ToolGPA

NOVEMBER 2026

Brave Search

The Insider’s Guide

Private web search engine with its own index and AI answers



Every plan, grade, refund rule and rival among AI research tools, read from Brave Search’s own pages.

Made by Brave Software · checked Nov 13, 2026 · toolgpa.com

3.2
GPA



Contents

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

02 What it costs
Every plan, the free plan, ways to pay less and how prices have moved

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

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

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

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

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

ToolGPA put this guide together from Brave Search's own pages, its app-store listings and our grades. Every fact in it is on Brave Search'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

3.2

GPA, above 65 of the 69 other AI research tools we grade

Brave Search is a web search engine that runs on Brave's own index instead of Google's or Bing's. It adds an AI answer feature called Ask Brave and says it does not profile users. Results show ads unless you pay for the Search premium subscription.

To get you started, here are **9 things to know about Brave Search**, taken from its own pages and our grades.

> **It searches the open web, not scholarly databases, so it will not filter to peer-reviewed work or manage citations.**
>
> From our report card of Brave Search

1 **Best for private web search with AI answers**

Brave Search is a web search engine with its own index and Ask Brave AI answers, free and supported by ads.

2 **Paid plans start at $2.50 a month when paid by the year**

As its pricing page puts it: $3 per month, or $29.99 per year.

3 There is a free plan

Search and Ask Brave are free to use and supported by ads; no account is needed.

4 It runs on Web

Web.

5 Independent index

Results come from an index Brave built itself, not from a pass-through to Google or Bing, according to the vendor.

6 Ask Brave

Combines an AI chat answer with a results page, so you get a summary plus sources and can ask follow-up questions.

7 No profiling

The vendor says it does not collect personal data to profile searchers, and its search ads are anonymous and marked.

8 A 3.2 GPA, above 65 of 69

That is against the other AI research tools we grade, on value, the free plan, features, ease of use and platforms.

9 Keep it

To replace Brave Search you would be making a search engine with an AI model behind it. That is not a weekend's work, with an AI app builder or without one.

Brave Search at a glance

PRICING
Free plan, from $3 per month, or $29.99 per year

FREE PLAN
Yes

FREE TRIAL
None stated

RUNS ON
Web

MADE BY
Brave Software

CATEGORY
AI Research Tools

OUR GRADE
3.2 GPA, very good

The report card

Best for private web search with AI answers

Brave Search is a web search engine with its own index and Ask Brave AI answers, free and supported by ads. It searches the open web, not scholarly databases, so it will not filter to peer-reviewed work or manage citations. Removing the ads costs $3 a month.

TOOLGPA REPORT CARD — **Brave Search** — Graded Nov 13, 2026

SUBJECT	GRADE	COMMENT
Value for money	A	Free with ads and no account, and the ad-free Search premium is $3 a month or $29.99 a year, under the category's $4.75 mark.
Free plan and trial	A	The whole search is free with no account needed.
Features	C	Own index, Ask Brave answers, Goggles and a Search API. For research it is a web search: no scholarly filter and no citation tools.
Ease of use	B	No store rating on record. Type a query and read the results, nothing to set up.
Platforms and integrations	B	Web search that works with the Brave browser and has a Search API. No standalone app is listed.
Grade point average		Very good, out of 4.0 **3.2**

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 Brave Search is for

- ✓ Fits if you want web search that does not profile you
- ✓ Works for developers who want a search API with their own web index

Who it is not for

- ✗ Skip it if you need peer-reviewed papers, because it searches the open web
- ✗ Not for you if you hate ads, as free results carry them and removal costs $3 a month
- ✗ Watch out: the Search API is separate, at $5 per 1,000 requests, and asks for a credit card even for the free credits
- ✗ Too light for managing sources or citations, since it has neither

Good to know

Good for

- ✓ Anyone wanting a general search engine that does not profile them
- ✓ Quick web lookups with a cited AI summary
- ✓ Developers who need a search API for AI agents

Worth knowing

- ⓘ It searches the open web, not scholarly databases, so it does not filter to peer-reviewed papers or manage citations.
- ⓘ Free results include ads; removing them needs Search premium at $3 a month or $29.99 a year.
- ⓘ The Search API is a separate product: $5 per 1,000 requests, or $4 per 1,000 plus $5 per million tokens for Answers, with up to $20 of free credits monthly.
- ⓘ The API requires a credit card even for the free credits, which the vendor says is an anti-fraud check.

