ToolGPA

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# ClamAV

## The Insider's Guide

Free open-source antivirus engine and command-line scanner




**Every plan, grade, refund rule and rival among antivirus apps, read from ClamAV's own pages.**

Made by Cisco · checked Nov 12, 2026 · toolgpa.com

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ToolGPA put this guide together from ClamAV's own pages, its app-store listings and our grades. Every fact in it is on ClamAV's page too, where it is kept up to date. Checked Nov 12, 2026.

# Welcome

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

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GPA, above 32 of the 56 other antivirus apps we grade

ClamAV is an open-source antivirus engine, licensed under GPLv2 and maintained by Cisco. It ships a multi-threaded scanner daemon, command-line scanning tools and a signature updater, and is aimed at mail gateways, servers and other automated scanning. Its own documentation says it is not a traditional desktop antivirus suite.

> "Its own docs say it isn't a traditional antivirus or endpoint suite.

From our report card of ClamAV

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

**1** **Best for free command-line malware scanning**

ClamAV is a free, open-source scanner for files and mail servers.

**2** **It is free**

ClamAV has no paid plan at all. Free and open source under the GNU General Public License v2, with signature updates published by Cisco.

**3** **It runs on 3 platforms**

Windows, macOS and Linux.

**4** **Command-line and daemon scanning**

Includes a command-line scanner for on-demand file scans and a multi-threaded scanner daemon, with an automatic signature updater.

**5** **Mail gateway focus**

The docs describe it as designed especially for e-mail scanning on mail gateways, and the About page lists a milter interface for sendmail.

**6** **Archive and file format support**

Scans inside archives such as Zip, RAR, 7Zip, Tar and ISO, and reads PE, ELF and Mach-O executables, Office files, PDF and HTML.

**7** **A 2.4 GPA, above 32 of 56**

That is against the other antivirus apps we grade, on value, the free plan, features, ease of use and platforms.

**8** **Keep it**

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

### ClamAV at a glance

| | |
|---|---|
| PRICING<br>Free | FREE PLAN<br>Yes |
| FREE TRIAL<br>None stated | RUNS ON<br>macOS, Windows, Linux |
| MADE BY<br>Cisco | CATEGORY<br>Antivirus & Malware Protection |
| OUR GRADE<br>2.4 GPA, fair | |

## The report card

### Best for free command-line malware scanning

ClamAV is a free, open-source scanner for files and mail servers. Its own docs say it isn't a traditional antivirus or endpoint suite. It has no desktop

app, runs from the command line and watches files in real time only on Linux.

| TOOLGPA REPORT CARD | ClamAV | Graded Nov 12, 2026 |
|---|---|---|
| SUBJECT | GRADE | COMMENT |
| **Value for money** | A | Free and open source under the GPL v2, with signature updates from Cisco. Anyone can download and run it. |
| **Free plan and trial** | A | Free outright, with no plan limits on record. The docs suggest 3 GiB of RAM and 5 GiB of disk for the standard database. |
| **Features** | D | Command-line and daemon scanning, archive support, signed databases and mail gateway focus. The docs point to Cisco Secure Endpoint for a full antivirus. |
| **Ease of use** | D | No store rating on record, and you work through a command line and config files. |
| **Platforms and integrations** | C | Windows, Mac and Linux, but computers only: no phone app and no graphical interface. |
| **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 ClamAV is for

- ✓ Fits if you run Linux or a mail server and want a free scanner
- ✓ Works for a sysadmin who's comfortable on the command line

### Who it is not for

- ✗ Not for you if you want a desktop antivirus with a window, because there's no graphical app
- ✗ Skip it if you want real-time protection on Windows or Mac, as on-access scanning is documented for Linux only
- ✗ Too light for your only protection, since the docs say it isn't a traditional antivirus or endpoint suite
- ✗ Watch out: it wants about 3 GiB of RAM and 5 GiB of free disk with the standard database

