ToolGPA

NOVEMBER 2026

Handshake

The Insider's Guide

Early-career hiring network with free job posting



Every plan, grade, refund rule and rival among hiring and applicant tracking tools, read from Handshake's own pages.

Made by Handshake · checked Nov 13, 2026 · toolgpa.com

2.0
GPA

Handshake

The largest, most trusted network for work and careers

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

2.0

GPA, above 54 of the 101 other hiring and applicant tracking tools we grade

Handshake is a career network that connects employers with students, recent graduates and alumni through university partnerships. Employers can post jobs for free, message candidates from a dashboard and pay for promoted jobs, a Pro plan or a sales-led Enterprise plan. The employer side includes campus events, applicant management and analytics.

> "
>
> **You set up a company profile and post roles.**
>
> From our grade for ease of use

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

1 **Best for posting jobs to early-career candidates**

It targets students and recent graduates, and ATS integrations are Enterprise only.

2 **Paid plans start at $450 a month**

As its pricing page puts it: $450 per month.

3 **There is a free plan**

Basic: free job posting, 10 candidate messages a month and a simple company presence.

4 **It runs on Web**

Web.

5 **Early-career talent pool**

Jobs reach a network the vendor puts at 30 million job seekers, including alumni, master's and PhD students, through 1,600+ university partners.

6 **Candidate messaging**

Message candidates from the dashboard: 10 a month on Basic, 200 on Pro and a custom volume on Enterprise.

7 **Talent matches and filters**

Pro shows up to 100 matches per job and filters by school year, major, GPA, skills and location. Enterprise unlocks 50+ filters.

8 **A 2.0 GPA, above 54 of 101**

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

9 **Keep it**

To replace Handshake you would be making jobs posted to dozens of job boards at once, which takes an agreement with each board. That is not a weekend's work, with an AI app builder or without one.

Handshake at a glance

PRICING Free plan, from $450 per month	FREE PLAN Yes
FREE TRIAL None stated	RUNS ON Web
MADE BY Handshake	CATEGORY Hiring & Applicant Tracking
OUR GRADE 2.0 GPA, fair	

The report card

Best for posting jobs to early-career candidates

Handshake lets employers post jobs free to its early-career network, with 10 candidate messages a month, and Pro is $450 a month. It targets students and recent graduates, and ATS integrations are Enterprise only.

TOOLGPA REPORT CARD	Handshake	Graded Nov 13, 2026
SUBJECT	GRADE	COMMENT
Value for money	D	Pro is $450 a month, above the dearest tenth of hiring tools, and promoted jobs cost extra from $34 a day. Basic is free.
Free plan and trial	B	Basic gives unlimited job posts, 10 messages a month and a company presence, and an occasional hirer could live on it.
Features	C	Early-career talent pool, messaging, matches, promoted jobs, events and analytics. 50+ filters and ATS integration are Enterprise only.
Ease of use	C	No rating on record. You set up a company profile and post roles.
Platforms and integrations	C	A web service, with integrations only on the Enterprise plan.
Grade point average		Fair, out of 4.0 **2.0**

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 Handshake is for

- ✓ Fits if you hire interns and new graduates and post a few jobs a year
- ✓ Works for employers that want school and event connections

Who it is not for

- ✕ Skip it if you want to hire experienced staff, since the pool is early-career
- ✕ Tight if you message candidates, since Basic allows 10 a month
- ✕ Pricey if you want Pro, at $450 a month with no billing basis stated
- ✕ Watch out: promoted jobs are an add-on from $34 a day
- ✕ Watch out: ATS and XML integrations, school search and premium support are Enterprise only

Good to know

Good for

- ✓ Employers hiring interns and new graduates
- ✓ Small teams that want to post a job for free
- ✓ Large employers running campus recruiting programs

Worth knowing

- ⓘ Basic allows only 10 candidate messages a month.
- ⓘ Pro's page does not say whether $450 a month is billed monthly or annually.
- ⓘ ATS and XML integrations, school search and premium support are Enterprise-only.
- ⓘ Promoted jobs are an extra cost on Basic and Pro, starting at $34 a day.

PART 02 · PRICING

What it costs

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

$450

A month to start. There is a free plan too

Handshake has a free plan. Paid plans start at $450 per month.

BASIC

$0

Unlimited job posting, 10 messages a month and a simple company presence. Promoted jobs from $34 a day as an add-on.

PRO

$450

per month

200 messages a month, AI applicant tools, team collaboration, automation and 3 promoted-job days a month that roll over.

ENTERPRISE

Custom

Unlimited messaging, 50+ filters, ATS integration, event support and funnel analytics. Annual plan, sold through sales.

The free plan

Basic: free job posting, 10 candidate messages a month and a simple company presence.

Read from joinhandshake.com 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: Web

Early-career hiring network with free job posting. Here is what it does, as its own site describes it, and what it covers: AI features, reports, applicant tracking, job board posting.

