ToolGPA

NOVEMBER 2026

Forward Email

The Insider's Guide

Open-source email forwarding and hosting for custom domains



Every plan, grade, refund rule and rival among email sending services, read from Forward Email's own pages.

Made by Forward Email LLC · checked Nov 12, 2026 · toolgpa.com

2.8
GPA



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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 Forward Email's own pages, its app-store listings and our grades. Every fact in it is on Forward Email'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 46 of the 50 other email sending services we grade

Forward Email is an open-source service for email on your own domain. The free plan forwards incoming mail, and paid plans add mailboxes, outbound SMTP, a developer API and team controls, all with unlimited domains and aliases. It is mainly a mailbox and forwarding service, with sending included from the Enhanced Protection plan.

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

> **You point your domain's DNS at the service and create aliases, and the site warns that a forgotten mailbox password loses the mailbox.**
>
> From our grade for ease of use

1 **Best for email on your own domain without per-mailbox fees**

Forward Email is open-source email forwarding and hosting for your own domain, with sending and an API added from $3 a month for unlimited domains.

2 **Paid plans start at $3 a month**

As its pricing page puts it: $3 per month for unlimited domains.

3 **There is a free plan**

Unlimited inbound forwarding, catch-all addresses and webhooks for unlimited domains. It cannot send mail or store mail.

4 **It runs on 6 platforms**

Web, macOS, Windows, Linux, iOS and Android.

5 **Forwarding on custom domains**

Receive mail at your own domain and forward it to an existing address, with catch-all aliases, multiple recipients per alias and regex filtering.

6 **Outbound SMTP**

Enhanced Protection and above send through SMTP, with unlimited outbound on a reputation basis and 900 a day at the start of Team.

7 **Mailboxes with IMAP storage**

Paid plans include 10 GB of pooled storage; extra storage is $3 a month per 10 GB. The site says mailboxes are encrypted with your password.

8 **A 2.8 GPA, above 46 of 50**

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

9 **Keep it**

Nothing Forward Email does is plain enough to make in a weekend. The 2 things listed below take a company.

Forward Email at a glance

PRICING
Free plan, from $3 per month for unlimited domains

FREE PLAN
Yes

FREE TRIAL
None stated

RUNS ON
Web, macOS, Windows, Linux, iOS, Android

MADE BY
Forward Email LLC, since 2017

CATEGORY
Email Sending Services

OUR GRADE
2.8 GPA, good

The report card

Best for email on your own domain without per-mailbox fees

Forward Email is open-source email forwarding and hosting for your own domain, with sending and an API added from $3 a month for unlimited domains. The free plan only forwards incoming mail, so it is not a sending service until you pay, and sending limits on the $3 plan depend on your reputation rather than a published number.

TOOLGPA REPORT CARD — **Forward Email** — Graded Nov 12, 2026

SUBJECT	GRADE	COMMENT
Value for money	A	$3 a month for unlimited domains and aliases, under the $6 that is 60% of the $10 where the cheaper quarter of sending services starts. It is mostly a mailbox and forwarding service, so the comparison is rough.

SUBJECT	GRADE	COMMENT
Free plan and trial	C	The free plan forwards unlimited inbound mail with catch-all addresses, but it cannot send or store mail, so for the sending job nothing free works.
Features	C	Forwarding, IMAP mailboxes, outbound SMTP and an API on paid plans, but sending is an add-on to a mailbox service and the listing names no tracking, templates or dedicated IPs.
Ease of use	C	No store rating on record. You point your domain's DNS at the service and create aliases, and the site warns that a forgotten mailbox password loses the mailbox.
Platforms and integrations	A	Apps for Mac, Windows, Linux, iPhone and Android plus the web, and a developer API with webhooks.
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 Forward Email is for

- ✓ Fits if you want email on your own domain and don't want to pay per mailbox
- ✓ Works for developers who want open-source software they can also self-host

Who it is not for

- ✗ Skip it if you need to send mail on the free plan, because it only forwards
- ✗ Watch out: outbound limits on the $3 plan depend on your sending reputation, not a stated number
- ✗ Watch out: forget your mailbox password and the mailbox is gone unless you kept offline backups
- ✗ Tight if you need over 10 GB of storage, as extra is $3 a month per 10 GB
- ✗ Pricey if you want team controls and priority support, which start at $9 a month

Good to know

Good for

- ✓ People who want email on their own domain without paying per mailbox
- ✓ Developers who want an open-source service they can also self-host
- ✓ Anyone who only needs inbound forwarding for free

Worth knowing

- ⓘ The free plan cannot send mail, so it does not work as a sending service.
- ⓘ Sending limits on Enhanced Protection are reputation-based rather than a fixed monthly count.
- ⓘ The site says that if you forget your mailbox password you lose the mailbox unless you have offline backups.
- ⓘ Prices are listed per month for unlimited domains; no yearly billing is shown on the page.

