ToolGPA

NOVEMBER 2026

Awesome

The Insider’s Guide

Lua-configurable framework window manager for X

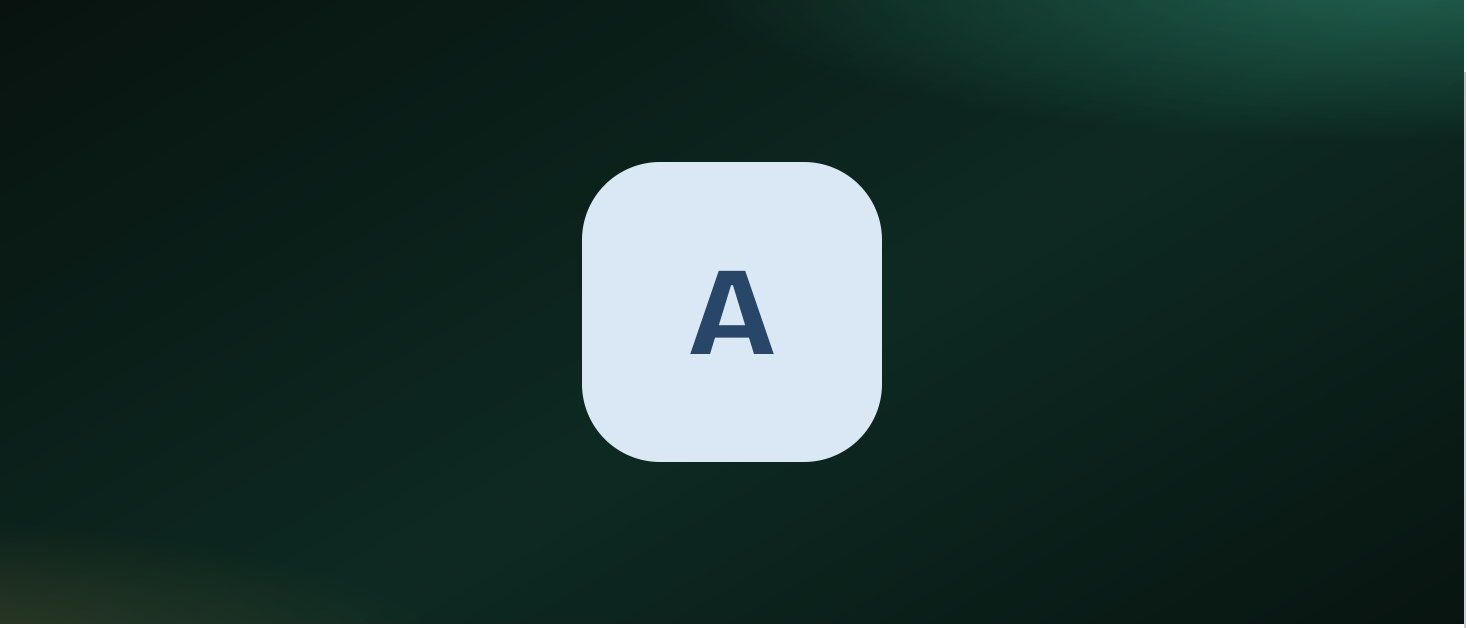


Every plan, grade, refund rule and rival among window managers and launchers, read from Awesome’s own pages.

Made by AwesomeWM project · checked Nov 13, 2026 · toolgpa.com

2.4

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Who made this guide, what else is on the site, and how to cite it

ToolGPA put this guide together from Awesome's own pages, its app-store listings and our grades. Every fact in it is on Awesome's page too, where it is kept up to date. Checked Nov 13, 2026.

Welcome

What it is, who it suits, its grades and the ten things to know first

2.4

GPA, above 11 of the 48 other window managers and launchers we grade

Awesome is a window manager for X that is configured and extended in Lua. It uses tags instead of workspaces, supports multiple monitors through XRandR, and can be driven entirely from the keyboard. It is licensed under GPLv2.

To get you started, here are **8 things to know about Awesome**, taken from its own pages and our grades.