> **Early-career talent pool, messaging, matches, promoted jobs, events and analytics.**

From our grade for features

Early-career talent pool

Jobs reach a network the vendor puts at 30 million job seekers, including alumni, master's and PhD students, through 1,600+ university partners.

Candidate messaging

Message candidates from the dashboard: 10 a month on Basic, 200 on Pro and a custom volume on Enterprise.

Talent matches and filters

Pro shows up to 100 matches per job and filters by school year, major, GPA, skills and location. Enterprise unlocks 50+ filters.

Promoted jobs

A paid boost for visibility. Basic and Pro buy it as an add-on from $34 a day, and Enterprise includes custom promotion.

Events and school connections

Enterprise adds custom school lists, career fair and event promotion across schools, and messaging to attendees before and after.

Analytics

Campaign analytics on Pro, and full-funnel dashboard reports on how the hiring team is performing on Enterprise.

Where it runs

Web

What it works with

Its own pages name no integrations.

Handshake is made by Handshake.

Where it stands

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

54/101

Other hiring and applicant tracking tools it is graded above

Handshake's GPA of 2.0 is higher than 54 of the 101 other hiring and applicant tracking tools we grade, and level with 21.

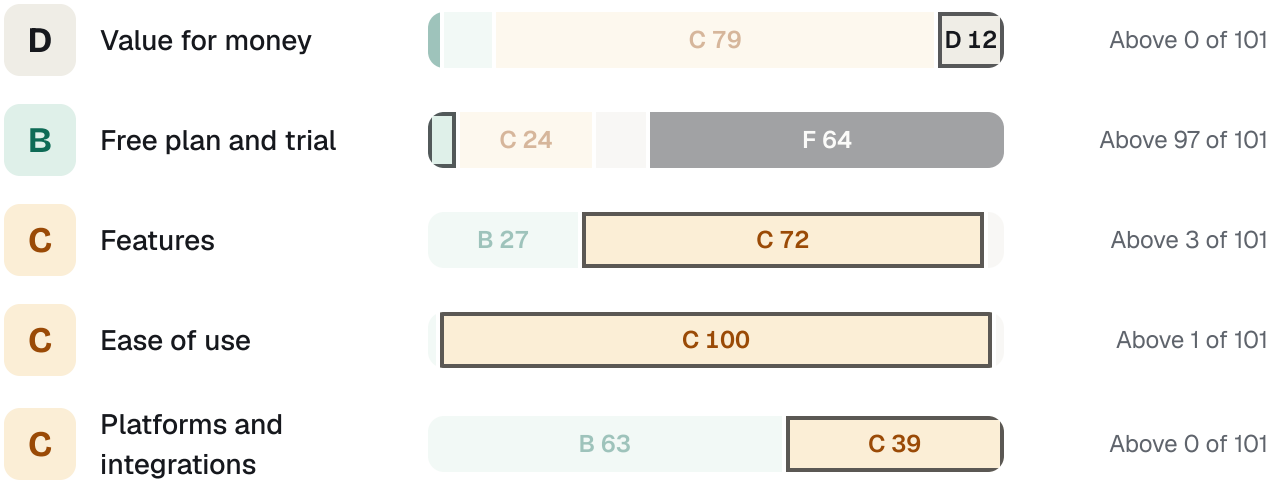
It stands best on free plan and trial (B, above 97 of 101) and worst on value for money (D, above 0).

Its paid plans start at $450 a month, against a middle price of $99 for the category: 39 of the 42 others that charge start lower.

On features, ease of use and platforms it scores 2.0 out of 4. 33 tools score higher and cost less.