## Good to know

### Good for

- ✓ Mail servers and gateways that need a malware scanning step
- ✓ Linux and server admins who are comfortable with a command line
- ✓ Anyone who wants an auditable, free scanning engine

### Worth knowing

- ⓘ ClamAV's own docs say it is not a traditional antivirus or endpoint security suite and point to Cisco Secure Endpoint for that.
- ⓘ Real-time on-access scanning is documented for Linux only.
- ⓘ The downloads page offers installers and source packages; it does not offer a desktop app with a graphical interface or a mobile app.
- ⓘ The docs recommend at least 3 GiB of RAM and 5 GiB of free disk space for the scanner with the standard signature database.

# What it costs

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

**Free**

No paid plan at all

ClamAV is free to use.

> **Free outright, with no plan limits on record.**
>
> From our grade for free plan and trial

CLAMAV

## $0

Open-source engine, scanner daemon and updater. You install and run it yourself, with no paid edition.

### The free plan

Free and open source under the GNU General Public License v2, with signature updates published by Cisco.

Read from docs.clamav.net on Nov 12, 2026.

# What it does

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

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Places it runs: macOS, Windows and Linux

Free open-source antivirus engine and command-line scanner. Here is what it does, as its own site describes it, and what it covers: open source, malware protection.

> **Command-line and daemon scanning, archive support, signed databases and mail gateway focus.**
>
> From our grade for features

### Command-line and daemon scanning

Includes a command-line scanner for on-demand file scans and a multi-threaded scanner daemon, with an automatic signature updater.

### Mail gateway focus

The docs describe it as designed especially for e-mail scanning on mail gateways, and the About page lists a milter interface for sendmail.

## Archive and file format support

Scans inside archives such as Zip, RAR, 7Zip, Tar and ISO, and reads PE, ELF and Mach-O executables, Office files, PDF and HTML.

## On-access scanning on Linux

The ClamOnAcc client for the ClamD daemon scans files as they are accessed on modern Linux, and can block access until a file has been scanned.

## Signed signature databases

Signature databases are signed, so the scanner only executes trusted definitions, and the databases are updated several times a day.

### Where it runs

macOS
Windows
Linux

### What it works with

Its own pages name no integrations.

ClamAV is made by Cisco.

# Where it stands

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

**32/56**

Other antivirus apps it is graded above

ClamAV's GPA of 2.4 is higher than 32 of the 56 other antivirus apps we grade, and level with 8.

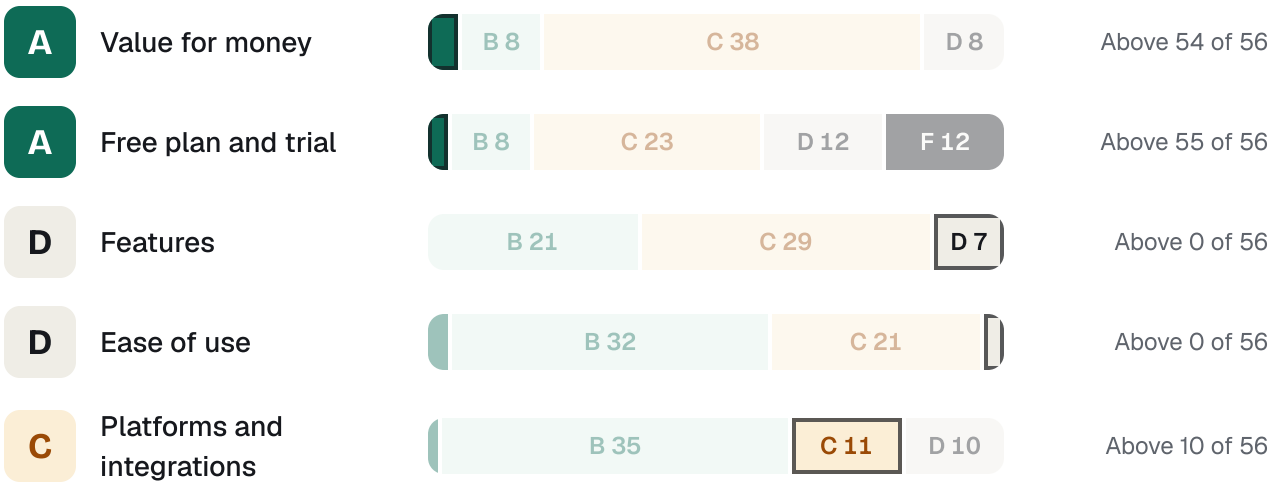
It stands best on free plan and trial (A, above 55 of 56) and worst on features (D, above 0).