> **No rating on record, and it is configured by writing Lua.**
>
> From our grade for ease of use

1 **Best for scripting an X11 window manager in Lua**

Awesome is a free window manager for X that you configure and extend in Lua.

2 **It is free**

Awesome has no paid plan at all.

3 **It runs on Linux**

Linux.

4 **Lua configuration**

A documented API lets you define the window manager's behavior in Lua.

5 **Tags**

Uses tags rather than workspaces, so a window can sit on several tags at once.

6 **Multi-monitor**

Supports multiple screens through XRandR, with per-screen tags.

7 **A 2.4 GPA, above 11 of 48**

That is against the other window managers and launchers we grade, on value, the free plan, features, ease of use and platforms.

8 **Keep it**

Awesome is free, so making your own would save you nothing.

Awesome at a glance

PRICING Free	FREE PLAN It is free
FREE TRIAL None stated	RUNS ON Linux
MADE BY AwesomeWM project	CATEGORY Window Managers & Launchers
OUR GRADE 2.4 GPA, fair	

The report card

Best for scripting an X11 window manager in Lua

Awesome is a free window manager for X that you configure and extend in Lua. It needs Lua work to get far beyond the defaults, runs on X11 only, and its site still shows 4.3 as the stable docs version.

TOOLGPA REPORT CARD	Awesome	Graded Nov 13, 2026

SUBJECT	GRADE	COMMENT
Value for money	A	Free to download under GPLv2 with no paid edition.
Free plan and trial	A	The whole program is free to download and run, with no cap and no paid edition.
Features	C	Tags, multi-monitor and EWMH support, but the listing says you need Lua configuration to get much beyond the defaults.
Ease of use	D	No rating on record, and it is configured by writing Lua.
Platforms and integrations	D	Linux on X11 only, with no other operating system and no integrations listed.
Grade point average		Fair, out of 4.0 **2.4**

An A is worth 4 points, a B 3, a C 2, a D 1 and an F nothing. The GPA is the average of the five.

Who Awesome is for

- ✓ Fits if you run X11 and are happy to write Lua
- ✓ Works for power users who want fine-grained control of their desktop

Who it is not for

- ✗ Skip it if you use Windows or macOS, as it does not run there
- ✗ Not for you if you are on Wayland, because it is X11 only
- ✗ Too light on defaults for anyone who will not write Lua
- ✗ Watch out: the site shows 4.3 as the stable docs and its page was last edited in 2022

Good to know

Good for

- ✓ Linux users who want to script their window manager in Lua
- ✓ Power users who prefer X11 with fine-grained control

Worth knowing

- ⓘ X11 only; the project site shows 4.3 as the stable docs version and its page was last edited in 2022.
- ⓘ Needs configuration in Lua to get much beyond the defaults.

What it costs

Every plan, the free plan, ways to pay less and how prices have moved

Free

No paid plan at all

Awesome is free to use.

> **The whole program is free to download and run, with no cap and no paid edition.**
>
> From our grade for free plan and trial

FREE

$0

Free software; the project publishes its source and lists no paid edition.

Read from awesomewm.org on Nov 13, 2026.

What it does

Its main features, where it runs, what it works with and who makes it

1

Place it runs: Linux

Lua-configurable framework window manager for X. Here is what it does, as its own site describes it, and what it covers: open source, public API, keyboard-first, window management.

> **Tags, multi-monitor and EWMH support, but the listing says you need Lua configuration to get much beyond the defaults.**
>
> From our grade for features

Lua configuration

A documented API lets you define the window manager's behavior in Lua.

Tags

Uses tags rather than workspaces, so a window can sit on several tags at once.

Multi-monitor

Supports multiple screens through XRandR, with per-screen tags.

Keyboard operation

Everything can be done from the keyboard.

Freedesktop standards

Implements EWMH, XDG Base Directory, XEmbed, notifications and system tray.

Where it runs

Linux

What it works with

Its own pages name no integrations.

Awesome is made by AwesomeWM project.

