ToolGPA

NOVEMBER 2026

Prefect

The Insider's Guide

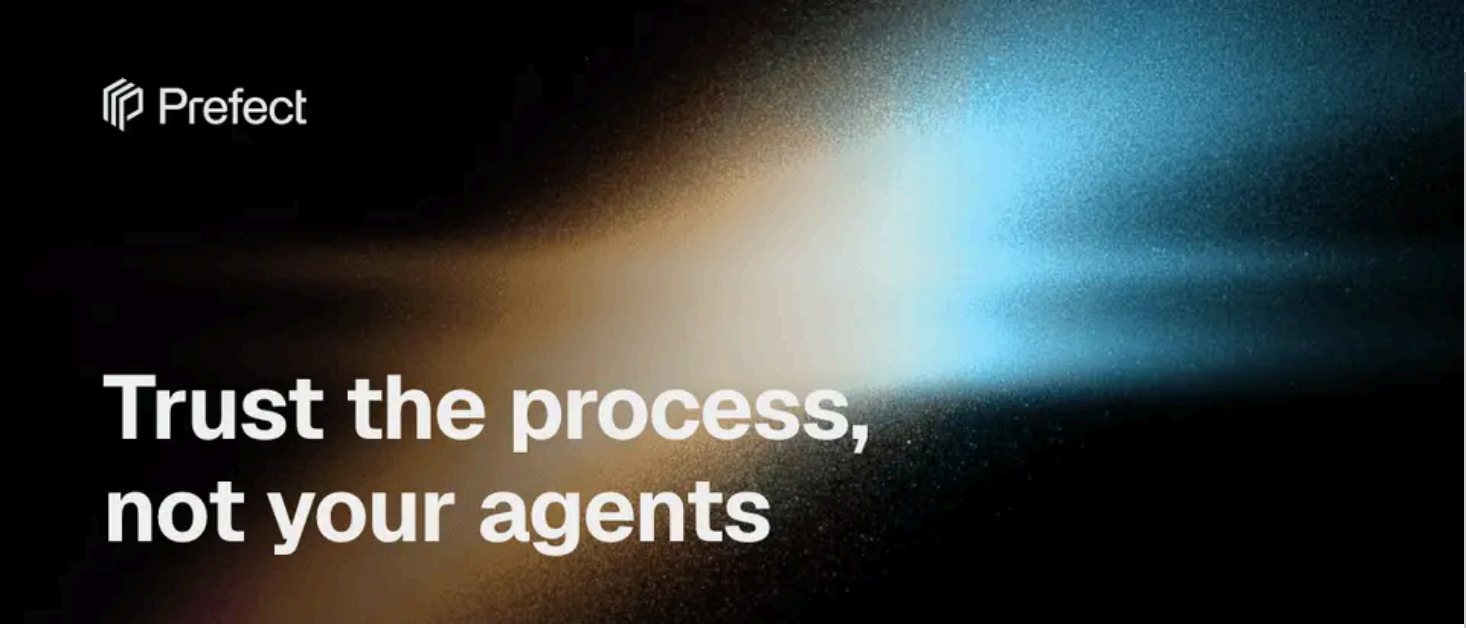
Python workflow orchestration with an open-source core and a cloud



Every plan, grade, refund rule and rival among automation tools, read from Prefect's own pages.

Made by Prefect Technologies, Inc. · checked Nov 13, 2026 · toolgpa.com

2.4
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 Prefect's own pages, its app-store listings and our grades. Every fact in it is on Prefect'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

2.4

GPA, above 90 of the 134 other automation tools we grade

Prefect is a workflow orchestration framework for Python. A decorator turns an ordinary function into a flow with retries, scheduling and run tracking, and the same code runs on the open-source server or on Prefect Cloud. The cloud adds hosted compute, alerting, service accounts and governance features across four plans.

> "You write Python and set up work pools, or self-host the server."
>
> From our grade for ease of use

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

1 **Best for Python teams scheduling and tracking workflows**

Prefect turns an ordinary Python function into a scheduled, retried and tracked workflow, on an open-source server or on Prefect Cloud.

2 **Paid plans start at $100 a month**

As its pricing page puts it: $100 per month, billed monthly (Starter, 3 users).

3 There is a free plan

Hobby plan: 2 users, up to 5 deployments, 500 minutes a month of Prefect Serverless and 7 days of run retention.

4 It runs on Web

Web.

5 Flows from plain Python

Adding a decorator to a Python function makes it a flow with retries, state tracking and artifacts, without a separate DAG definition language.

6 Scheduling and deployments

Flows are packaged as deployments that can be scheduled, triggered by webhooks or events, and run remotely on work pools you configure.

7 Prefect Serverless

Managed compute run by Prefect, so flows can run without hosting your own infrastructure. Each paid plan includes a monthly allowance of it.

8 A 2.4 GPA, above 90 of 134

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

9 Keep it

To replace Prefect you would be making connections to other products, each kept working as those products change. That is not a weekend's work, with an AI app builder or without one.

Prefect at a glance

PRICING
Free plan, from $100 per month, billed monthly (Starter, 3 users)

FREE PLAN
Yes

FREE TRIAL
None stated

RUNS ON
Web

MADE BY
Prefect Technologies, Inc.