What it costs

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

$2.50

A month to start, paid by the year.
There is a free plan too

Brave Search has a free plan. Paid plans start at $3 per month, or $29.99 per year.

> **The whole search is free with no account needed.**
>
> From our grade for free plan and trial

FREE

$0

Web search with Ask Brave AI answers, with ads in the results.

SEARCH PREMIUM

$3

per month, billed monthly ($29.99 per year)

Removes ads from search results pages; the vendor lists no other differences.

The free plan

Search and Ask Brave are free to use and supported by ads; no account is needed.

Read from brave.com on Nov 13, 2026.

Ways to pay less

ANNUAL DISCOUNT

Search premium costs $29.99 a year

Brave's premium page lists Search premium at $3 per month or $29.99 per year, which is below twelve monthly payments.

Stated on brave.com

What it does

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

1

Place it runs: Web

Private web search engine with its own index and AI answers. Here is what it does, as its own site describes it, and what it covers: public API, AI features, AI search, web browser.

> **Own index, Ask Brave answers, Goggles and a Search API.**

From our grade for features

Independent index

Results come from an index Brave built itself, not from a pass-through to Google or Bing, according to the vendor.

Ask Brave

Combines an AI chat answer with a results page, so you get a summary plus sources and can ask follow-up questions.

No profiling

The vendor says it does not collect personal data to profile searchers, and its search ads are anonymous and marked.

Ad-free option

A paid Search premium subscription removes ads from the results pages.

Goggles

Custom re-ranking rules let you boost or drop domains in results; the API page lists Goggles as an option.

Search API

A separate developer API returns web, news, image and video results and LLM-ready page context, billed from prepaid credits.

Where it runs

Web

What it works with

Brave Browser

Brave Search is made by Brave Software.

PART 04 · STANDING

Where it stands

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

65/69

Other AI research tools it is graded above

Brave Search's GPA of 3.2 is higher than 65 of the 69 other AI research tools we grade, and level with 4.

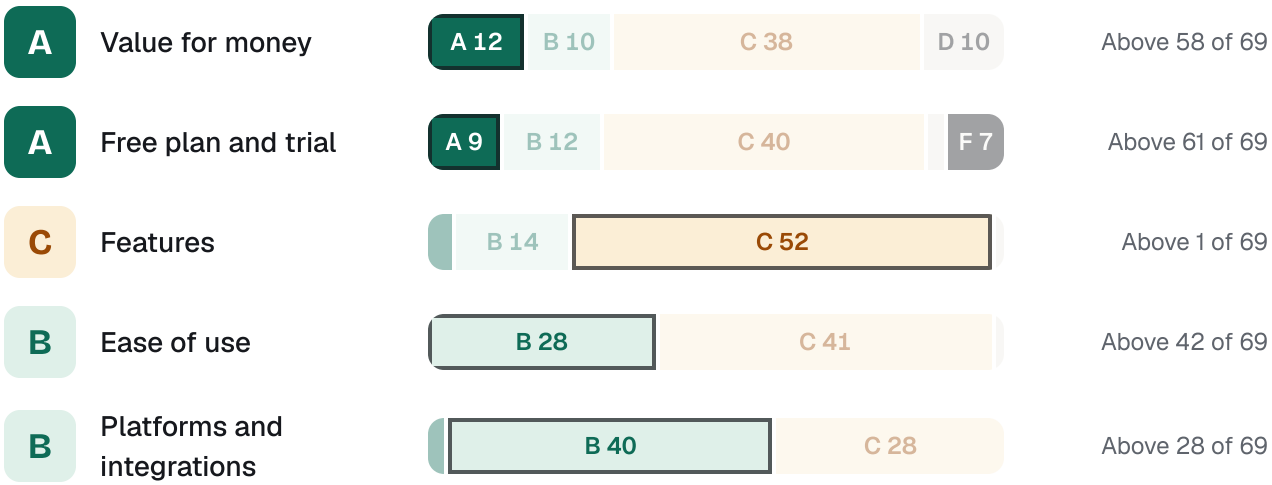
It stands best on free plan and trial (A, above 61 of 69) and worst on features (C, above 1).