PART 04 · STANDING

Where it stands

Its grades against its category, and whether to keep it or make your own

11/48

Other window managers and launchers it is graded above

Awesome's GPA of 2.4 is higher than 11 of the 48 other window managers and launchers we grade, and level with 11.

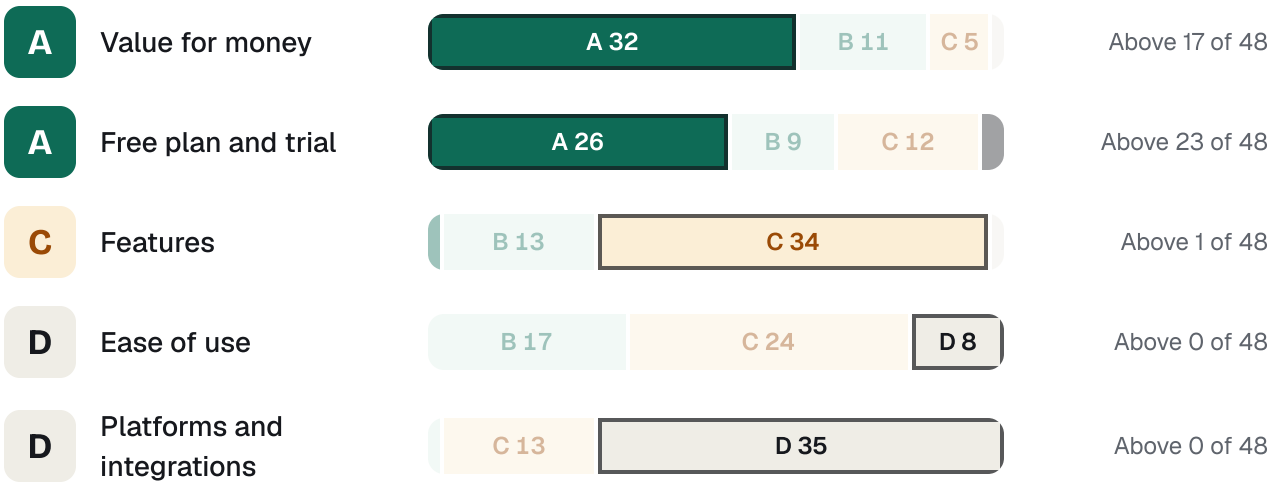
It stands best on free plan and trial (A, above 23 of 48) and worst on ease of use (D, above 0).

Awesome has no paid plan.

On features, ease of use and platforms it scores 1.3 out of 4. Nothing scores higher for less, though at least one tool matches that score at a lower price.

