ToolGPA

NOVEMBER 2026

Moonlight

The Insider’s Guide

Open-source client for streaming PC games to other devices



Every plan, grade, refund rule and rival among remote desktop apps, read from Moonlight’s own pages.

Made by Moonlight Game Streaming Project · checked Nov 12, 2026 · toolgpa.com

3.0
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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 Moonlight's own pages, its app-store listings and our grades. Every fact in it is on Moonlight'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

3.0

GPA, above 31 of the 35 other remote desktop apps we grade

Moonlight is an open-source game streaming client, formerly called Limelight, that plays games and the desktop of your own PC on another device over a local network or the Internet. It implements the protocol of NVIDIA's GameStream and works with hosts such as Sunshine. It is a community project with no paid version.

> "
>
> **Streaming over the internet needs your own network setup.**
>
> From our report card of Moonlight

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

1 **Best for streaming your gaming PC to another device**

It's only a client, so you need a host such as Sunshine or GeForce Experience on the PC.

2 **It is free**

Moonlight has no paid plan at all.

3 **It runs on 5 platforms**

Windows, macOS, Linux, iOS and Android.

4 **High-quality streaming**

The site lists streaming at up to 4K with HDR support and up to 120 FPS on the PC client, with an option to disable V-Sync for lower latency.

5 **Many client devices**

Clients are listed for Windows, macOS, Linux, Steam Link, Raspberry Pi 4, iOS, Apple TV, Android, Fire OS and ChromeOS, plus community ports for consoles and TVs.

6 **Full desktop access**

Anything visible on the host PC can be streamed, including the whole Windows desktop, not only games.

7 **A 3.0 GPA, above 31 of 35**

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

8 **Keep it**

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

Moonlight at a glance

PRICING Free	FREE PLAN It is free
FREE TRIAL None stated	RUNS ON macOS, Windows, Linux, iOS, Android
MADE BY Moonlight Game Streaming Project	CATEGORY Remote Desktop
OUR GRADE 3.0 GPA, very good	

The report card

Best for streaming your gaming PC to another device

Moonlight is a free client that streams a PC's games and desktop to Windows, Mac, Linux, iPhone, Android and more, with no ads or paid versions. It's only a client, so you need a host such as Sunshine or GeForce Experience on the PC. Streaming over the internet needs your own network setup.

TOOLGPA REPORT CARD

Moonlight

Graded Nov 12, 2026

SUBJECT	GRADE	COMMENT
Value for money	A	Free with no paid versions, subscriptions, ads or bundled services, against a $2.50 cheaper-quarter start for remote access tools.
Free plan and trial	A	Free outright, with nothing held back and no paid versions at all.
Features	C	Streaming, many client devices and full desktop access. It's only a client that needs a compatible host, and console and TV ports are unofficial.
Ease of use	C	No rating on record. You set up a host such as Sunshine, and over the internet you need port forwarding or a virtual network.
Platforms and integrations	B	Windows, Mac, Linux, iOS and Android, with Sunshine, GeForce Experience, ZeroTier and Tailscale links. No web version is listed.

Grade point average — Very good, out of 4.0 **3.0**

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 Moonlight is for

- ✓ Fits if you want to play games from your PC on another screen in the house
- ✓ Works for people who can set up a host such as Sunshine

Who it is not for

- ✗ Skip it if you want a plug-and-play remote support tool, as you must set up a host and network yourself
- ✗ Not for you if the PC has no compatible host, since Moonlight is only a client
- ✗ Watch out: console and TV ports are community or homebrew builds, not official apps
- ✗ Tight if you want to stream over the internet, which needs port forwarding or a virtual network

Good to know

Good for

- ✓ Gamers streaming from a home PC to a phone, TV or laptop
- ✓ Users who want a free, open-source alternative to paid streaming
- ✓ Anyone running a self-managed remote gaming setup

Worth knowing

- ⓘ It is only a client: you need a compatible host such as Sunshine or GeForce Experience on the PC.
- ⓘ Console and TV ports are community or homebrew builds, not official apps.
- ⓘ Streaming over the Internet needs your own network setup, such as port forwarding or a virtual network.

What it costs

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

Free

No paid plan at all

Moonlight is free to use.

> **Free outright, with nothing held back and no paid versions at all.**
>
> From our grade for free plan and trial

FREE

$0

Community project; the site says it has no paid versions, subscriptions, ads or bundled services.

Read from moonlight-stream.org on Nov 12, 2026.

What it does

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

5

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

Open-source client for streaming PC games to other devices. Here is what it does, as its own site describes it, and what it covers: open source, remote desktop.

> **Streaming, many client devices and full desktop access.**

From our grade for features

High-quality streaming

The site lists streaming at up to 4K with HDR support and up to 120 FPS on the PC client, with an option to disable V-Sync for lower latency.

Many client devices

Clients are listed for Windows, macOS, Linux, Steam Link, Raspberry Pi 4, iOS, Apple TV, Android, Fire OS and ChromeOS, plus community ports for consoles and TVs.

Full desktop access

Anything visible on the host PC can be streamed, including the whole Windows desktop, not only games.