Its paid plans start at $2.50 a month when paid by the year, against a middle price of $10 for the category: 1 of the 48 others that charge start lower.

On features, ease of use and platforms it scores 2.7 out of 4. Nothing scores higher for less, though at least one tool matches that score at a lower price.

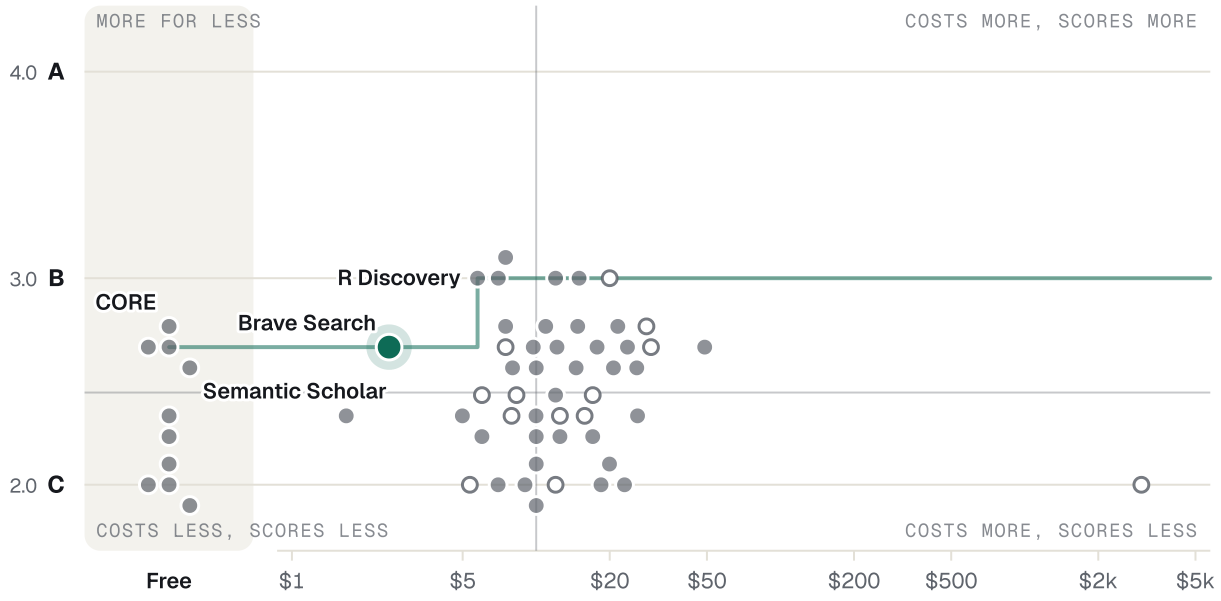
Each grade against the category

Every bar is all 70 AI research tools we grade, cut by the letter each got. Brave Search's own letter is outlined.



Price against what you get

Each dot is one of 59 AI research tools. Further left costs less; higher up scores better on features, ease of use and platforms. Brave Search 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

To replace Brave Search you would be making a search engine with an AI model behind it. That is not a weekend's work, with an AI app builder or without one.

It is one of the better ones too: its GPA of 3.2 is higher than 65 of the 69 other AI research tools we grade. It costs $29.99 a year.

What you could not

- ✕ A search engine with an AI model behind it.
- ✕ A web browser.

- ✕ It plugs into other products, Brave Browser among them, and has an API.

What this rests on. Brave Search'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



Exa, Liner, Google Scholar, Consensus and Undermind

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

Exa

2.2 GPA

Free plan

Web search API built for AI agents and applications.

