

Checking 301 Redirect Indexing for Bulk Purchased Links

You just dropped a few hundred dollars on a bulk link package. The seller delivered a spreadsheet of URLs, all set up with 301 redirects pointing to your money pages. Nobody warns you that a redirect existing on the web and **Google actually counting it** are two utterly different beasts. Checking 301 Redirect Indexing for Bulk Purchased Links is the one verification step that separates wasted budget from genuine ranking movement.

Most practitioners stop at a curl -L and see a 200 OK at the destination. That's laughably incomplete. A functioning HTTP redirect doesn't guarantee Google has crawled, processed, and *indexed* the intermediate hop or the final target as intended. Without proper validation, you're flying blind.

Google's own documentation on [301 redirects](#) hints at signal consolidation but stays quiet on timing and partial failures. In practice, a redirect chain from a low-quality purchased domain often gets crawled once and then ignored, especially if the intermediate URL never appears in any sitemap or discoverable path.

Here, we'll cut through the noise. You'll get concrete, runnable checks — manual, semi-automated, and scripted — that tell you whether those bulk 301s have actually landed in Google's index, not just in your server logs.

What “Indexing a 301 Redirect” Actually Means for Google

There's a persistent myth that a 301 redirect transfers index status instantly. Wrong. The redirecting URL (purchased-link-domain.com/page) might get crawled, but Google's index entry is ultimately tied to the final canonical destination. If the final page is already indexed, the 301 isn't a new entry — it's a consolidation signal. If the final page isn't indexed, the redirect alone won't force it in. And if the intermediate hop is a chain of multiple 301s, you've introduced dampening and potential crawl budget waste.

Industry tests, including analyses by Backlinko and earlier PageRank patent discussions, suggest a single 301 can pass roughly 90-95% of link equity under ideal conditions. A double-hop (A→B→C) can lose another 5-10%, plus increase the chance that Googlebot stops chasing. When you bulk-buy links, those original redirecting domains are often fresh, with zero authority, no crawl history, and sometimes even tagged as spam. Google might not bother recrawling them for months, if ever.

Think of a 301 like a postal forwarding address. If the new address is unoccupied or the mailman doesn't trust the forwarding note, the mail just doesn't arrive. You need to verify that the “mail” (link equity)

reached the destination and that the destination itself is listed in the postal directory (Google's index).

A common situation we see: an agency acquires 500 "high DA" links from a provider, all redirecting via 301. They check the redirect chain with a browser extension and see 200 OK. But six weeks later, zero ranking improvement. When we run the real batch checks, only 30% of the target URLs are actually indexed by Google. The 301s were never processed as signals — they were just HTTP codes in the void.

Manual Methods: search Operators, Cache, and Google Search Console

Before you fire up any script, ground yourself with manual spot-checks. They expose gaps that tools sometimes smooth over.

:::info Manual verification is best for auditing a sample of 10-20 links before committing to a full batch scan. It's useless for hundreds of URLs at once, but highly educational. :::

- `site:final-destination-url.com` — run this in Google. If the destination URL doesn't appear, no amount of 301 magic will index it. This is the brutal baseline.
- `cache:final-destination-url.com` — if a cached version exists with a recent date, Googlebot has visited recently, which is a decent proxy for active indexing.
- **URL Inspection tool** inside [Google Search Console](#) — enter the destination URL and check "Page indexing" status. It tells you if the URL is indexed, and if it was submitted via sitemap or discovered via a redirect. That discovery path clue is gold.
- `info:redirecting-domain.com/page` (rarely stable, but occasionally returns the canonical version) — not reliable, but worth a quick try.

One practitioner trick: use a `site:` search for the original redirecting domain with an exact path match. If Google has indexed that exact redirecting URL with a snippet that mentions "Moved Permanently" or shows the destination, you know the redirect was at least partially processed. That's uncommon with bulk purchased links because the domains themselves are often not indexed.

Rule of thumb: If the redirect target URL isn't in the index, the 301 itself counts for nothing. No amount of redirect hops will create an index entry for a URL Googlebot can't crawl successfully or chooses to deindex.

Automated Batch Verification with curl, Python, and the URL Inspection API

For bulk purchased links, you need a script that can consume a CSV of original redirect URLs and return clear index status signals per destination. Here's a minimal working approach using curl to extract the

final destination, then batch-checking that against the Google Search Console Inspection API.

First, a fast one-liner to get the final redirected-to URL and HTTP code. It follows up to 10 hops and prints the last URL and final status code:

```
```bash curl -o /dev/null -s -w "%{url_effective}\n%{http_code}\n" -L --max-redirs 10 "http://purchased-link-example.com/path" ```
```

Run it in a loop over a urls.txt file, and store results. But the real gold is checking index status of each destination URL via the [Google Indexing API](#) (originally for job postings, but usable with URL Inspection API integrations). A practical Python snippet that batches calls, respecting quota, looks like this:

```
```python import requests import json import time # Assume 'destinations.csv' has one URL per line with open('destinations.csv') as f: urls = [line.strip() for line in f if line.strip()] API_KEY = 'YOUR_SEARCH_CONSOLE_API_KEY' endpoint = 'https://searchconsole.googleapis.com/v1/urlInspection/index:inspect' results = [] for url in urls[:200]: # daily quota ~2000 requests for most setups payload = {"inspectionUrl": url, "siteUrl": "sc-domain:" + extract_domain(url)} resp = requests.post(endpoint, params={'key': API_KEY}, json=payload) data = resp.json() # Extract indexingState: 'INDEXED', 'NOT_INDEXED', etc. state = data.get('inspectionResult', {}).get('indexStatusResult', {}).get('indexingState', 'UNKNOWN') results.append((url, state)) time.sleep(0.5) # avoid rate limits ... ```
```

This gives you precise indexed/not-indexed data. The catch: the API requires you to own the property in Search Console. For purchased links, you often don't own the redirecting domain, so you can only inspect the destination URLs you control. That's usually enough. If the destination doesn't appear indexed, the 301 failed in its signalling task.

