ToolGPA

NOVEMBER 2026

Openfire

The Insider's Guide

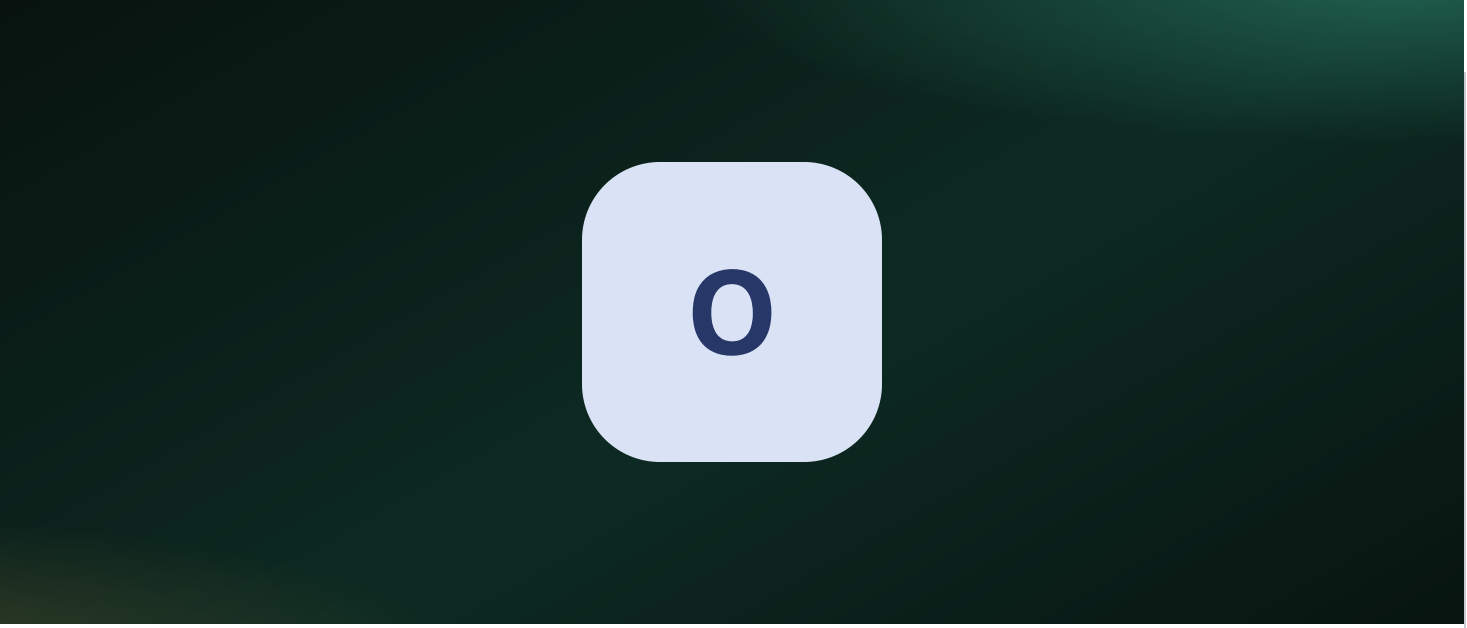
Open-source XMPP chat server you run on your own hardware



Every plan, grade, refund rule and rival among team communication apps, read from Openfire's own pages.

Made by Ignite Realtime · checked Nov 13, 2026 · toolgpa.com

2.2
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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 Openfire's own pages, its app-store listings and our grades. Every fact in it is on Openfire'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

2.2

GPA, above 9 of the 75 other team communication apps we grade

Openfire is a real-time collaboration server built on XMPP and released under the Apache License. You install it on your own machine and connect XMPP chat clients to it. It is developed by the Ignite Realtime community and has plugins and a separate Spark desktop client.

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

> "
>
> **It needs a separate Java runtime, there is no hosted version and the vendor offers no paid support, only a community forum.**
>
> From our report card of Openfire

1 **Best for your own XMPP chat server**

Openfire is a free XMPP chat server you install and run yourself, with plugins and an admin console.

2 **It is free**

Openfire has no paid plan at all. Free to download and run under the Apache License; no paid edition is listed.

3 **It runs on 3 platforms**

Windows, macOS and Linux.

4 **XMPP server**

Built on XMPP, which the project describes as the widely adopted open protocol for instant messaging.

5 **Plugins**

An archive of plugins extends the server, for example one that deploys the third-party Converse web client.

6 **Admin console**

The server is administered through a console, and plugins can be installed from it.

