

Google Preferred Sources: how to get your site picked in AI search

On October 15, 2026 Google said it is showing more links higher up in AI Mode and AI Overviews. The one thing a site owner can do about it: ask readers to add you as a Preferred Source. Exactly how, in two steps.

WHAT THIS ADDS

Most coverage of Google's October 15 update asks whether links will bring more clicks. Google has published no click data yet, so nobody knows. The part you control is smaller and clearer: readers can choose the sites they trust, and those sites get a Preferred badge inside AI answers. Google gives you a button and a link to ask for it. Put one on your site this week and put the link in your next email.

What Google announced on October 15

On **October 15, 2026** Hema Budaraju, Google's VP of Product Management, posted *More ways to connect with the web from Search*. It covers five changes to **AI Mode** and **AI Overviews**:

- **Inline links:** Google says it has made "continued and substantial increases" to inline links and will show them higher in responses more often.
- **Official sites (test):** for some searches, links to the official site appear in a dedicated section at the top of the answer, with a note on why each is useful.
- **Dive deeper:** links at the end of some answers get image thumbnails and a more clickable design.
- **Preferred Sources carousels:** timely-article carousels, which highlight the sources a reader chose, are rolling out to more locations and languages.
- **Creator names (test):** clickable creator and publisher names on video results in AI Mode that link to their Search profiles.

Google did not publish click or traffic figures with the announcement, so the effect on your visits is unknown. Search Engine Journal reports Google said use of Preferred Sources is more than seven times higher than at the start of the year; that is Google's own number.

What a Preferred Source is

Readers can open Google's **source preferences** tool and pick the sites they want to see more of. Google's documentation says that when a reader selects your site, your content is more likely to appear

in **Top Stories** with a "preferred" badge. In **AI Mode and AI Overviews**, your content can be highlighted with a "preferred" badge for the readers who selected you.

It works one reader at a time. Selecting you does not move you up for everyone; it changes what that reader sees. That is why Google gives owners a way to ask.

Step 1: check Search Console includes you in generative AI features

Google's documentation says that to be eligible as a preferred source in AI Mode and AI Overviews, your site must be **included in Search generative AI features in Search Console**. Open your property in Search Console and make sure your site is eligible there. If you do not have a Search Console property, set one up first: it is free.

Then check your site appears in the source preferences tool: type your address into the tool's search box. Only **domain-level and subdomain-level** sites can appear. `https://www.example.com/` and `https://code.example.com/` are eligible. A subfolder such as `https://www.example.com/blog` is not.

Step 2: add Google's button to your site

This is Google's recommended method. Add this line in the `<head>` of your page:

```
<script async src="https://news.google.com/swg/js/v1/publisher.js"></script>
```

Then put this tag where you want the button to show:

```
<div google-add-preferred-source-btn></div>
```

Readers who click it add your site as a preferred source and are returned to your page. The button translates itself to the reader's language. You can set it to dark with `data-theme="dark"` or force a language with `data-lang="en"`.

No code? Use the link instead

If your site builder will not take the script, Google provides a link you can use as plain text, as an image link, in social posts, in newsletters or in promotions:

```
https://www.google.com/preferences/source?q=yoursite.com
```

Replace `yoursite.com` with your own address. Google says the button and the link are both optional: they make it easier for readers to pick you, and you are not required to use them to be a preferred source.

What to publish so readers want to pick you

Google's May 27, 2026 announcement said any website that publishes **fresh content** is eligible for Preferred Sources and that the feature favours original reporting. So the ask only works if there is something new to read.

- Post something new on a regular schedule, even a short one.

- Put the button on your blog posts and on your newsletter sign-up page, where readers already like you.
- Add the link to your email footer and to one social post: "Want to see us first in Google? Add us as a preferred source."

What we do not know yet

Google has not said how many clicks the higher links send, and it has not said how much a Preferred badge changes behaviour. Selecting a source does not override relevance. Search Engine Journal also notes that Search Console gives every link in an AI Overview the overview's single position, so higher links will not show up as a better position. Treat this as a low-cost step with an unknown payoff, and check your own Search Console numbers in a few weeks.

DO THIS

Check that Search Console includes your site in Search generative AI features. Add Google's button (one script line in the head, one div where you want it) or use the link google.com/preferences/source?q=yoursite.com in your email and posts. It must be a domain or subdomain, not a subfolder, and you need fresh posts.

What Fynl.io is

One portal a small business runs itself on, instead of five subscriptions that do not talk to each other.

- A CRM and pipeline that shows every lead and where it stopped
- A calendar clients can book straight into
- Quotes, contracts and invoices, with deposits taken up front
- A website and form builder, so the enquiry lands in the same place
- Your Gmail connected, so the whole thread sits on the contact
- Automations for the follow-up you keep forgetting to send

The AI runs on **your own Claude or ChatGPT API key** — no markup on it. No SMS or phone calls yet. \$49/month per business, \$149 Agency, and we move your contacts over for you.

Fynl.io builds your website and email in the same portal as your clients, quotes and invoices, so the Preferred Source button and link can go on your site and in your newsletter without a developer.

The AI inside Fynl runs on your own Claude or ChatGPT API key, with no markup.

Sources

- Google: More ways to connect with the web from Search (October 15, 2026) — <https://blog.google/products-and-platforms/products/search/updates-ai-mode-overviews-explore-web/>

- Google Search Central: Help your readers find your site through preferred sources — <https://developers.google.com/search/docs/appearance/preferred-sources>
- Google: New ways to find your favorite sources and original content in AI Search (May 27, 2026) — <https://blog.google/products-and-platforms/products/search/original-high-quality-content-search/>
- Search Engine Journal: Google puts inline links higher in more AI search responses — <https://www.searchenginejournal.com/google-inline-links-higher-ai-search-responses/593089/>