Out of Stock Pages Checklist

Keep your free Google traffic alive. By Sultan Javed

Before you delete any sold out product page, run it through these 4 steps. Tick each box as you go.

0 First: does the page have traffic?

- [ ] Open Google Search Console, go to Performance, filter by page, and paste the product URL.
- [ ] If it gets clicks or impressions, do NOT delete it. Pick step 1 or step 2 below.
- [ ] Check if the page has backlinks or is linked from blogs, collections or menus.

1 Product is coming back: keep the page

- [ ] Keep the URL live. Do not unpublish it.
- [ ] Show a clear "Sold out" label on the page.
- [ ] Add a "Notify me when back in stock" button (a Shopify back in stock app or form).
- [ ] Add a line like "Expected back soon" only if it is true.
- [ ] Link to 3 similar in stock products so buyers have somewhere to go.

2 Gone for good: redirect to the closest match

- [ ] Pick the closest matching product. If none fits, pick the best matching collection.
- [ ] In Shopify admin, open Online Store, then Navigation, then View URL Redirects (menu names can change, so search "URL redirects" if you cannot find it).
- [ ] Redirect from: /products/old-product. Redirect to: /products/closest-match.
- [ ] Open the old URL in a private window and confirm it lands on the new page.

3 Never send everyone to your homepage

- [ ] Do not redirect every deleted page to the homepage. Google can treat it as a broken page (a soft 404), and buyers get confused.
- [ ] Redirect only to a page that truly matches what the buyer was looking for.
- [ ] If nothing relevant exists, a clean 404 page with search and top collections is better than a random redirect.
- [ ] Make your 404 page helpful: search bar, best sellers, link to collections.

4 Check Search Console for errors

- [ ] Open Search Console, then Indexing, then Pages.
- [ ] Look at the reasons for pages not indexed, such as "Not found (404)" and "Soft 404".
- [ ] Open each flagged URL. Decide: keep, redirect, or leave as 404.
- [ ] Fix it, then click Validate Fix in Search Console.
- [ ] Repeat this check once a month, and after every big catalog clean up.

Quick decision guide

Situation	What to do
Coming back soon	Keep the page, mark sold out, add notify me
Gone, similar product exists	Redirect to the closest product
Gone, whole range ended	Redirect to the best matching collection
Gone, nothing relevant	Leave a helpful 404 page
Everything deleted at once	Never redirect all to the homepage

Rule of thumb: every deleted page should have a clear plan. Keep it, redirect it, or let it 404 on purpose. Never delete by accident.

Need help fixing this on your store? Message me on LinkedIn: Sultan Javed.