7 **A 2.2 GPA, above 9 of 75**

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

8 **Keep it**

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

Openfire at a glance

PRICING Free	FREE PLAN Yes
FREE TRIAL None stated	RUNS ON macOS, Windows, Linux
MADE BY Ignite Realtime	CATEGORY Team Communication
OUR GRADE 2.2 GPA, fair	

The report card

Best for your own XMPP chat server

Openfire is a free XMPP chat server you install and run yourself, with plugins and an admin console. It needs a separate Java runtime, there is no hosted version and the vendor offers no paid support, only a community forum.

TOOLGPA REPORT CARD	Openfire	Graded Nov 13, 2026

SUBJECT	GRADE	COMMENT
Value for money	C	Free under the Apache License, but only useful if you host it, which needs a server.
Free plan and trial	A	Free outright, with no paid edition and no cap.
Features	C	XMPP server, plugins and admin console. The matching Spark desktop client was last updated in March 2023.
Ease of use	D	No rating on record. You install a server, supply a Java runtime and maintain it.
Platforms and integrations	C	Runs on Windows, Mac and Linux servers, with plugins. Clients are separate, and no hosted version exists.

Grade point average Fair, out of 4.0 **2.2**

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 Openfire is for

- ✓ Fits if you want to run your own chat server and control the data
- ✓ Works for sysadmins already comfortable with Java and XMPP

Who it is not for

- ✕ Not for you if you do not want to maintain a server, since there is no hosted version
- ✕ Watch out: from version 4.7.0 on, no Java runtime is bundled
- ✕ Skip it if you need paid support, as only the community forum and issue tracker are listed
- ✕ Watch out: the Spark desktop client was last updated in March 2023
- ✕ Too light for end users on its own, since they need a separate chat client

Good to know

Good for

- ✓ IT teams that want to host their own chat server
- ✓ Organizations that need XMPP compatibility with existing clients
- ✓ Anyone who wants the server source under an open license

Worth knowing

- ⓘ It is server software: you install and maintain it yourself. Releases from 4.7.0 on no longer bundle a Java runtime, so you install one separately.
- ⓘ Installers are listed for Windows, macOS (dmg), Debian and RPM packages, and a Unix tarball. No hosted version is offered on the pages read.
- ⓘ The Spark desktop client download listed was last updated in March 2023.
- ⓘ Support comes from the community through the project's forums and issue tracker; the pages read list no paid support.

What it costs

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

Free

No paid plan at all

Openfire is free to use.

> **Free under the Apache License, but only useful if you host it, which needs a server.**
>
> From our grade for value for money

OPEN SOURCE

$0

Self-hosted server under the Apache License. You supply the machine and a Java runtime.

The free plan

Free to download and run under the Apache License; no paid edition is listed.

Read from igniterealtime.org on Nov 13, 2026.

What it does

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

3

Places it runs: macOS, Windows and Linux

Open-source XMPP chat server you run on your own hardware. Here is what it does, as its own site describes it, and what it covers: open source, self-hostable, public API, team chat.

> "Runs on Windows, Mac and Linux servers, with plugins."
>
> From our grade for platforms and integrations

XMPP server

Built on XMPP, which the project describes as the widely adopted open protocol for instant messaging.

Plugins

An archive of plugins extends the server, for example one that deploys the third-party Converse web client.

Admin console

The server is administered through a console, and plugins can be installed from it.

Recent XMPP security work

Project posts describe SASL2, Bind2 and FAST connection extensions and SCRAM-SHA-512-PLUS support.

Own desktop client

The same project publishes Spark, a cross-platform desktop chat client for organizations.

Where it runs

macOS · Windows · Linux

What it works with

Converse · Spark · Smack

Openfire is made by Ignite Realtime.

PART 04 · STANDING

Where it stands

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

9/75

Other team communication apps it is graded above

Openfire's GPA of 2.2 is higher than 9 of the 75 other team communication apps we grade, and level with 19.