Your own host

Sunshine, an open-source host built for Moonlight, is the recommended host; GeForce Experience and an Internet Hosting Tool are also listed.

Remote hosting options

The site says a home server can be reached through port forwarding, IPv6 or software-defined networks such as ZeroTier and Tailscale.

Where it runs

macOS · Windows · Linux · iOS · Android

What it works with

Sunshine · GeForce Experience · ZeroTier · Tailscale · NordVPN Meshnet

Moonlight is made by Moonlight Game Streaming Project.

Where it stands

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

31/35

Other remote desktop apps it is graded above

Moonlight's GPA of 3.0 is higher than 31 of the 35 other remote desktop apps we grade, and level with 2.

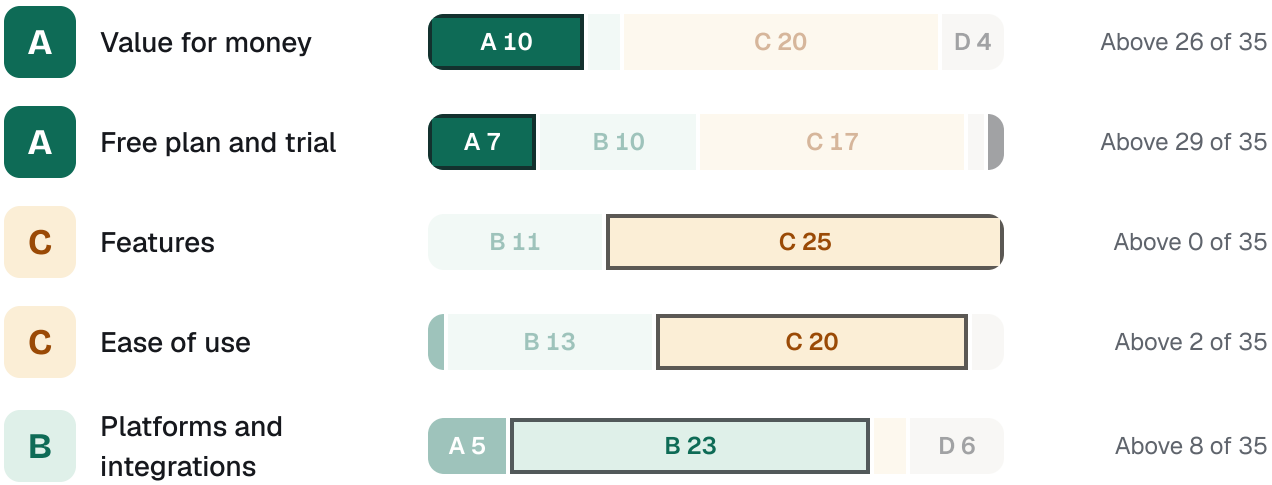
It stands best on free plan and trial (A, above 29 of 35) and worst on features (C, above 0).

Moonlight has no paid plan.

On features, ease of use and platforms it scores 2.3 out of 4. Nothing scores higher for less, though at least one tool matches that score at a lower price.

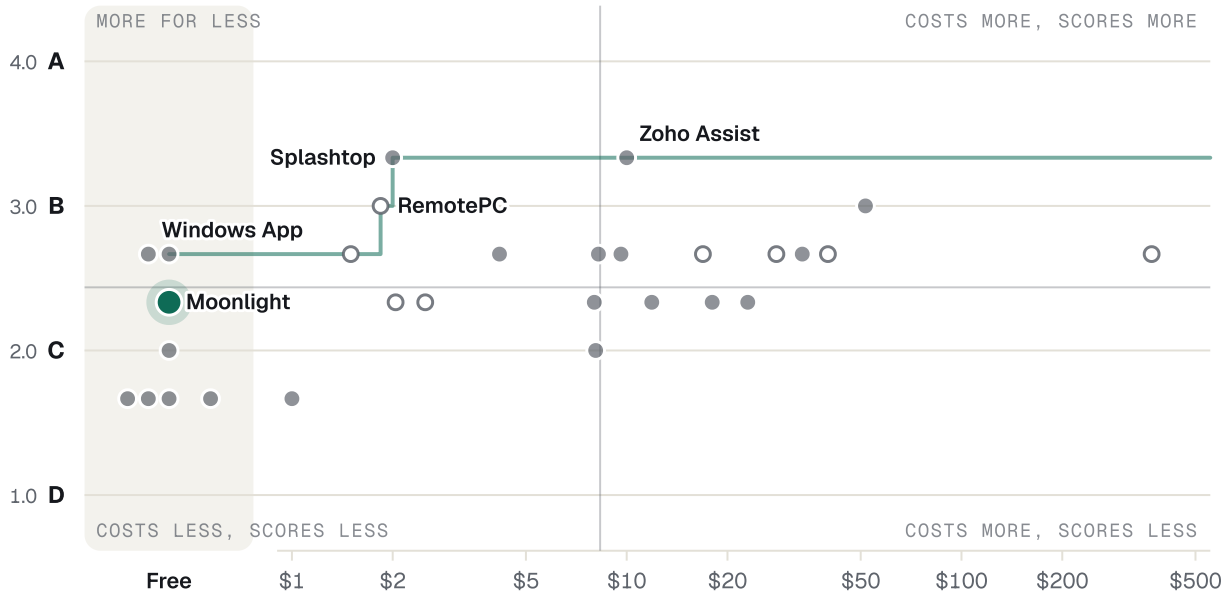
Each grade against the category

Every bar is all 36 remote desktop apps we grade, cut by the letter each got. Moonlight's own letter is outlined.