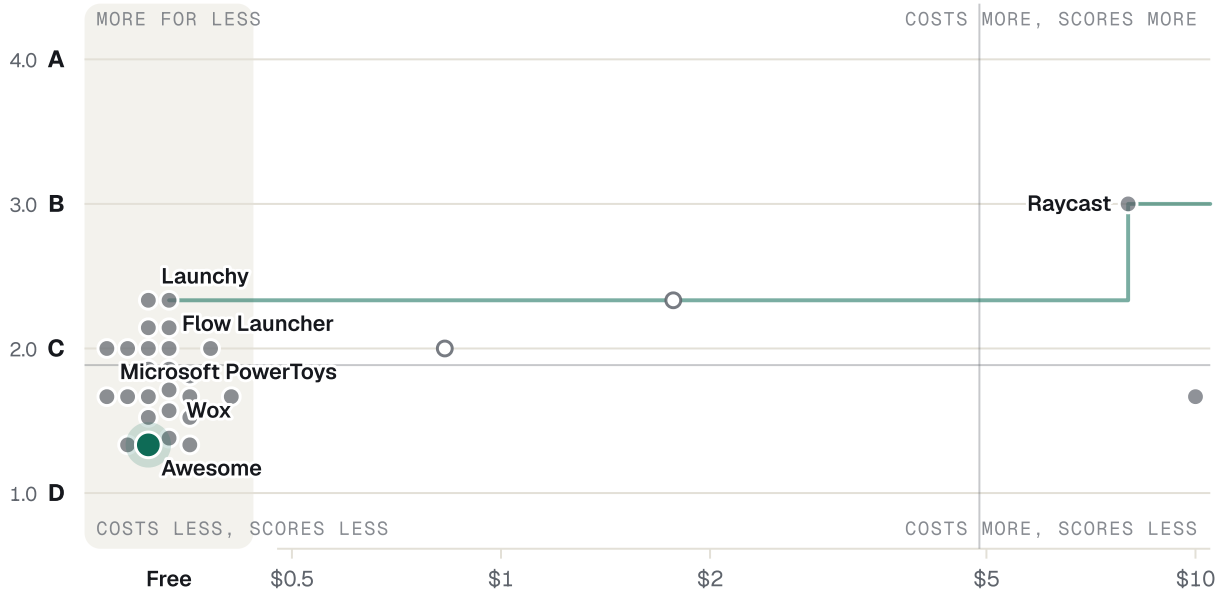
Each grade against the category

Every bar is all 49 window managers and launchers we grade, cut by the letter each got. Awesome's own letter is outlined.



Price against what you get

Each dot is one of 29 window managers and launchers. Further left costs less; higher up scores better on features, ease of use and platforms. Awesome is the marked dot.



What paid plans start at, a month (each step along is roughly double) ⍰

Keep it, or make your own?

Whether this is something you could build for yourself with an AI app builder, and what you would give up.

Keep it

Awesome is free, so making your own would save you nothing.

And it is not the kind of software a weekend replaces. That makes this kind of software worth paying for, not this one in particular: 26 of the 48 other window managers and launchers grade higher.

What you could not

- ✕ Control over other apps' windows.
- ✕ A real app for Linux. Something home-made would be a web page.
- ✕ An API that other software can build on.

What this rests on. Awesome's listing: what it does, where it runs, what it plugs into and what it costs. It is a judgement about the kind of software this is. We have not built a replacement for it, and making your own means looking after it too. How we decide, and every tool's verdict.

The alternatives

The tools it is most often weighed against, side by side



i3, Sway, Hyprland, Vicinae and Ulauncher

The 5 tools Awesome is most often weighed against, with where each one differs from it.



2.6 GPA

i3

Free

Tiling window manager for X11 on Linux and BSD.

Awesome and i3 compared in full



2.6 GPA

Sway

Free

i3-compatible tiling Wayland compositor.

Awesome and Sway compared in full



2.6 GPA

Hyprland

Free

Dynamic tiling Wayland compositor with animations.

Awesome and Hyprland compared in full



2.8
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Vicinae

Free

Keyboard-driven launcher for Linux, macOS and Windows.

- Only Vicinae lists macOS and Windows apps.
- Vicinae also covers launcher, clipboard manager and calculator.

Awesome and Vicinae compared in full



2.6
GPA

Ulauncher

Free

Open-source application launcher for Linux with extensions.

- Awesome also covers window management.
- Ulauncher also covers launcher.

Awesome and Ulauncher compared in full

PART 06 · QUESTIONS

Quick answers

The questions people ask about it, each answered in a line or two

12

Questions, each answered in a line or two

The short version of everything above, for when you only need the answer. Each one is told in full in its part of the guide.

Is Awesome free?

Yes. Awesome is free to use.

How much does Awesome cost?

Awesome lists one plan. Free: $0.

What platforms does Awesome work on?

Awesome is available on Linux.

Does Awesome have an Android app?

No Android app was listed when its pages were read on Nov 13, 2026. Awesome is listed for Linux.

Does Awesome have an iPhone app?

No iPhone app was listed when its pages were read on Nov 13, 2026. Awesome is listed for Linux.

Is Awesome open source?

Yes. Awesome is open source, according to its own site.

Does Awesome have an API?

Yes. Awesome offers a public API, according to its own site.

Who makes Awesome?

Awesome is made by AwesomeWM project.