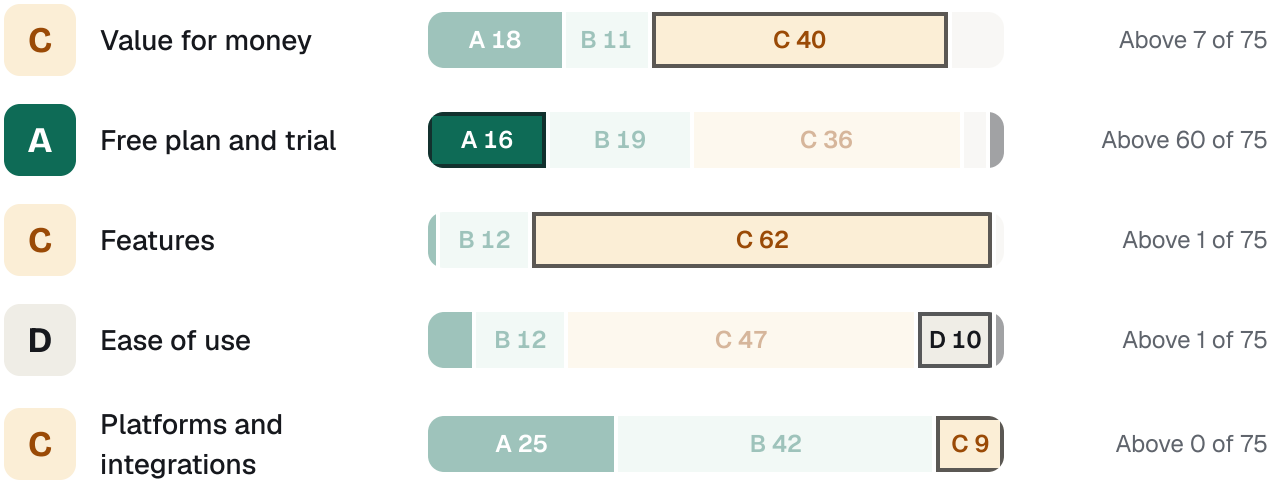
It stands best on free plan and trial (A, above 60 of 75) and worst on ease of use (D, above 1).

Openfire has no paid plan.

On features, ease of use and platforms it scores 1.7 out of 4. Nothing scores higher for less, though at least one tool matches that score at a lower price.

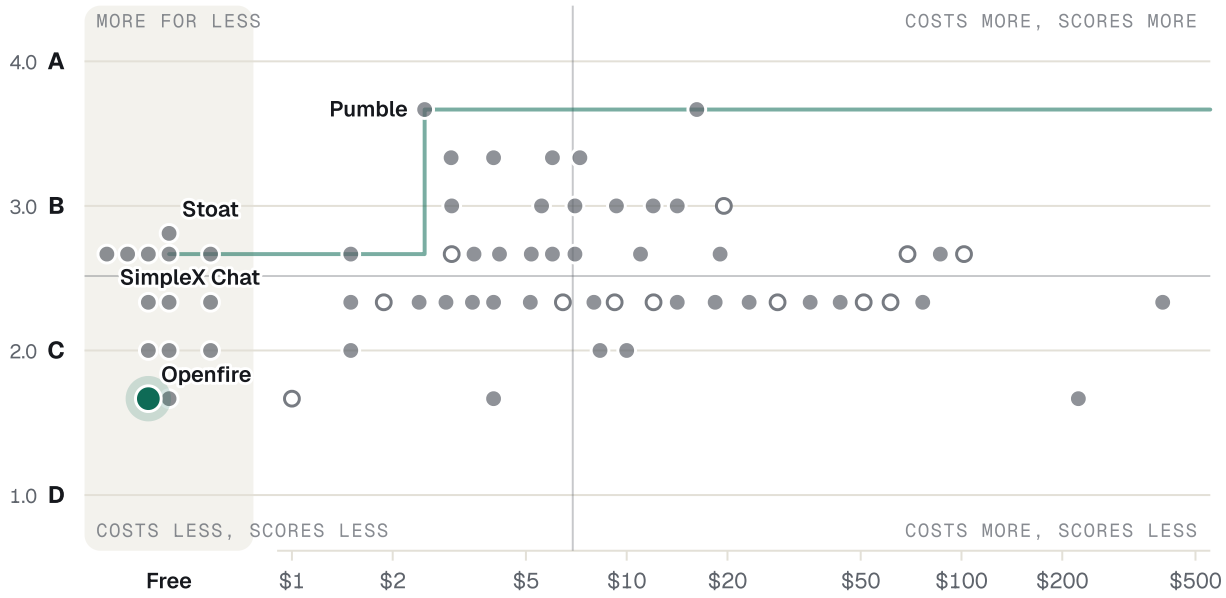
Each grade against the category

Every bar is all 76 team communication apps we grade, cut by the letter each got. Openfire's own letter is outlined.



