ToolGPA

NOVEMBER 2026

Claws Mail

The Insider’s Guide

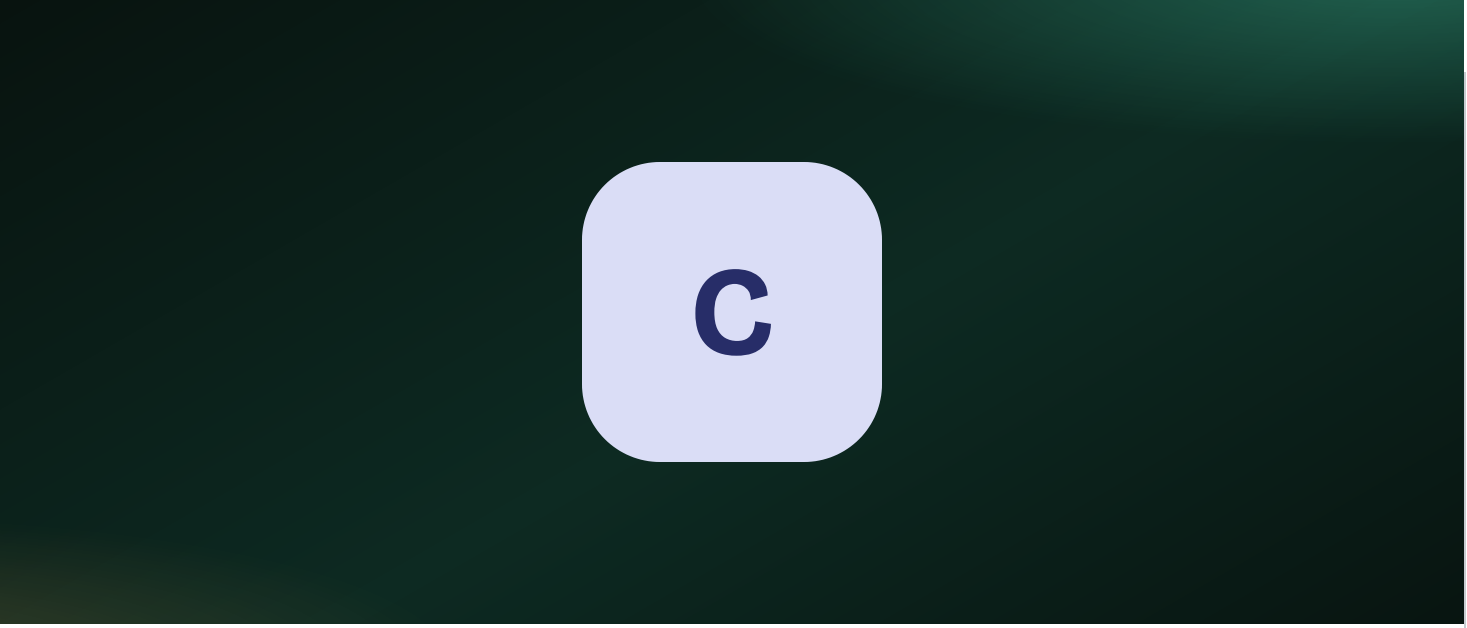
Lightweight GTK email and news client, free under the GPL

C

Every plan, grade, refund rule and rival among email apps, read from Claws Mail’s own pages.

Made by Claws Mail project · checked Nov 12, 2026 · toolgpa.com

2.8
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 Claws Mail's own pages, its app-store listings and our grades. Every fact in it is on Claws Mail'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

2.8

GPA, above 88 of the 122 other email apps we grade

Claws Mail is a free email and Usenet news client built on GTK, with keyboard access to almost every command. It stores messages in the MH format and can be extended with plugins for an RSS reader, a calendar and more. It is distributed under the GPL and aimed mainly at Linux and Unix systems.

> "
>
> **Calendar and RSS are plugins, not part of the base app.**
>
> From our report card of Claws Mail

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

1 **Best for a lightweight keyboard-driven mail client**

Claws Mail is a free, GPL mail client that you can drive from the keyboard, with filters, search, GnuPG and plugins.

2 **It is free**

Claws Mail has no paid plan at all. The whole application is free software under the GPL.

3 **It runs on 2 platforms**

Linux and Windows.

4 **Keyboard-driven interface**

Almost all commands can be reached from the keyboard, in a layout meant to look familiar to people from other mail clients.

5 **Filtering and search**

Filtering, per-folder processing, message scoring, colour labels and a search function for sorting a busy mailbox.