What are the alternatives to Awesome?

The closest alternatives to Awesome in our directory are i3, Sway, Hyprland, Vicinae and Ulauncher.

How does Awesome compare with other window managers and launchers?

Awesome's GPA of 2.4 is higher than 11 of the 48 other window managers and launchers we grade, and level with 11.

Is Awesome good value for money?

ToolGPA grades Awesome A for value for money. Awesome has no paid plan.

Could I make my own version of Awesome?

Awesome is free, so making your own would save you nothing. And it is not the kind of software a weekend replaces.

Where this guide comes from

The prices, plans, platforms and features were read from Awesome's own pages on Nov 13, 2026, and the grades were given on Nov 13, 2026. Graded from this listing, whose facts were read from the Awesome project's own pages on 13 November 2026. Not based on using the product, and shorter than our full reviews.

Every tool we list gets five grades, A to F, each with its reason, and a GPA that averages them. How each is decided is at toolgpa.com/grades. This guide is ToolGPA's own work; it is not made, paid for or approved by AwesomeWM project. Prices change, so check awesomewm.org before you buy.

awesomewm.org/

github.com/awesomeWM/awesome

About ToolGPA

Who made this guide, what else is on the site, and how to cite it

7,721

Tools graded, in 95 categories

ToolGPA grades software the way a school report grades a pupil: five subjects, a letter for each with the reason written beside it, and a GPA that averages them. Prices, plans and platforms are read from each maker's own pages and dated, so you always know how fresh a figure is.

Every grade, review and ranking on ToolGPA is our own judgement. No company can pay for a grade or change one. Every tool on the site has a guide like this one, free to download and pass on. It all lives at toolgpa.com.

7,721	95	739	579
tools graded	categories	price changes on record	apps priced in 12 countries

What else is on toolgpa.com

Awesome, kept up to date

Everything in this guide, with prices and grades as they are today

toolgpa.com/tools/awesome

How grades are given

The rules behind every letter and every GPA

toolgpa.com/grades

Value charts

What each tool costs against what it scores, for every category

toolgpa.com/charts

Compare

Any two tools side by side, plan by plan

toolgpa.com/compare

Price changes

Every price rise and cut on record, each with its source

toolgpa.com/price-changes

Prices by country

What apps cost on the App Store in 12 countries

toolgpa.com/prices-by-country

Pay less

Every public discount: yearly billing, students, nonprofits

toolgpa.com/save

Keep or make

Which tools are worth paying for, and which you could build yourself

toolgpa.com/keep-or-make

Scan for the live page

Prices and grades as they are today

Quoting this guide?

Please name ToolGPA and link to the live page, so readers can check the figures for themselves:

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ToolGPA, "Awesome: The Insider's Guide",
checked Nov 13, 2026.
https://toolgpa.com/tools/awesome
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Know someone choosing between window managers and launchers?

Send them this guide:
toolgpa.com/tools/awesome/guide

ToolGPA elsewhere: youtube.com/@toolgpa

See our other guides

The best-graded window managers and launchers after Awesome, each with an Insider's Guide of its own.

Window Managers & Launchers Insider's Guide

Every one of the 49 window managers and launchers we grade, compared

Flow Launcher Insider's Guide

Free, open-source app launcher and file search for Windows

3.0 GPA

Launchy Insider's Guide

Open-source keystroke launcher with plugins and skins

3.0 GPA

Cerebro Insider's Guide

Free open-source Electron launcher for Windows, Mac and Linux

2.8 GPA

ToolGPA

Choosing software? Every tool graded, every price dated.

Compare tools at toolgpa.com ›

Everything in this guide is ToolGPA's own summary of what Awesome's pages, its app-store listings and public reviews said on the dates shown. Grades are our judgement under the rules at toolgpa.com/grades. Every grade, review and ranking on ToolGPA is our own judgement. No company can pay for a grade or change one. Awesome is a trademark of its owner, and this guide is not made, paid for or approved by AwesomeWM project. Prices and plans change: check awesomewm.org before you buy.