SHOPIFY RECOMMENDATIONS

The Recommendation Block Planner

Two parts. Part 1 estimates the weekly upkeep of each recommendation setup for your catalog. Part 2 plans each block's strategy, guardrails and fallback chain. Write your numbers next to our defaults, then run the four formulas.

1 The weekly upkeep model

INPUT	DEFAULT	YOUR STORE
Active products	2,000	
New products per week	20	
Sell-outs per week	30	
Recommendation slots per product page	4	
Minutes to build one list *	4	
Minutes to swap one product in a list *	1	
Existing lists each new product joins	3	
Seasonal resets per year	4	
Share of lists rebuilt at each reset	0.5	
Hero share you hand-pick (layered)	5%	

INPUT	DEFAULT	YOUR STORE
Rules in a rule-based setup	12	
Minutes to review one rule each week *	5	
Minutes to rewrite one rule at a reset *	15	
Minutes of tag cleanup per new product *	2	
Rule misfires fixed by hand per week	10	
Top product pages spot-checked per week	25	
Minutes per spot check *	1	
Minutes a week on exclusions *	15	
Guardrail rules (layered)	6	

* Our assumption, not a measurement. Time yourself.

SETUP	MINUTES PER WEEK (DIVIDE BY 60 FOR HOURS)	DEFAULT	YOURS
Hand-picked	new × build + new × lists joined × swap + sell-outs × slots × swap + products × rebuild share × resets ÷ 52 × build	9.5 h	
Rule-based	rules × review + new × tag cleanup + rules × rebuild share × resets ÷ 52 × rewrite + misfires × swap	1.9 h	
Algorithmic	spot checks × minutes per check + exclusions	0.7 h	
Layered	products × hero share × rebuild share × resets ÷ 52 × build + guardrail rules × review + spot checks × minutes per check + exclusions	1.4 h	

Slots that go dark each week (hand-picked): sell-outs × slots = 120 at our defaults. Yours: _____. This one needs no time assumption.

2 Plan each block

PLACEMENT	PRIMARY STRATEGY	MIN.	FALLBACK 1 (FILL OR REPLACE)	FALLBACK 2 (ALWAYS HAS PRODUCTS)	GUARDRAIL RULES	HOLDOUT PLAN
Product page (example)	Frequently Bought Together	4	Similar Products, fill	Manual collection: best sellers in season, replace	In stock; same season tag; no gift cards or samples	10 to 20% of sessions see a fixed best-seller list
Product page						
Cart						
Collection page						
Home page						
Search or 404 page						

What your result means

Hand-picked hours above what your team can spare: let an algorithm fill the long tail and keep hand-picks for heroes.

Rule-based close to hand-picked: your tags are doing the work of lists. Check tag hygiene first.

Many slots going dark: add a fallback chain before you add more lists.

Keep these hand-picked

☐ **Parts that must fit** the product on the page.

☐ **Looks your team styled,** kept in one reference metafield.

☐ **Launches** with no sales history yet.

Everything else can be filled by data, with rules as guardrails.

Plan a block in five steps

1. Pick a strategy per placement.
2. Set a minimum and two fallbacks.
3. Hand-pick only pairings that need judgment.
4. Add guardrails for stock, season and exclusions.
5. Run a holdout before you trust the block's report.

Want to see a layered block on your catalog?

We'll build one block with a fallback chain on your own products and show you what each step returns.

Book a demo