6 **GnuPG support**

Encrypt and sign messages with GnuPG through GPGME, and switch the encryption type while composing.

7 **A 2.8 GPA, above 88 of 122**

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

8 **Keep it**

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

Claws Mail at a glance

PRICING Free	FREE PLAN Yes
FREE TRIAL None stated	RUNS ON Windows, Linux
MADE BY Claws Mail project	CATEGORY Email Apps
OUR GRADE 2.8 GPA, good	

The report card

Best for a lightweight keyboard-driven mail client

Claws Mail is a free, GPL mail client that you can drive from the keyboard, with filters, search, GnuPG and plugins. Calendar and RSS are plugins, not part of the base app. It looks like an older desktop mail program, and it's Linux plus a separate Windows port.

TOOLGPA REPORT CARD	Claws Mail	Graded Nov 12, 2026

SUBJECT	GRADE	COMMENT
Value for money	A	Free under the GPL for anyone to download. A program anyone can download and run counts as free and substantial.
Free plan and trial	A	Free outright, the whole app, with no paid edition.
Features	C	A keyboard-driven client with filtering, search, GnuPG, plugins, several protocols and MH storage. Gaps: calendar and RSS are plugins, not the base app.
Ease of use	C	No store rating on record. You install from a distro package or source, connect your accounts and add plugins for extras.
Platforms and integrations	C	Linux, plus a separate Windows port. No macOS version is mentioned and there's no phone or web version.
Grade point average		Good, out of 4.0 **2.8**

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 Claws Mail is for

- ✓ Fits if you want a light mail client you can drive from the keyboard
- ✓ Works for people who use GnuPG and want plugins for extras

Who it is not for

- ✗ Skip it if you want a calendar built in, as that's a plugin
- ✗ Not for you if you use a Mac, since the downloads page mentions no macOS version
- ✗ Watch out: Windows is a separate port
- ✗ Too light on looks if you want a modern design: the interface is built on GTK and follows older desktop mail clients

Good to know

Good for

- ✓ Linux users who want a fast, low-resource mail client
- ✓ People who prefer to work from the keyboard
- ✓ Users who read both email and Usenet news

Worth knowing

- ⓘ Calendar and RSS are plugins, not part of the base application.
- ⓘ Windows is listed as a separate port; no macOS version is mentioned on the downloads page.
- ⓘ The interface is built on GTK and follows the look of older desktop mail clients.

What it costs

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

Free

No paid plan at all

Claws Mail is free to use.

> **Free under the GPL for anyone to download.**
>
> From our grade for value for money

CLAWS MAIL

$0

Free under the GPL; install from a distribution package or the source tarballs.

The free plan

The whole application is free software under the GPL.

Read from claws-mail.org on Nov 12, 2026.

What it does

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

2

Places it runs: Windows and Linux

Lightweight GTK email and news client, free under the GPL. Here is what it does, as its own site describes it, and what it covers: open source, keyboard-first, email client, inbox filtering.

> **A keyboard-driven client with filtering, search, GnuPG, plugins, several protocols and MH storage.**
>
> From our grade for features

Keyboard-driven interface

Almost all commands can be reached from the keyboard, in a layout meant to look familiar to people from other mail clients.

Filtering and search

Filtering, per-folder processing, message scoring, colour labels and a search function for sorting a busy mailbox.

GnuPG support

Encrypt and sign messages with GnuPG through GPGME, and switch the encryption type while composing.

Plugins

Extras such as an RSS aggregator and a calendar come as plugins, and the project lists them on a plugins page.

Protocols and accounts

Multiple accounts over POP3, IMAP4rev1 and SMTP with SSL, plus Usenet news reading and posting through NNTP.

MH storage and import

Messages are kept in the MH format, and mbox import and export lets you move mail in and out of other clients.

Where it runs

Windows Linux

What it works with

GnuPG

Claws Mail is made by Claws Mail project.

PART 04 · STANDING

Where it stands

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

88/122

Other email apps it is graded above

Claws Mail's GPA of 2.8 is higher than 88 of the 122 other email apps we grade, and level with 11.