- Brave Search also covers web browser.
- Exa also covers AI agents and research.

Brave Search and Exa compared in full

Liner

2.6 GPA

Free plan · from $14.99/mo

AI search with cited answers, research agents and a writer.

- Only Liner lists macOS, Windows, iOS and Android apps.
- Only Liner lists a browser extension.
- Brave Search also covers web browser.

Brave Search and Liner compared in full



3.0
GPA

Google Scholar

Free

Free search engine for scholarly articles, books and theses.

- Brave Search also covers AI search and web browser.
- Google Scholar also covers research, citations and bookmarks.

Brave Search and Google Scholar compared in full



2.6
GPA

Consensus

Free plan

AI search engine that answers questions from peer-reviewed papers.

- Only Consensus lists an Android app.
- Brave Search also covers web browser.
- Consensus also covers AI agents, research and citations.

Brave Search and Consensus compared in full



2.2
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Undermind

Free plan · from $16/mo

AI literature search agent that reads hundreds of papers.

- Brave Search also covers web browser.
- Undermind also covers chat assistant, AI agents, research and citations.

Brave Search and Undermind compared in full

PART 06 · QUESTIONS

Quick answers

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

14

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 Brave Search free?

Brave Search has a free plan. Search and Ask Brave are free to use and supported by ads; no account is needed.

How much does Brave Search cost?

Brave Search lists 2 plans. Free: $0.

What platforms does Brave Search work on?

Brave Search is available on Web.

Does Brave Search offer any discounts?

Brave Search publicly lists the following: Search premium costs $29.99 a year.

Does Brave Search have an Android app?

No Android app was listed when its pages were read on Nov 13, 2026. Brave Search is listed for Web.

Does Brave Search have an iPhone app?

No iPhone app was listed when its pages were read on Nov 13, 2026. Brave Search is listed for Web.

Is Brave Search open source?

Brave Search is not described as open source on its own site, as read on Nov 13, 2026.

Does Brave Search have an API?

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

What does Brave Search integrate with?

Brave Search's listing names Brave Browser. A listing names up to eight integrations, so it may connect to more.

Who makes Brave Search?

Brave Search is made by Brave Software.

What are the alternatives to Brave Search?

The closest alternatives to Brave Search in our directory are Exa, Liner, Google Scholar, Consensus and Undermind.

How does Brave Search compare with other AI research tools?

Brave Search's GPA of 3.2 is higher than 65 of the 69 other AI research tools we grade, and level with 4.

Is Brave Search good value for money?

ToolGPA grades Brave Search A for value for money. Its paid plans start at $2.50 a month when paid by the year, against a middle price of $10 for the category: 1 of the 48 others that charge start lower.

Could I make my own version of Brave Search?

To replace Brave Search you would be making a search engine with an AI model behind it.

Where this guide comes from

The prices, plans, platforms and features were read from Brave Search'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 Brave Search'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 Brave Software. Prices change, so check search.brave.com before you buy.

brave.com/search/
brave.com/search/api/
brave.com/premium/
search.brave.com/help/ads

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

Brave Search, kept up to date

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

toolgpa.com/tools/brave-search

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, "Brave Search: The Insider's Guide",
checked Nov 13, 2026.
https://toolgpa.com/tools/brave-search
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Know someone choosing between AI research tools?

Send them this guide:
toolgpa.com/tools/brave-search/guide

ToolGPA elsewhere: youtube.com/@toolgpa

See our other guides

The best-graded AI research tools after Brave Search, each with an Insider's Guide of its own.

AI Research Tools Insider's Guide

Every one of the 70 AI research tools we grade, compared

Ai2 Asta Insider's Guide

AI research assistant for finding papers and analyzing data

3.2 GPA

CORE Insider's Guide

Open access research search backed by a free API

3.2 GPA

Resoomer Insider's Guide

Free text summarizer and rewriting toolkit for documents

3.2 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 Brave Search'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. Brave Search is a trademark of its owner, and this guide is not made, paid for or approved by Brave Software. Prices and plans change: check search.brave.com before you buy.