What it costs

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

$3

A month to start. There is a free plan too

Forward Email has a free plan. Paid plans start at $3 per month for unlimited domains.

> **It is mostly a mailbox and forwarding service, so the comparison is rough.**
>
> From our grade for value for money

FREE

$0

Email forwarding only: unlimited inbound mail, spam protection, 50 MB attachments, catch-all addresses and regex filtering. No sending.

ENHANCED PROTECTION

$3

per month for unlimited domains

Adds unlimited aliases, 10 GB pooled storage, outbound SMTP with reputation-based limits, DMARC reporting and API access.

TEAM

$9

per month for unlimited domains

Everything in Enhanced, plus unlimited team members, permission management and priority support. Outbound starts at 900 a day.

ENTERPRISE

$250

per month for unlimited domains

Adds unlimited API requests, a dedicated support chatroom, a contract by DocuSign and onboarding help.

The free plan

Unlimited inbound forwarding, catch-all addresses and webhooks for unlimited domains. It cannot send mail or store mail.

Read from forwardemail.net on Nov 12, 2026.

What it does

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

6

Places it runs: Web, macOS, Windows, Linux, iOS and Android

Open-source email forwarding and hosting for custom domains. Here is what it does, as its own site describes it, and what it covers: open source, self-hostable, public API.

> **Apps for Mac, Windows, Linux, iPhone and Android plus the web, and a developer API with webhooks.**
>
> From our grade for platforms and integrations

Forwarding on custom domains

Receive mail at your own domain and forward it to an existing address, with catch-all aliases, multiple recipients per alias and regex filtering.

Outbound SMTP

Enhanced Protection and above send through SMTP, with unlimited outbound on a reputation basis and 900 a day at the start of Team.

Mailboxes with IMAP storage

Paid plans include 10 GB of pooled storage; extra storage is $3 a month per 10 GB. The site says mailboxes are encrypted with your password.

Developer API and webhooks

A developer API comes with paid plans, and mail on any plan can be sent to webhooks.

Open source and self-hosting

The software is open source and a self-hosted Docker version is listed among the features.

Where it runs

Web · macOS · Windows · Linux · iOS · Android

What it works with

Gmail · Outlook · Yahoo

Forward Email is made by Forward Email LLC, and has been around since 2017.

Where it stands

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

46/50

Other email sending services it is graded above

Forward Email's GPA of 2.8 is higher than 46 of the 50 other email sending services we grade, and level with 3.

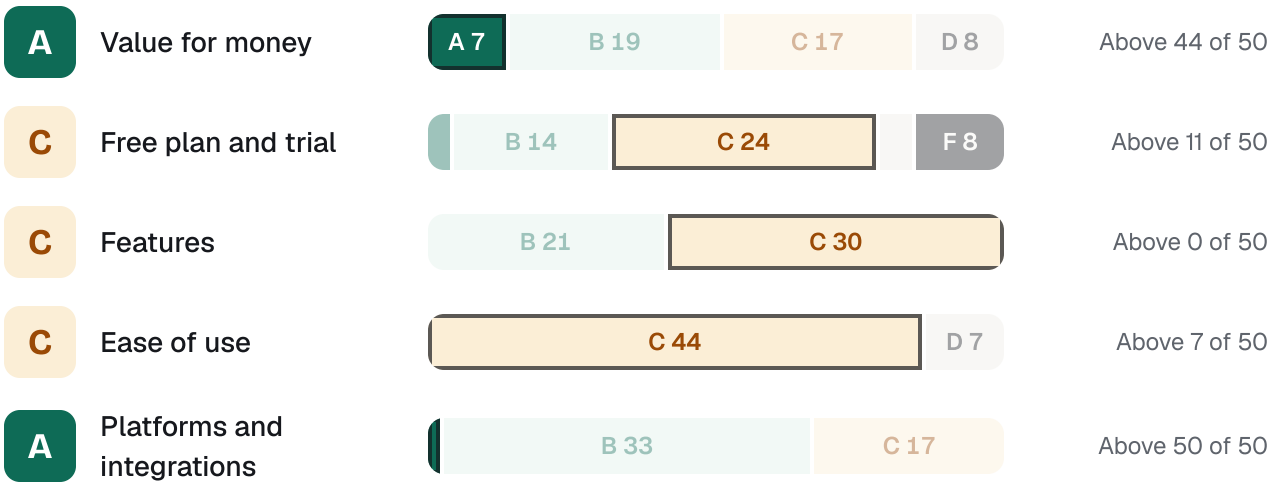
It stands best on platforms and integrations (A, above 50 of 50) and worst on features (C, above 0).