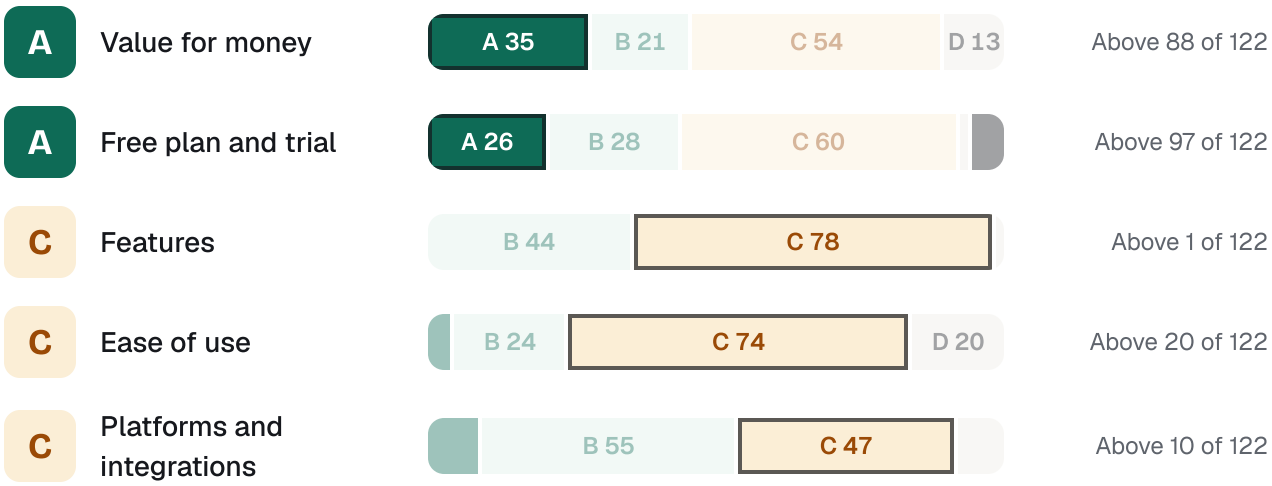
It stands best on free plan and trial (A, above 97 of 122) and worst on features (C, above 1).

Claws Mail has no paid plan.

On features, ease of use and platforms it scores 2.0 out of 4. Nothing scores higher for less, though at least one tool matches that score at a lower price.

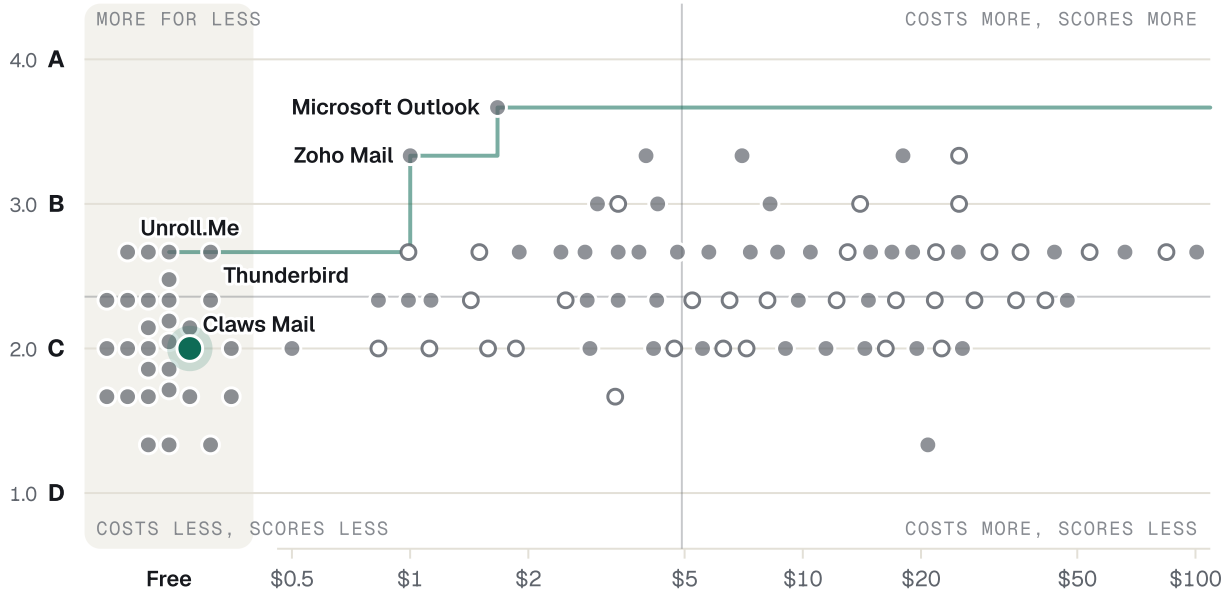
Each grade against the category

Every bar is all 123 email apps we grade, cut by the letter each got. Claws Mail's own letter is outlined.