ClamAV has no paid plan.

On features, ease of use and platforms it scores 1.3 out of 4, and no tool on the category's chart scores higher without costing more.

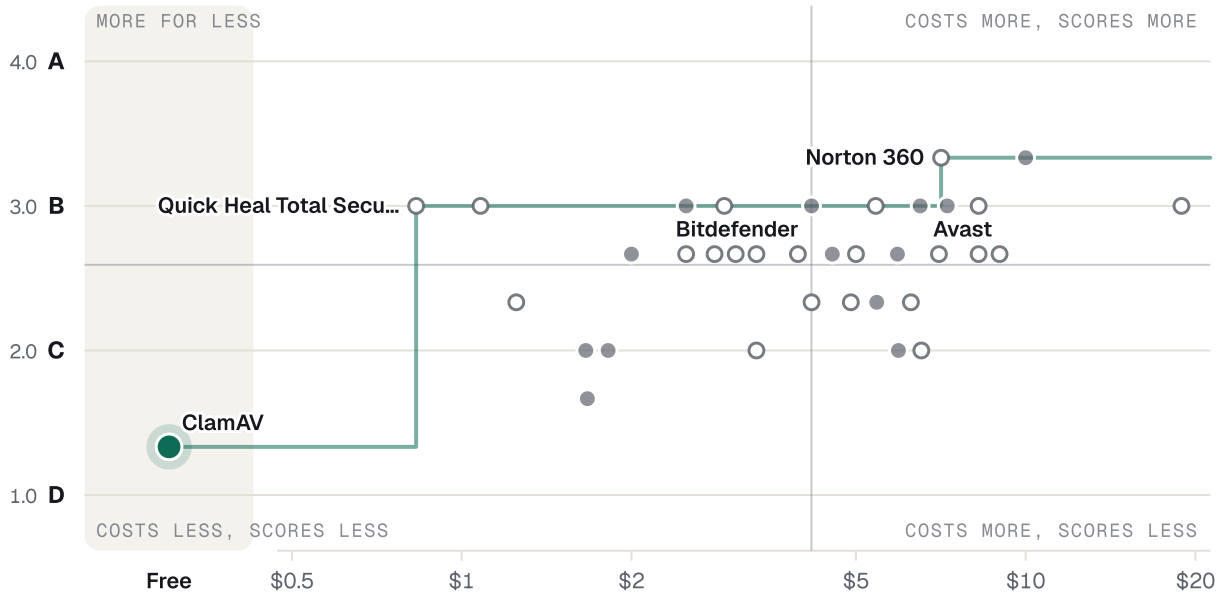
## Each grade against the category

Every bar is all 57 antivirus apps we grade, cut by the letter each got. ClamAV's own letter is outlined.



## Price against what you get

Each dot is one of 36 antivirus apps. Further left costs less; higher up scores better on features, ease of use and platforms. ClamAV 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

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

And it is not the kind of software a weekend replaces.

**What you could not**

- ✕ An engine that recognises new malware as it appears.
- ✕ Apps for macOS, Windows and Linux that stay in step with each other.

**What this rests on.** ClamAV'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



Malwarebytes, ESET, Sophos Home, Emsisoft Anti-Malware and Avira

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

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## Malwarebytes

Free plan · from $59.99/yr

Malware scanner and real-time protection, with VPN and ID plans.

