

The Custom Ranking Recipe Sheet

One page. One goal. One honest answer: is this collection sorted for the click, or for the result you actually carry?

Native AI Collection Sort ranks your products by predicted conversion probability. That is a strong default, and for a lot of collections it is all you need. But conversion is not margin, sell-through, or inventory health, and a sort that only knows the click can quietly float your cheapest, lowest-margin products to the top.

This sheet maps each business goal you carry to the exact mechanic that serves it, and the check that proves it worked. Pick the goal you carry this quarter and build that one.

How to run it

1. Pick the business goal you carry this quarter. One row per goal.
 2. Build the objective first. If you are ranking on margin or sell-through, you create that as a metric before you can sort on it (margin comes in as an imported metric off your Shopify financials, where your cost data already lives).
 3. Apply the mechanic in the middle column to your collection.
 4. Run the verification check. Pull the top of the collection and confirm the sort moved the number you care about, not just conversion.
 5. Mark the row done. Then move to the next goal only when this one reads clean.
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The five recipes

- **Contribution margin.** Rank the profitable product up, not just the cheap one. Build margin as an imported metric, then blend it with conversion in a weighted group so the order serves both.
 - **Overstock sell-through.** Clear the units you are long on. Define a sell-through metric, then soft-boost the overstock so slow movers surface without a hard block that breaks relevance.
 - **New-arrival exposure.** Surface launches before they have any conversion history. Use the additive soft-boost mode, which lifts zero-history products into view instead of burying them.
 - **Inventory health.** Keep out-of-stock at the bottom and favor well-stocked. Use a hard priority rule to demote anything at zero inventory, then a weighted group to favor stock coverage.
 - **Full-price protection.** Stop markdowns from cannibalizing full-price demand. Blend margin into the sort and softly demote deep-discount tags so they stop dominating the first row.
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Your goal → mechanic → check grid

Swap the example goals for your own. Add rows as needed.

Business goal	Build the objective (metric)	Apply the mechanic	Verify the sort serves it	Done
Contribution margin	Margin as imported metric	Weighted group: 60% margin, 40% sales	Margin-weighted top 20 vs conversion top 20: blended margin up, conversion holds	☐
Overstock sell-through	Sell-through metric (sold vs on hand)	Soft boost, Lift mode, on overstock tag	Overstock SKUs moved up; units cleared week over week	☐
New-arrival exposure	Published date / freshness signal	Soft boost, Lift mode (additive)	New arrivals appear in the first rows at launch	☐
Inventory health	Inventory quantity + stock coverage	Priority rule: demote zero-inventory; weighted group favors stock	Out-of-stock at bottom; near-sold-out de-emphasized	☐
Full-price protection	Margin / full-price sell-through metric	Weighted group + soft demote discount tags	Full-price SKUs hold position; markdowns leave row one	☐
_____	_____	_____	_____	☐
_____	_____	_____	_____	☐

The goal I'm building this quarter: _____

How to read your check

- **Build the objective first.** Create the number before you rank on it. Margin, sell-through, and inventory-health scores are objectives you define or import as metrics, then rank on like any native signal. Margin comes in as an imported metric off your Shopify financials.
 - **Weighted group when you have two goals at once.** "60% margin, 40% sales" blends both into one normalized score, so you serve margin without ignoring what sells.
 - **Soft boost when you want a nudge, not a block.** It lifts a group of products up while keeping natural interleaving, so a strong non-boosted product can still out-rank a weak boosted one. Use the additive Lift mode for anything with no history yet, like new arrivals.
 - **Priority rule when it is non-negotiable.** A hard rule forces matching products to the top or bottom regardless of everything else. Use it for the absolutes, like demoting out-of-stock.
 - **Always verify against the goal, not the click.** The point of governed ranking is that every signal you sort on is a number you can query back. Pull the top of the collection, compare the metric you care about before and after, and confirm the trade you intended.
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How margin gets wired in

Margin becomes a sortable signal the moment you build it as a metric. The built-in metrics are behavioral and sales-side: sales, quantity, views, conversions, velocity, returns. Margin draws on cost data, and cost lives in your Shopify financials, so you wire margin in as an imported metric that refreshes on a schedule you set. It is a quick build step you set once, and from then on you sort, weight, and measure on it like any other signal. The cost data always comes straight from your Shopify financials, which is what keeps the margin number real.

Want us to run this live on your catalog?

We'll take one collection and one goal you carry, build the sort live, and show you the before-and-after read-back so you can see the margin or sell-through move, not just the conversion. 30 minutes, your collection, your numbers.

[Book a demo →](#)

Built by the Layers team. Enterprise search and merchandising for Shopify Plus. Last updated July 2026.