
- Compare that number to plan prices: tradesreceptionist.com/guides/ai-receptionist-cost/

2. Call scripts

Greeting: "Thanks for calling [Company], this is [Name]. Are you calling about a new problem, an existing job, or something urgent?"

Emergency triage: "Is there active water, gas smell, no heat/cooling with vulnerable people, or sparking? If yes: I'm getting our on-call tech now. What's the address and best callback number?"

Booking: "I can get you on the schedule. What's the address, what's going on, and which works better: [slot A] or [slot B]?"

Price shopper: "Every job's a little different, so we diagnose on site. Our service call is [\$X], applied to the repair if you go ahead. Want me to book that?"

Missed-call text back: "Hi, this is [Company]. Sorry we missed your call. We're on a job. Reply here with your address and what's going on and we'll get you scheduled."

Voicemail: "You've reached [Company]. For emergencies press 1 or text this number. Otherwise leave your name, address and issue and we'll call back within [time]."

3. AI receptionist setup steps

- Decide the job: messages only, booking, or emergency transfer.
- Shortlist 2-3 tools that fit your software and budget (quiz: tradesreceptionist.com/tools/find-your-receptionist/).
- Write the knowledge base: service area, services, hours, emergency definition, prices you'll share, booking rules.
- Connect calendar or field-service software; confirm native vs webhook.
- Start with after-hours / no-answer forwarding.
- Test with routine, emergency, price-shopper and wrong-number calls.
- Review transcripts weekly and fix wrong answers.
- Check usage vs plan limits and overage after month one.

4. Questions to ask vendors

- What exactly counts as a billable minute, call or caller?
- What are overage rates?
- Does it book directly into ServiceTitan / Jobber / Housecall Pro, or via webhook?
- Can it transfer emergencies to my on-call phone?
- Is there a trial with my real number?

Prices and vendor details: tradesreceptionist.com. Some links on the site are affiliate links; see tradesreceptionist.com/disclosure/. This playbook is general guidance, not a guarantee of results.