Let people book themselves instead of playing phone tag

> *“Booking anything takes four messages back and forth before we land on a time that works.”*

Category: scheduling **Setup Time:** ~20 minutes **Estimated Hours Saved:** 4 hrs/week **Direct Software Cost:** $0 / month

SOLUTION SUMMARY

Publish a booking link that shows your real availability and lets someone pick a slot without asking you first. Phone tag is the single largest avoidable time drain in a service business, and it costs bookings outright when someone gives up mid-thread. A link removes the negotiation entirely, works while you are with a client, and books at nine at night when you are asleep.

REQUIRED TOOLS & DIRECT WHOLESALE UTILITIES

- **Your existing booking system: (Free Tier / Wholesale)**
- **Google Calendar appointment schedules: (Free Tier / Wholesale)**
- **Calendly: (Free Tier / Wholesale)**

STEP-BY-STEP APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Decide what people are actually allowed to book**
   Not every service should be self-bookable. Start with the one or two that need no judgement call from you.

2. **Set genuine availability, not aspirational availability**
   Publish only hours you will reliably honour. A booking you have to move costs more goodwill than a narrower window would have.

3. **Add buffers and a daily cap**
   Ten to fifteen minutes between slots, and a maximum per day. Without a cap, one busy week fills every gap you had for admin.

4. **Put the link everywhere people already look**
   Google Business Profile, Instagram bio, email signature, website. Most of the value is in the Google profile, because that is where people find you at the moment of intent.

5. **Set the confirmation and reminder in the same place**
   A booking with no confirmation feels unfinished, and reminders are what stop it becoming a no-show.

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: What if I need to vet people before booking?

A: Use a short intake question on the booking form, or make the link consultation-only and book the treatment yourself afterwards. Self-serve does not have to mean unfiltered.

Q: What does it cost?

A: Nothing to start. Google appointment schedules and the free Calendly tier both cover a single service. Payment at booking is where costs appear.

Q: Will I lose the personal touch?

A: Most people prefer booking at 9pm without waiting for a reply. The personal part is the appointment, not the scheduling negotiation.