- Only ClamAV lists a Linux app.
- Only Malwarebytes lists Android and iOS apps.
- Only Malwarebytes lists a browser extension.

ClamAV and Malwarebytes compared in full

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## ESET

Free trial · from $12.99/yr

Antivirus and home security plans priced by device count.

- ClamAV has a free plan. ESET does not, though it has a free trial.
- Only ClamAV lists a Linux app.
- Only ESET lists an Android app.

ClamAV and ESET compared in full



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## Sophos Home

Free trial · from $59.99/yr

Business-grade antivirus for up to 10 Windows PCs and Macs.

- ClamAV has a free plan. Sophos Home does not, though it has a free trial.
- Only ClamAV lists a Linux app.
- Only Sophos Home lists Android and iOS apps.

ClamAV and Sophos Home compared in full



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## Emsisoft Anti-Malware

Free trial · from $39.95/yr

Dual-engine malware scanner for home PCs, with a web console.

- ClamAV has a free plan. Emsisoft Anti-Malware does not, though it has a free trial.
- Only ClamAV lists a Linux app.
- ClamAV is open source, according to its own site.

ClamAV and Emsisoft Anti-Malware compared in full



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## Avira

Free plan

Free antivirus suite with a VPN, PC cleaner and password manager.

- Only ClamAV lists macOS and Linux apps.
- Only Avira lists Android and iOS apps.
- ClamAV is open source, according to its own site.

ClamAV and Avira compared in full

PART 06 · QUESTIONS

# Quick answers

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

**11**

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 ClamAV free?

Yes. ClamAV is free to use.

### How much does ClamAV cost?

ClamAV lists one plan. ClamAV: $0.

### What platforms does ClamAV work on?

ClamAV is available on Windows, macOS and Linux.

### Does ClamAV have an Android app?

No Android app was listed when its pages were read on Nov 12, 2026. ClamAV is listed for Windows, macOS and Linux.

### Does ClamAV have an iPhone app?

No iPhone app was listed when its pages were read on Nov 12, 2026. ClamAV is listed for Windows, macOS and Linux.

### Is ClamAV open source?

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

### Who makes ClamAV?

ClamAV is made by Cisco.

### What are the alternatives to ClamAV?

The closest alternatives to ClamAV in our directory are Malwarebytes, ESET, Sophos Home, Emsisoft Anti-Malware and Avira.

### How does ClamAV compare with other antivirus apps?

ClamAV's GPA of 2.4 is higher than 32 of the 56 other antivirus apps we grade, and level with 8.

### Is ClamAV good value for money?

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

### Could I make my own version of ClamAV?

ClamAV 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 ClamAV's own pages on Nov 12, 2026, and the grades were given on Nov 12, 2026. Graded from this listing, whose facts were read from Cisco's own pages on 12 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 Cisco. Prices change, so check clamav.net before you buy.

clamav.net
clamav.net/about
clamav.net/downloads
docs.clamav.net/

PART 07 · ABOUT

# 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

### ClamAV, kept up to date

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

toolgpa.com/tools/clamav

### 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:

```
ToolGPA, "ClamAV: The Insider's Guide",
checked Nov 12, 2026.
https://toolgpa.com/tools/clamav
```

### Know someone choosing between antivirus apps?

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

ToolGPA elsewhere: youtube.com/@toolgpa

# See our other guides

The best-graded antivirus apps after ClamAV, each with an Insider's Guide of its own.

### Antivirus & Malware Protection Insider's Guide

Every one of the 57 antivirus apps we grade, compared

### Avast Insider's Guide

Free antivirus for PC, Mac and phones, with paid Premium and Ultimate

3.0 GPA

### AVG Insider's Guide

Free antivirus for Windows, with paid Internet Security and Ultimate

2.8 GPA

### Bitdefender Insider's Guide

Antivirus suites for computers and phones, with a free Windows tier

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 ClamAV'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. ClamAV is a trademark of its owner, and this guide is not made, paid for or approved by Cisco. Prices and plans change: check clamav.net before you buy.