Price against what you get

Each dot is one of 29 remote desktop apps. Further left costs less; higher up scores better on features, ease of use and platforms. Moonlight 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

Moonlight 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 3.0 is higher than 31 of the 35 other remote desktop apps we grade.

What you could not

- ✕ A fast, secure link to another computer through any network.
- ✕ Apps for macOS, Windows, Linux, iOS and Android that stay in step with each other.
- ✕ It plugs into other products, Sunshine, GeForce Experience and ZeroTier among them.

What this rests on. Moonlight'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.

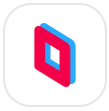
The alternatives



Parsec, RustDesk, Tailscale, NoMachine and Chrome Remote Desktop

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

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



2.6 GPA

Parsec

Free plan · from $8.33/mo

Low-latency remote desktop for games and creative work.

- Only Moonlight lists an iOS app.
- Only Parsec lists a web app.
- Moonlight is open source, according to its own site.

Moonlight and Parsec compared in full



3.0 GPA

RustDesk

Free plan · from $11.88/mo

Open-source remote desktop you can run on your own server.

- Only RustDesk lists a web app.
- RustDesk is self-hostable, according to its own site.

Moonlight and RustDesk compared in full



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GPA

Tailscale

Free plan · from $8/mo

Private network that links your devices, servers and teams.

- Tailscale is end-to-end encrypted, according to its own site.
- Moonlight also covers remote desktop.
- Tailscale also covers vPN.

Moonlight and Tailscale compared in full



2.2
GPA

NoMachine

Free trial · from $24.50/yr

Self-hosted remote desktop sold as yearly server subscriptions.

- Moonlight has a free plan. NoMachine does not, though it has a free trial.
- Only NoMachine lists a web app.
- Moonlight is open source, according to its own site.

Moonlight and NoMachine compared in full



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GPA

Chrome Remote Desktop

Free

Google's free remote access to your own computers from a browser.

- Only Chrome Remote Desktop lists a web app.
- Only Chrome Remote Desktop lists a browser extension.
- Moonlight is open source, according to its own site.

Moonlight and Chrome Remote Desktop compared in full

PART 06 · QUESTIONS

Quick answers

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

10

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 Moonlight free?

Yes. Moonlight is free to use.

How much does Moonlight cost?

Moonlight lists one plan. Free: $0.

What platforms does Moonlight work on?

Moonlight is available on Windows, macOS, Linux, iOS and Android.

Is Moonlight open source?

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

What does Moonlight integrate with?

Moonlight's listing names Sunshine, GeForce Experience, ZeroTier, Tailscale and NordVPN Meshnet.

Who makes Moonlight?

Moonlight is made by Moonlight Game Streaming Project.

What are the alternatives to Moonlight?

The closest alternatives to Moonlight in our directory are Parsec, RustDesk, Tailscale, NoMachine and Chrome Remote Desktop.

How does Moonlight compare with other remote desktop apps?

Moonlight's GPA of 3.0 is higher than 31 of the 35 other remote desktop apps we grade, and level with 2.

Is Moonlight good value for money?

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

Could I make my own version of Moonlight?

Moonlight 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 Moonlight'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 Moonlight'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 Moonlight Game Streaming Project. Prices change, so check moonlight-stream.org before you buy.

moonlight-stream.org

PART 07 · ABOUT

About ToolGPA

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

5,038

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**.

5,038	95	739	579
tools graded	categories	price changes on record	apps priced in 12 countries

What else is on toolgpa.com

Moonlight, kept up to date

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

toolgpa.com/tools/moonlight-game-streaming

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, "Moonlight: The Insider's
Guide", checked Nov 12, 2026.
https://toolgpa.com/tools/moonlight-
game-streaming
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Know someone choosing between remote desktop apps?

Send them this guide: toolgpa.com/tools/moonlight-game-streaming/guide

ToolGPA elsewhere: youtube.com/@toolgpa

See our other guides

The best-graded remote desktop apps after Moonlight, each with an Insider's Guide of its own.

Remote Desktop Insider's Guide

Every one of the 36 remote desktop apps we grade, compared

Chrome Remote Desktop Insider's Guide

Google's free remote access to your own computers from a browser

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Jump Desktop Insider's Guide

Remote desktop with one-time app licences and a per-user team plan

3.2 GPA

RustDesk Insider's Guide

Open-source remote desktop you can run on your own server

3.0 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 Moonlight'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. Moonlight is a trademark of its owner, and this guide is not made, paid for or approved by Moonlight Game Streaming Project. Prices and plans change: check moonlight-stream.org before you buy.