Price against what you get

Each dot is one of 107 email apps. Further left costs less; higher up scores better on features, ease of use and platforms. Claws Mail 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

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

And it is not the kind of software a weekend replaces. It is one of the better ones too: its GPA of 2.8 is higher than 88 of the 122 other email apps we grade.

What you could not

- An email client: sending, receiving, threading and searching years of mail.
- Filters that read every message as it arrives.
- A real app for Windows and Linux. Something home-made would be a web page.

What this rests on. Claws Mail'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



Thunderbird, Evolution, Betterbird, Mailspring and MailMate

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

3.2 GPA

Thunderbird

Free

Free, open-source email app for Windows, macOS, Linux and Android.

- Only Thunderbird lists macOS and Android apps.
- Claws Mail also covers inbox filtering.
- Thunderbird also covers tasks and calendar.

Claws Mail and Thunderbird compared in full

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2.8 GPA

Evolution

Free

GNOME's free mail, calendar and address book app.

- Only Claws Mail lists a Windows app.
- Claws Mail also covers inbox filtering.
- Evolution also covers calendar.

Claws Mail and Evolution compared in full

3.0
GPA

Betterbird

Free

A fork of Thunderbird with extra features and bug fixes.

- Only Betterbird lists a macOS app.
- Claws Mail also covers inbox filtering.
- Betterbird also covers calendar.

Claws Mail and Betterbird compared in full

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GPA

Mailspring

Free plan · from $8/mo

Open-source desktop email client for Mac, Windows and Linux.

- Only Mailspring lists a macOS app.
- Claws Mail also covers inbox filtering.
- Mailspring also covers templates.

Claws Mail and Mailspring compared in full



2.0
GPA

MailMate

Free trial · from $10/mo

Keyboard-driven IMAP email client for macOS with Markdown composing.

- Claws Mail has a free plan. MailMate does not, though it has a free trial.
- Only Claws Mail lists Linux and Windows apps.
- Only MailMate lists a macOS app.

Claws Mail and MailMate 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 Claws Mail free?

Yes. Claws Mail is free to use.

How much does Claws Mail cost?

Claws Mail lists one plan. Claws Mail: $0.

What platforms does Claws Mail work on?

Claws Mail is available on Linux and Windows.

Does Claws Mail have an Android app?

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

Does Claws Mail have an iPhone app?

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

Is Claws Mail open source?

Yes. Claws Mail is open source, according to its own site.

What does Claws Mail integrate with?

Claws Mail's listing names GnuPG. A listing names up to eight integrations, so it may connect to more.

Who makes Claws Mail?

Claws Mail is made by Claws Mail project.

What are the alternatives to Claws Mail?

The closest alternatives to Claws Mail in our directory are Thunderbird, Evolution, Betterbird, Mailspring and MailMate.

How does Claws Mail compare with other email apps?

Claws Mail's GPA of 2.8 is higher than 88 of the 122 other email apps we grade, and level with 11.

Is Claws Mail good value for money?

ToolGPA grades Claws Mail A for value for money. Claws Mail has no paid plan.

Could I make my own version of Claws Mail?

Claws Mail 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 Claws Mail'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 Claws Mail'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 Claws Mail project. Prices change, so check claws-mail.org before you buy.

claws-mail.org/

claws-mail.org/features.php

claws-mail.org/downloads.php

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

Claws Mail, kept up to date

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

toolgpa.com/tools/claws-mail

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, "Claws Mail: The Insider's Guide",
checked Nov 12, 2026.
https://toolgpa.com/tools/claws-mail
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Know someone choosing between email apps?

Send them this guide:
toolgpa.com/tools/claws-mail/guide

ToolGPA elsewhere: youtube.com/@toolgpa

See our other guides

The best-graded email apps after Claws Mail, each with an Insider's Guide of its own.

Email Apps Insider's Guide

Every one of the 126 email apps we grade, compared

Microsoft Outlook Insider's Guide

Microsoft's email and calendar app for desktop, mobile and web

3.6 GPA

AOL Mail Insider's Guide

Free webmail with news and weather in a companion mobile app

3.2 GPA

BlueMail Insider's Guide

Cross-platform email client with a unified inbox and built-in AI

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 Claws Mail'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. Claws Mail is a trademark of its owner, and this guide is not made, paid for or approved by Claws Mail project. Prices and plans change: check claws-mail.org before you buy.