ToolGPA

NOVEMBER 2026

Pidgin

The Insider's Guide

Desktop chat client that connects to many chat networks at once



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

Made by Pidgin · checked Nov 13, 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 Pidgin's own pages, its app-store listings and our grades. Every fact in it is on Pidgin'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

2.8

GPA, above 49 of the 75 other team communication apps we grade

Pidgin is a free, open-source chat program that lets you log in to accounts on several chat networks at the same time, such as XMPP and IRC. It is a client for existing networks rather than a hosted team workspace. Plugins extend it, and it has no ads.

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

> "
>
> **It is only a client, though: there is no phone app, no browser version, no hosted workspace, and the Mac version is left to Adium.**
>
> From our report card of Pidgin

1 **Best for one desktop window for several chat networks**

Pidgin is a desktop chat program that logs into several networks at once, such as XMPP and IRC.

2 **It is free**

Pidgin has no paid plan at all.

3 **It runs on 2 platforms**

Windows and Linux.

4 **Several networks in one window**

Out of the box it works with Jabber/XMPP, Bonjour, Gadu-Gadu, IRC, GroupWise Messenger, Sametime, SILC, SIMPLE and Zephyr.

5 **Plugins for more protocols**

Plugins add support for further chat networks and extend what the client can do.

6 **Chat network features**

Supports file transfers, away messages, buddy icons, custom smileys and typing notifications where the network offers them.

7 **A 2.8 GPA, above 49 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**

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

Pidgin at a glance

PRICING Free	FREE PLAN It is free
FREE TRIAL None stated	RUNS ON Windows, Linux
MADE BY Pidgin	CATEGORY Team Communication
OUR GRADE 2.8 GPA, good	

The report card

Best for one desktop window for several chat networks

Pidgin is a desktop chat program that logs into several networks at once, such as XMPP and IRC. It is free and has no ads. It is only a client, though:

there is no phone app, no browser version, no hosted workspace, and the Mac version is left to Adium.

TOOLGPA REPORT CARD **Pidgin** Graded Nov 13, 2026

SUBJECT	GRADE	COMMENT
Value for money	A	Free and open source under the GPL, with no ads. A program anyone can download and run.
Free plan and trial	A	Free outright, with no paid tier and no cap. Donations are accepted.
Features	C	Handles several accounts in one window and adds more through plugins. It is a client for other people's networks, so it does a smaller job than a workspace.
Ease of use	C	No rating on record. You add and set up each chat account yourself before it does anything.
Platforms and integrations	C	Windows and Linux only. No Mac build from the project, no mobile app and no 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 Pidgin is for

- ✓ Fits if you keep accounts on XMPP and IRC and want them in one window
- ✓ Works for Windows or Linux users who would rather have a small program than a browser tab

Who it is not for

- ✗ Skip it if you want a phone app, as none is listed
- ✗ Not for you if you are on a Mac, since the vendor points you to Adium
- ✗ Too light for team use, with no workspace, channels structure or admin tools of its own
- ✗ Watch out: Linux builds come from your distribution's package manager, not from the project

Good to know

Good for

- ✓ People who already use XMPP or IRC and want one client
- ✓ Users who want a free, ad-free desktop chat program

Worth knowing

- ⓘ It is a desktop client only: no hosted workspace, mobile app or browser version is listed.
- ⓘ The vendor says it runs on Windows, Linux, BSD and other UNIX-like systems; for macOS it points to Adium instead.
- ⓘ Linux builds are not provided by the project; it recommends installing from the distribution's package manager.

What it costs

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

Free

No paid plan at all

Pidgin is free to use.

> **Free and open source under the GPL, with no ads.**
>
> From our grade for value for money

FREE

$0

Free, open source under the GNU General Public License, with no ads. Donations are accepted.

Read from pidgin.im on Nov 13, 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

Desktop chat client that connects to many chat networks at once. Here is what it does, as its own site describes it, and what it covers: open source, team chat, file sharing.

> **Handles several accounts in one window and adds more through plugins.**

From our grade for features

Several networks in one window

Out of the box it works with Jabber/XMPP, Bonjour, Gadu-Gadu, IRC, GroupWise Messenger, Sametime, SILC, SIMPLE and Zephyr.