:::warning The URL Inspection API is limited to ~2000 requests per day per project. If you're checking tens of thousands of purchased links, you'll need to sample smartly or use a paid third-party bulk index checker that bypasses GSC ownership restrictions. :::

When Good-Looking Redirects Still Fail: Edge Cases and Gotchas

A redirect that works perfectly in a browser can fail the indexing test for reasons that aren't obvious until you dig. The most common villains: robots.txt blocking on the source domain, noindex in the HTTP response of the destination, slow server responses triggering a crawl abort, and soft 404s where the final page returns 200 but Google treats it as worthless.

I've seen a batch of 1,500 purchased links where 400 of them went to a destination page that had an X-Robots-Tag: noindex header left over from a staging environment. The 301s were flawless, but Google obeyed the noindex and refused to consolidate signals. That error cost the client months of lost opportunity. You fix it by running a curl -I -L on each destination and grepping for X-Robots-Tag.

Another subtle killer: canonicalization conflicts. If the destination page has a `<link rel="canonical">` pointing to a different URL, Google may choose that canonical over the one you're trying to strengthen via 301. The redirect still resolves, but the equity consolidates elsewhere — maybe to a page you didn't intend. Always cross-check the destination's canonical tag before celebrating.

A quick decision flow for diagnosing a failing 301 batch:

```
```mermaid
graph LR
 A[Get list of redirect source URLs] --> B[curl -L to find final destination & status]
 B --> C{HTTP 200 on destination?}
 C -- No --> D[Fix destination: 404/500/chain loop]
 C -- Yes --> E{Check robots.txt & noindex on destination}
 E -- Blocked --> F[Remove block]
 E -- Allowed --> G{site:dest URL returns result?}
 G -- No --> H[Consider internal linking & sitemap submission]
 G -- Yes --> I[301 likely indexed; move to Spot-check via GSC API]
```
```

Real-World Walkthrough: 200 Purchased Links, a Script, and a Hard Truth

A few months back, an e-commerce site acquired 200 “niche edits” from a broker. All links were supposedly permanent, static, 301-redirecting to category pages. The provider promised “manual outreach, quality domains.” After two months with no movement, we ran the numbers.

We pulled the redirect source list, used the curl loop described earlier to extract final destinations, then fired up a [bulk Google index checker](#) that could verify index status without GSC ownership. The result: out of 200 destination URLs, 64 were indexed, 89 were not indexed (crawled but not selected), and the remaining 47 were completely undiscovered. The 301s weren't broken — they were just ignored. The domains hosting the redirects had no organic traffic history and zero backlinks themselves. Google saw them as likely spam vehicles and didn't assign any crawl budget to their outlinks.

We salvaged the campaign by submitting the destination URLs through IndexNow and a fresh sitemap, then building a few internal links to each category page from already-indexed blog posts. Three weeks later, indexed count rose to 172. The 301s could finally do their job because the targets themselves were crawling-worthy. No amount of external redirects could substitute for crawl demand.

Five-Point Checklist Before You Declare Victory on a Link Buy

- **1. Sample manual check:** Pick 20 random redirect sources; verify via site: that destinations are indexed. If fewer than 80% show up, the purchase is not yet working.
- **2. Validate final HTTP chain:** Run a batch curl on all redirect links; confirm final status is 200, no infinite loops, no soft 404 content.
- **3. Audit destination headers:** Scan for X-Robots-Tag: noindex, meta robots noindex, and conflicting canonical tags. A single noindex poisons the whole deal.

- **4. Check crawl demand:** If the redirect source domains have zero organic keywords and no indexed pages, Google likely won't crawl them often enough to follow the 301. Consider linking to the redirect sources from a high-traffic page to force discovery.
- **5. Use an index API or bulk checker:** Batch-verify destination index status. A number below 60% after 30 days is a red flag — either the links are worthless or your technical setup is broken.

FAQ: Stubborn Questions About 301 Indexing and Bulk Links

Does Google index the redirect itself or only the destination?

Google may store the redirect instruction temporarily, but search results show the final destination. Index status refers to the canonical URL being present in the index. If the destination is indexed, the redirect has been processed; if not, it hasn't.

Can I check indexing without owning the redirecting domain?

Yes. You only need to verify the final destination URL. Tools like the URL Inspection API or third-party services that query Google's index directly (e.g., SpeedyIndex) let you check any URL you control, often without needing Search Console property ownership for batch checks.

How long should I wait before checking after purchasing links?

Allow at least two weeks, but realistically 4–6 weeks for low-authority domains to be crawled and for signals to consolidate. Check early to catch technical failures, but don't expect full indexing immediately.

What if the destination is indexed but rankings don't improve?

Then the problem is link quality, relevance, or overall site competitiveness, not indexing. A 301 that passes no meaningful authority because the source is spam exists only on paper.

Stop Hoping, Start Validating

Checking 301 redirect indexing for bulk purchased links isn't an optional nice-to-have. It's the difference between paying for a link inventory that actually contributes to your domain's authority graph and paying for a spreadsheet of HTTP codes nobody cares about. Run the manual site: checks this week. Build a five-line curl loop. Run a batch index inspection. When the numbers come back, you'll know whether you bought equity or just air.

Sources & References

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