Cut no-shows with automatic appointment reminders

> *“People book and then just don't turn up, and that empty slot is gone for good.”*

Category: scheduling **Setup Time:** ~15 minutes **Estimated Hours Saved:** 2 hrs/week **Direct Software Cost:** $0 / month

SOLUTION SUMMARY

Turn on automated SMS and email reminders at 24 hours and 2 hours before each appointment, and make sure the reminder contains a one-tap reschedule link. Reminders alone reduce no-shows substantially; adding an easy reschedule option converts a would-be no-show into a moved booking, which is a slot you keep rather than a slot you lose. Nearly every booking tool already includes this and most businesses have simply never switched it on.

REQUIRED TOOLS & DIRECT WHOLESALE UTILITIES

- **Your existing booking system: (Free Tier / Wholesale)**
- **Acuity Scheduling: (paid)**
- **Calendly: (Free Tier / Wholesale)**

STEP-BY-STEP APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Check what you already have**
   Open your booking tool's notification settings before buying anything. This is switched off by default more often than not.

2. **Set two reminders, not one**
   24 hours out gives them time to reschedule. 2 hours out catches the people who genuinely forgot.

3. **Use SMS for the 2-hour reminder**
   Email gets missed on the day of. Text does not.

4. **Put a reschedule link in every reminder**
   The goal is not guilt, it's recovering the slot. Make moving the appointment easier than ghosting.

5. **Watch the numbers for a month**
   Note your no-show count before and after. This is the number that proves the fix worked.

5-POINT QUALITY VERIFICATION PROTOCOL

[ ] **Carrier & Webhook Test:** Confirm webhook listener receives test payload and returns HTTP 200 within 500ms.

[ ] **End-to-End Simulation:** Execute live test event from personal device and verify SMS/email delivery.

[ ] **Anti-Spam & Rate Limit Check:** Verify repeated submissions do not trigger duplicate messages to clients.

[ ] **Direct Ownership Audit:** Confirm all API keys, accounts, and credentials belong directly to your practice.

[ ] **Staff Notification Verification:** Verify practice manager/receptionist receives real-time push alert with dial link.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Should I charge a no-show fee instead?

A: Reminders first. Fees create friction at booking and can cost you more in deterred bookings than they recover.

Q: Is two reminders too many?

A: Two is standard and rarely draws complaints. Three starts to feel like nagging.