Plugins for more protocols

Plugins add support for further chat networks and extend what the client can do.

Chat network features

Supports file transfers, away messages, buddy icons, custom smileys and typing notifications where the network offers them.

Open source, no ads

The code is licensed under the GNU General Public License and the program contains no advertising.

Where it runs

Windows · Linux

What it works with

XMPP · IRC · Bonjour · Gadu-Gadu · GroupWise Messenger · Sametime · SILC · Zephyr

Pidgin is made by Pidgin.

Where it stands

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

49/75

Other team communication apps it is graded above

Pidgin's GPA of 2.8 is higher than 49 of the 75 other team communication apps we grade, and level with 10.

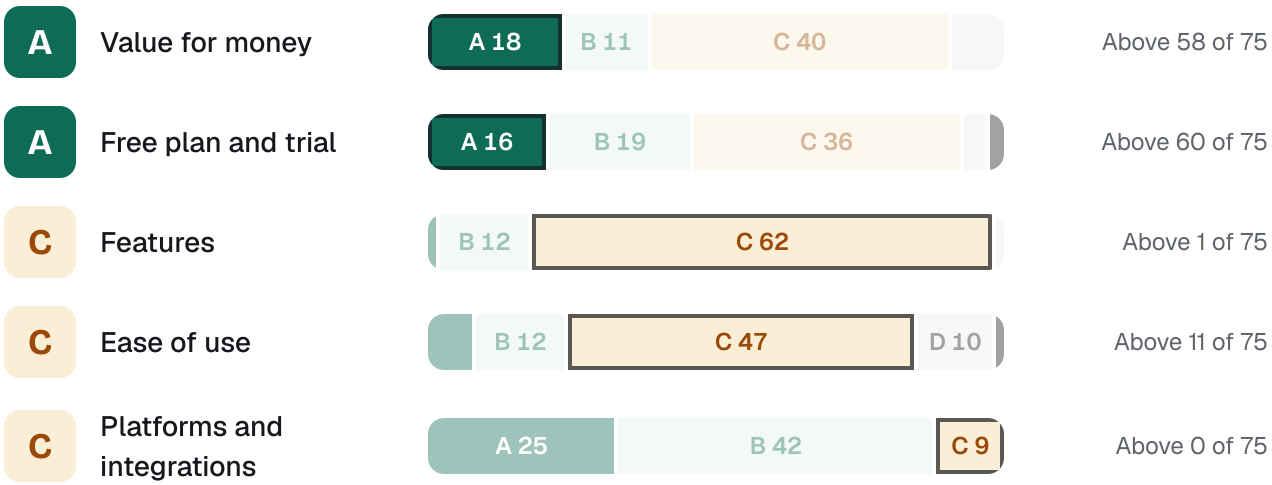
It stands best on free plan and trial (A, above 60 of 75) and worst on platforms and integrations (C, above 0).

Pidgin 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.