Its paid plans start at $3 a month, against a middle price of $15 for the category: 2 of the 41 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.

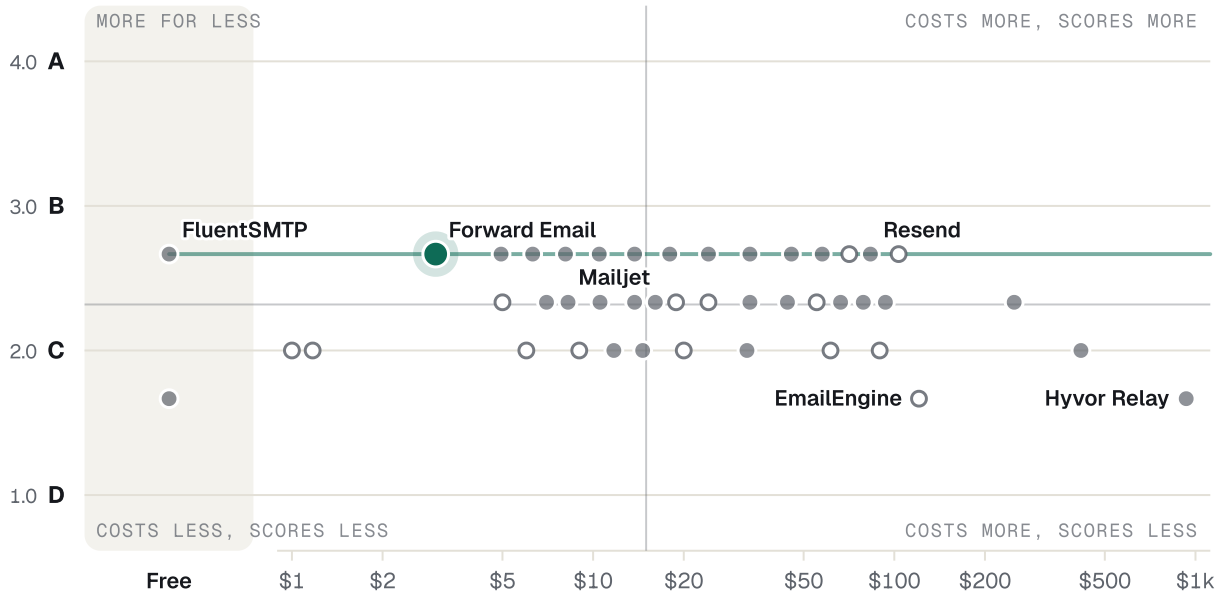
Each grade against the category

Every bar is all 51 email sending services we grade, cut by the letter each got. Forward Email's own letter is outlined.



Price against what you get

Each dot is one of 44 email sending services. Further left costs less; higher up scores better on features, ease of use and platforms. Forward Email 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

Nothing Forward Email does is plain enough to make in a weekend. The 2 things listed below take a company.

It is one of the better ones too: its GPA of 2.8 is higher than 46 of the 50 other email sending services we grade. It costs $36 a year. Forward Email is open source, so there is a third way: take its code and run it yourself.

What you could not

- ✕ Apps for macOS, Windows, Linux, iOS and Android that stay in step with each other.
- ✕ It plugs into other products, Gmail, Outlook and Yahoo among them, and has an API.