Price against what you get

Each dot is one of 66 team communication apps. Further left costs less; higher up scores better on features, ease of use and platforms. Openfire 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

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

And it is not the kind of software a weekend replaces. That makes this kind of software worth paying for, not this one in particular: 47 of the 75 other team communication apps grade higher.

What you could not

- ✕ Chat that a whole team counts on staying up.
- ✕ Apps for macOS, Windows and Linux that stay in step with each other.
- ✕ It plugs into other products, Converse, Spark and Smack among them, and has an API.

- ✕ What a company asks for before it lets staff use something: roles and permissions.
- ✕ Sharing with other people, which means accounts and invitations.

What this rests on. Openfire'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



ejabberd, Mattermost, Rocket.Chat, Zulip and Matrix

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



2.0 GPA

ejabberd

Free plan · from €200/mo

Erlang messaging server for XMPP, MQTT, SIP and Matrix.

Openfire and ejabberd compared in full



2.4 GPA

Mattermost

Free plan

Self-hosted team messaging with playbooks, calls and boards.

- Only Mattermost lists a web app.
- Only Mattermost lists iOS and Android apps.
- Mattermost also covers kanban boards, workflow automation and AI agents.

Openfire and Mattermost compared in full



2.4
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Rocket.Chat

Free plan

Open-source, self-managed chat for security-focused teams.

- Only Rocket.Chat lists a web app.
- Only Rocket.Chat lists iOS and Android apps.
- Rocket.Chat is end-to-end encrypted, according to its own site.

Openfire and Rocket.Chat compared in full



2.8
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Zulip

Free plan · from $3.50/mo

Open-source team chat that organizes channels by topic.

- Only Zulip lists a web app.
- Only Zulip lists iOS and Android apps.
- Zulip also covers file sharing.

Openfire and Zulip compared in full



3.0
GPA

Matrix

Free

Open, decentralized network for chat and calls.

- Only Matrix lists a web app.
- Only Matrix lists iOS and Android apps.
- Matrix is end-to-end encrypted, according to its own site.

Openfire and Matrix compared in full

PART 06 · QUESTIONS

Quick answers

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

13

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 Openfire free?

Yes. Openfire is free to use.

How much does Openfire cost?

Openfire lists one plan. Open source: $0.

What platforms does Openfire work on?

Openfire is available on Windows, macOS and Linux.

Does Openfire have an Android app?

No Android app was listed when its pages were read on Nov 13, 2026. Openfire is listed for Windows, macOS and Linux.

Does Openfire have an iPhone app?

No iPhone app was listed when its pages were read on Nov 13, 2026. Openfire is listed for Windows, macOS and Linux.

Is Openfire open source?

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

Does Openfire have an API?

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

What does Openfire integrate with?

Openfire's listing names Converse, Spark and Smack. A listing names up to eight integrations, so it may connect to more.

Who makes Openfire?

Openfire is made by Ignite Realtime.

What are the alternatives to Openfire?

The closest alternatives to Openfire in our directory are ejabberd, Mattermost, Rocket.Chat, Zulip and Matrix.

How does Openfire compare with other team communication apps?

Openfire's GPA of 2.2 is higher than 9 of the 75 other team communication apps we grade, and level with 19.

Is Openfire good value for money?

ToolGPA grades Openfire C for value for money. Openfire has no paid plan.

Could I make my own version of Openfire?

Openfire 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 Openfire'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 Ignite Realtime'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 Ignite Realtime. Prices change, so check igniterealtime.org before you buy.

igniterealtime.org/projects/openfire/

igniterealtime.org/downloads/

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

Openfire, kept up to date

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

toolgpa.com/tools/openfire

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, "Openfire: The Insider's Guide",
checked Nov 13, 2026.
https://toolgpa.com/tools/openfire
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Know someone choosing between team communication apps?

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

ToolGPA elsewhere: youtube.com/@toolgpa

See our other guides

The best-graded team communication apps after Openfire, each with an Insider's Guide of its own.

Team Communication Insider's Guide

Every one of the 76 team communication apps we grade, compared

Discord Insider's Guide

Free text, voice and video chat built around servers

3.6 GPA

Pumble Insider's Guide

Team chat with unlimited message history on the free plan

3.6 GPA

Zoho Cliq Insider's Guide

Team chat, calls and meetings from the Zoho suite

3.4 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 Openfire'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. Openfire is a trademark of its owner, and this guide is not made, paid for or approved by Ignite Realtime. Prices and plans change: check igniterealtime.org before you buy.