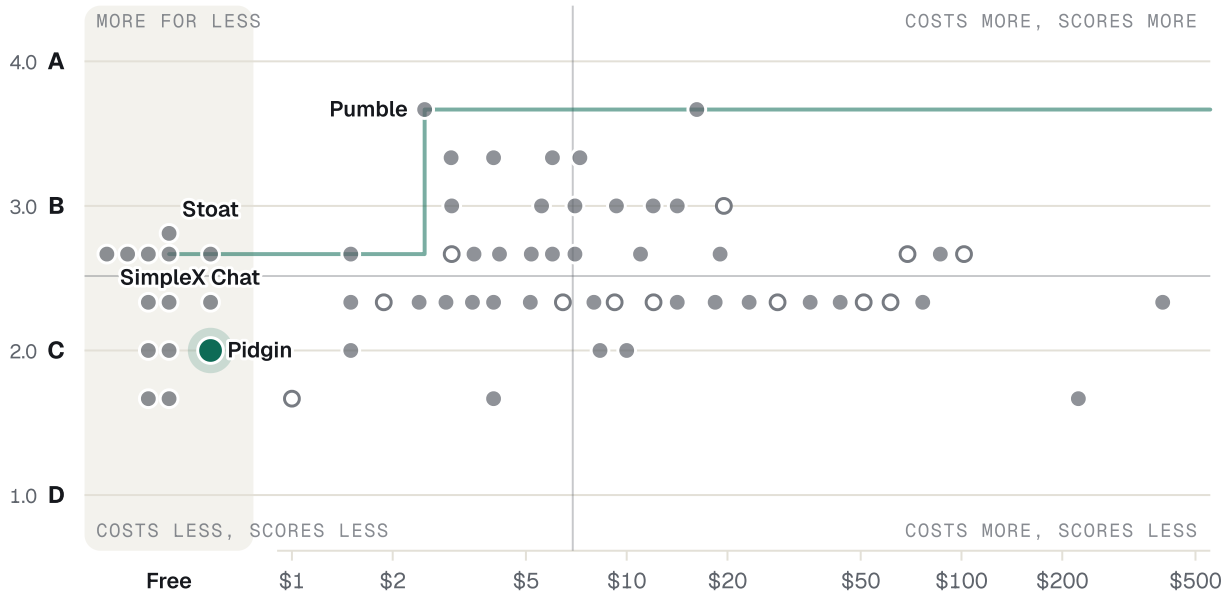
Each grade against the category

Every bar is all 76 team communication apps we grade, cut by the letter each got. Pidgin'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. Pidgin 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

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

And it is not the kind of software a weekend replaces.

What you could not

- ✕ Chat that a whole team counts on staying up.
- ✕ Storing and serving files for other people.
- ✕ A real app for Windows and Linux. Something home-made would be a web page.
- ✕ It plugs into other products, XMPP, IRC and Bonjour among them.

What this rests on. Pidgin'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



Jami, Matrix, Element, Openfire and ejabberd

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

Jami

3.2 GPA

Free

Peer-to-peer encrypted chat, calls and video conferences.

- Only Jami lists macOS, iOS and Android apps.
- Jami is end-to-end encrypted, according to its own site.
- Jami also covers video calls.

Pidgin and Jami compared in full

Matrix

3.0 GPA

Free

Open, decentralized network for chat and calls.

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

Pidgin and Matrix compared in full

Element

2.8 GPA

Free plan

End-to-end encrypted chat and calls on the Matrix standard.

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

Pidgin and Element compared in full

Openfire

2.2 GPA

Free

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

- Only Openfire lists a macOS app.
- Openfire is self-hostable, according to its own site.
- Pidgin also covers file sharing.

Pidgin and Openfire compared in full

ejabberd

2.0 GPA

Free plan · from €200/mo

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

- Only ejabberd lists a macOS app.
- ejabberd is self-hostable, according to its own site.
- Pidgin also covers file sharing.

Pidgin and ejabberd compared in full

Quick answers

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

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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 Pidgin free?

Yes. Pidgin is free to use.

How much does Pidgin cost?

Pidgin lists one plan. Free: $0.

What platforms does Pidgin work on?

Pidgin is available on Windows and Linux.

Does Pidgin have an Android app?

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

Does Pidgin have an iPhone app?

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

Is Pidgin open source?

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

What does Pidgin integrate with?

Pidgin's listing names XMPP, IRC, Bonjour, Gadu-Gadu, GroupWise Messenger, Sametime, SILC and Zephyr.

Who makes Pidgin?

Pidgin is made by a company of the same name.

What are the alternatives to Pidgin?

The closest alternatives to Pidgin in our directory are Jami, Matrix, Element, Openfire and ejabberd.

How does Pidgin compare with other team communication apps?

Pidgin's GPA of 2.8 is higher than 49 of the 75 other team communication apps we grade, and level with 10.

Is Pidgin good value for money?

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

Could I make my own version of Pidgin?

Pidgin 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 Pidgin'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 Pidgin'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 Pidgin. Prices change, so check pidgin.im before you buy.

pidgin.im
pidgin.im/about/
pidgin.im/install/

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

Pidgin, kept up to date

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

toolgpa.com/tools/pidgin

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

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

ToolGPA elsewhere: youtube.com/@toolgpa

See our other guides

The best-graded team communication apps after Pidgin, 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 Pidgin'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. Pidgin is a trademark of its owner, and this guide is not made, paid for or approved by Pidgin. Prices and plans change: check pidgin.im before you buy.