What this rests on. Forward Email'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



MailPace, SMTP2GO, Mailgun, turboSMTP and Postmark

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

2.2 GPA

MailPace

Free trial · from $10/mo

EU-hosted transactional email API and SMTP, without open tracking.

- Forward Email has a free plan. MailPace does not, though it has a free trial.
- Only Forward Email lists macOS, Windows, Linux, iOS and Android apps.
- Forward Email is open source and self-hostable, according to its own site.

Forward Email and MailPace compared in full

2.2 GPA

SMTP2GO

Free plan · from $15/mo

SMTP relay and email API priced by emails a month, with a free plan.

- Only Forward Email lists macOS, Windows, Linux, iOS and Android apps.
- Forward Email is open source and self-hostable, according to its own site.
- SMTP2GO also covers transactional email.

Forward Email and SMTP2GO compared in full



2.4 GPA

Mailgun

Free plan · from $15/mo

Email API and SMTP relay for developers, with list validation.

- Only Forward Email lists macOS, Windows, Linux, iOS and Android apps.
- Forward Email is open source and self-hostable, according to its own site.
- Mailgun also covers email verification and transactional email.

Forward Email and Mailgun compared in full



2.2 GPA

turboSMTP

Free plan · from $12.46/mo

SMTP relay and email API on European infrastructure, with a free plan.

- Only Forward Email lists macOS, Windows, Linux, iOS and Android apps.
- Forward Email is open source and self-hostable, according to its own site.
- turboSMTP also covers email verification and transactional email.

Forward Email and turboSMTP compared in full



2.2 GPA

Postmark

Free plan · from $15/mo

Transactional email API and SMTP, with broadcasts on a separate stream.

- Only Forward Email lists macOS, Windows, Linux, iOS and Android apps.
- Forward Email is open source and self-hostable, according to its own site.
- Postmark also covers dMARC and transactional email.

Forward Email and Postmark 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 Forward Email free?

Forward Email has a free plan. Unlimited inbound forwarding, catch-all addresses and webhooks for unlimited domains.

How much does Forward Email cost?

Forward Email lists 4 plans. Free: $0.

What platforms does Forward Email work on?

Forward Email is available on Web, macOS, Windows, Linux, iOS and Android.

Is Forward Email open source?

Yes. Forward Email is open source, according to its own site.

Does Forward Email have an API?

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

What does Forward Email integrate with?

Forward Email's listing names Gmail, Outlook and Yahoo. A listing names up to eight integrations, so it may connect to more.

Who makes Forward Email?

Forward Email is made by Forward Email LLC. It dates from 2017.

What are the alternatives to Forward Email?

The closest alternatives to Forward Email in our directory are MailPace, SMTP2GO, Mailgun, turboSMTP and Postmark.

How does Forward Email compare with other email sending services?

Forward Email's GPA of 2.8 is higher than 46 of the 50 other email sending services we grade, and level with 3.

Is Forward Email good value for money?

ToolGPA grades Forward Email A for value for money. Its paid plans start at $3 a month, against a middle price of $15 for the category: 2 of the 41 others that charge start lower.

Could I make my own version of Forward Email?

Nothing Forward Email does is plain enough to make in a weekend. The 2 things listed below take a company.

Where this guide comes from

The prices, plans, platforms and features were read from Forward Email'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 Forward Email'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 Forward Email LLC. Prices change, so check forwardemail.net before you buy.

forwardemail.net/en/private-business-email

forwardemail.net/en/about

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

Forward Email, kept up to date

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

toolgpa.com/tools/forward-email

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, "Forward Email: The Insider's Guide",
checked Nov 12, 2026.
https://toolgpa.com/tools/forward-email
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Know someone choosing between email sending services?

Send them this guide: toolgpa.com/tools/forward-email/guide

ToolGPA elsewhere: youtube.com/@toolgpa

See our other guides

The best-graded email sending services after Forward Email, each with an Insider's Guide of its own.

Email Sending Services Insider's Guide

Every one of the 51 email sending services we grade, compared

FluentSMTP Insider's Guide

Free WordPress plugin for sending site email through your provider

3.2 GPA

Amazon SES Insider's Guide

AWS email sending and receiving, paid per 1,000 emails

2.8 GPA

MailChannels Insider's Guide

Email API and SMTP relay for platforms with many downstream senders

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