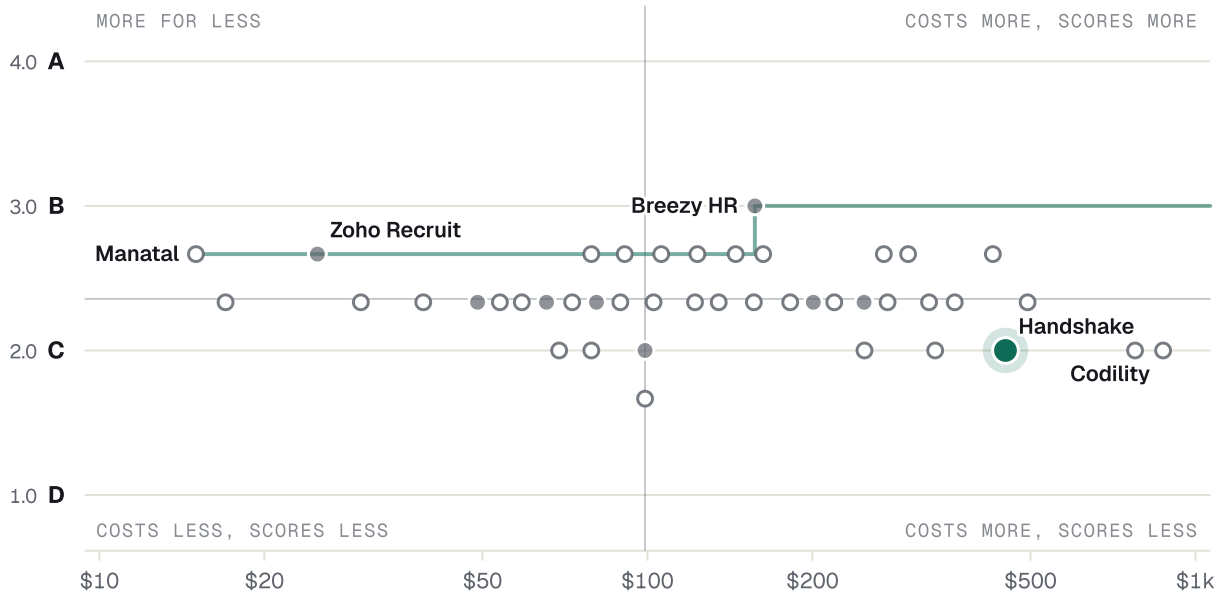
Each grade against the category

Every bar is all 102 hiring and applicant tracking tools we grade, cut by the letter each got. Handshake's own letter is outlined.



Price against what you get

Each dot is one of 43 hiring and applicant tracking tools. Further left costs less; higher up scores better on features, ease of use and platforms. Handshake 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 Handshake you would be making jobs posted to dozens of job boards at once, which takes an agreement with each board. That is not a weekend's work, with an AI app builder or without one.

It costs $5,400 a year.

What you could make

- Applicant tracking and reports: an app builder makes these well.

What you could not

- × Jobs posted to dozens of job boards at once, which takes an agreement with each board.

	× AI features, unless you pay a model provider for each request yourself.

What this rests on. Handshake'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



Wellfound, Indeed, Monster and Betterteam

The 4 tools Handshake is most often weighed against, with where each one differs from it.

Wellfound

2.6 GPA

Free plan · from $135/mo

Startup job board with AI sourcing and recruiter service.

- Handshake also covers reports.
- Wellfound also covers AI agents.

Handshake and Wellfound compared in full

Indeed

2.4 GPA

Free plan

Job search site with free and sponsored job posts for employers.

- Handshake also covers reports.

Handshake and Indeed compared in full

Monster

1.4 GPA

From $8

Job promotion and resume search on Monster and CareerBuilder.

- Handshake has a free plan. Monster does not.
- Handshake also covers reports.

Handshake and Monster compared in full

2.2
GPA

Betterteam

Free trial · from $39/mo

Job posting to many boards, priced by active jobs.

- Handshake has a free plan. Betterteam does not, though it has a free trial.
- Handshake also covers reports.

Handshake and Betterteam 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 Handshake free?

Handshake has a free plan. Basic: free job posting, 10 candidate messages a month and a simple company presence.

How much does Handshake cost?

Handshake lists 3 plans. Basic: $0.

What platforms does Handshake work on?

Handshake is available on Web.

Does Handshake have an Android app?

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

Does Handshake have an iPhone app?

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

Is Handshake open source?

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

Who makes Handshake?

Handshake is made by a company of the same name.

What are the alternatives to Handshake?

The closest alternatives to Handshake in our directory are Wellfound, Indeed, Monster and Betterteam.

How does Handshake compare with other hiring and applicant tracking tools?

Handshake's GPA of 2.0 is higher than 54 of the 101 other hiring and applicant tracking tools we grade, and level with 21.

Is Handshake good value for money?

ToolGPA grades Handshake D for value for money. Its paid plans start at $450 a month, against a middle price of $99 for the category: 39 of the 42 others that charge start lower.

Could I make my own version of Handshake?

To replace Handshake you would be making jobs posted to dozens of job boards at once, which takes an agreement with each board.

Where this guide comes from

The prices, plans, platforms and features were read from Handshake'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 Handshake'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 Handshake. Prices change, so check joinhandshake.com before you buy.

joinhandshake.com/employers/pricing/

joinhandshake.com/employers/

joinhandshake.com/

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

Handshake, kept up to date

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

toolgpa.com/tools/handshake

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, "Handshake: The Insider's Guide",
checked Nov 13, 2026.
https://toolgpa.com/tools/handshake
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Know someone choosing between hiring and applicant tracking tools?

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

ToolGPA elsewhere: youtube.com/@toolgpa

See our other guides

The best-graded hiring and applicant tracking tools after Handshake, each with an Insider's Guide of its own.

Hiring & Applicant Tracking Insider's Guide

Every one of the 102 hiring and applicant tracking tools we grade, compared

Manatal Insider's Guide

Low-cost per-user ATS and recruitment CRM with AI candidate matching

2.8 GPA

Breezy HR Insider's Guide

Flat-priced applicant tracking with a free one-job plan

2.6 GPA

JOIN Insider's Guide

Multiposting and applicant management priced per open job

2.6 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 Handshake'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. Handshake is a trademark of its owner, and this guide is not made, paid for or approved by Handshake. Prices and plans change: check joinhandshake.com before you buy.