

Theme Change Regression Checklist

Sales dropped after a Shopify theme change? The 48-hour hunt, cheapest check first. By Kaspian Fuad.

0. Before you touch anything

Do NOT delete the old theme

It is your control group and your one-click rollback.

Change nothing until step 6 is done

Random fixes destroy the evidence.

1. Tracking or sales? (10 min)

Shopify orders, 7 days before vs after

Shopify's native count is the source of truth.

GA4 purchases, same two windows

Fell while Shopify held = a tag died with the old theme.

Ad platform conversions, same windows

Pasted-in pixels in theme.liquid do not migrate.

Fix: move tags to Pixels manager

Custom pixels run independently of the theme.

2. Funnel by step and device (20 min)

Sessions > product views > ATC > checkout > order

Before vs after, mobile and desktop separately.

Drop at add-to-cart

Product page, product form, or a missing app block.

Drop at reached checkout

Cart drawer, cart page, trust or shipping element.

Mobile-only drop

Layout shift, speed, sticky ATC, or a popup over the picker.

3. App blocks and app embeds

Theme editor > App embeds

Apps install per theme. Everything is OFF until re-activated.

Reviews, size chart, upsell, currency, back-in-stock

The usual missing widgets. Count them on a product page.

Sticky add-to-cart

If it was an app embed, it is gone on mobile until switched on.

4. Templates that fell back to default

List products on custom templates

*product.bundle, product.landing, collection.sale, page.**

Does the new theme have a template with that name?

If not, the resource renders on the default template.

Check bestsellers first

A bespoke bestseller page is the biggest single conversion loss.

5. Custom sections and metafields

sections/ and snippets/ in the old theme

Anything a developer built lives here. None of it migrated.

Metafield displays

Ingredient tables, fit guides, spec sheets, vehicle fitment.

Shipping estimators, bundle builders, size calculators

Each one was doing quiet selling work.

6. Side-by-side preview on a phone

Top 5 products, old theme vs new theme

Screenshot above the fold on both.

Present on the left, missing on the right = suspect

Price, variants, installments, reviews, sticky ATC, trust.

Select every variant, change qty, add, open cart, reach checkout

Do it on a real phone, not a resized browser.

7. Speed and layout shift (field data)

CLS above 0.10 on product or cart

New announcement bar, hero, drawer, or shipping bar without reserved height.

LCP above 2.5 s on mobile product pages

Hero images without srcset or lazy loading, heavy JS.

Compare 28 days before vs after publish

Shopify Web performance dashboard or CrUX per URL.

8. JavaScript errors in the product form

Open DevTools console on a product page

Select variants, change quantity, add to cart. Read the red lines.

Single-variant products showing Unavailable

A product form reading option data its own way.

Wrong variant added to cart

Test accessories and multi-option products specifically.

9. Decide: fix forward or roll back

Drop over 15% and no named cause at 48 h

Publish the old theme. One click. Lose nothing but time.

Named 2 to 3 regressions

Fix one at a time, a day apart, on a duplicate, then publish.

Daily cost of waiting

\$2M/yr store, 30% drop = about \$1,600 a day.

Republish only when the preview matches

Every top product, every variant, on a phone.

10. Hiring for the fix

Senior Shopify dev who also does CRO

Not a designer. Not a general CRO agency.

Ask: what changed between the two themes?

A redesign proposal is the wrong answer.

Regression audit \$500 to \$2,500, 2 to 3 days

Fixes: a few hours of senior time at \$50 to \$75 an hour.

Demand the funnel before-and-after

Not a slide deck. Numbers per step, per device.