CATEGORY
Automation

OUR GRADE
2.4 GPA, fair

The report card

Best for Python teams scheduling and tracking workflows

Prefect turns an ordinary Python function into a scheduled, retried and tracked workflow, on an open-source server or on Prefect Cloud. The free Hobby plan stops at 2 users and 5 deployments, the cheapest Team bill is $400 a month, and it needs people who write Python.

TOOLGPA REPORT CARD — **Prefect** — Graded Nov 13, 2026

SUBJECT	GRADE	COMMENT
Value for money	C	The open-source version is free to host yourself, which needs a server. Paid Cloud starts at $100 a month for 3 users, against a $19.99 middle for automation tools.
Free plan and trial	B	A free Hobby plan: 2 users, 5 deployments, 500 minutes a month of serverless compute and 7 days of run retention. One person can live on that.

SUBJECT	GRADE	COMMENT
Features	B	Flows, scheduling, remote runs, managed compute, alerting and automations. SSO, SCIM and an SLA are Enterprise only, which the listing treats as plan gating.
Ease of use	D	No store rating on record. You write Python and set up work pools, or self-host the server.
Platforms and integrations	B	Web, an API and integrations with AWS, Databricks, dbt, Docker, Kubernetes, Slack, Snowflake and GitHub. No desktop or phone app.
Grade point average		Fair, out of 4.0 **2.4**

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 Prefect is for

- ✓ Fits if you write Python and want scheduling, retries and run history
- ✓ Makes sense if you want an open-source core you can self-host

Who it is not for

- ✗ Not for you if you don't write code, as workflows are Python functions
- ✗ Tight if you grow past Hobby: 2 users, 5 deployments and 7 days of run history
- ✗ Pricey if you need Team: it starts at 4 users at $100 each, so $400 a month
- ✗ Watch out: SSO, SCIM, RBAC and an uptime SLA are Enterprise only
- ✗ Watch out: there is no free trial of paid plans, the Hobby plan stands in for it

Good to know

Good for

- ✓ Python data and ML teams moving scripts into scheduled, monitored workflows
- ✓ Small teams that want a hosted control plane without a per-run price
- ✓ Teams that want to start self-hosted and move to a managed cloud later

Worth knowing

- ⓘ The Hobby plan stops at 2 users, 5 deployments and 7 days of run retention.
- ⓘ Team starts at 4 users at $100 per user per month, so the cheapest Team bill is $400 a month.
- ⓘ SSO, SCIM, object-level RBAC and an uptime SLA are Enterprise-only; Starter and Team have no SLA.
- ⓘ The pricing page says it offers no free trial of paid plans; the Hobby plan serves that purpose.

PART 02 · PRICING

What it costs

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

$100

A month to start. There is a free plan too

Prefect has a free plan. Paid plans start at $100 per month, billed monthly (Starter, 3 users).

> **The open-source version is free to host yourself, which needs a server.**
>
> From our grade for value for money

HOBBY

$0

2 users, 5 deployments, 500 min/mo of Prefect Serverless, logging and alerting, 7-day run retention.

STARTER

$100

per month for up to 3 users, billed monthly

20 deployments, 75 hours/mo of Prefect Serverless, bring your own compute, webhooks and 1,250 API requests/min.

TEAM

$100

per user / month, for 4 to 8 users, billed monthly

100 deployments, 225 hours/mo of Prefect Serverless, service accounts, 24-hour audit log, email support.

ENTERPRISE

Custom

SSO (SAML/OIDC), RBAC and ACLs, SCIM, multiple workspaces, unlimited deployments and a 99.9% uptime SLA. Annual billing; sold through sales.

The free plan

Hobby plan: 2 users, up to 5 deployments, 500 minutes a month of Prefect Serverless and 7 days of run retention.

Read from prefect.io on Nov 13, 2026.

Ways to pay less

STARTUPS

Prefect Startup Program

The pricing page says eligible startups get credits toward the Team plan through the Prefect Startup Program; qualification is by application.

Stated on prefect.io

What it does

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

1

Place it runs: Web

Python workflow orchestration with an open-source core and a cloud. Here is what it does, as its own site describes it, and what it covers: open source, self-hostable, public API, workflow automation, AI agents.

> "
>
> **Flows, scheduling, remote runs, managed compute, alerting and automations.**

From our grade for features

Flows from plain Python

Adding a decorator to a Python function makes it a flow with retries, state tracking and artifacts, without a separate DAG definition language.

Scheduling and deployments

Flows are packaged as deployments that can be scheduled, triggered by webhooks or events, and run remotely on work pools you configure.

Prefect Serverless

Managed compute run by Prefect, so flows can run without hosting your own infrastructure. Each paid plan includes a monthly allowance of it.

Observability and automations

Run logs, alerting and event-driven automations that send notifications or trigger runs when something in a workflow changes state.

Open-source core

The orchestration framework is open source and can be self-hosted; Prefect Cloud is the hosted version with more governance and scale features.

Security and compliance

Prefect states SOC 2 Type II, HIPAA and GDPR alignment, with hybrid and VPC deployment options on higher plans.

Where it runs

Web

What it works with

AWS
Databricks
dbt
Docker
Kubernetes
Slack
Snowflake
GitHub

Prefect is made by Prefect Technologies, Inc.

Where it stands

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

90/134

Other automation tools it is graded above

Prefect's GPA of 2.4 is higher than 90 of the 134 other automation tools we grade, and level with 23.

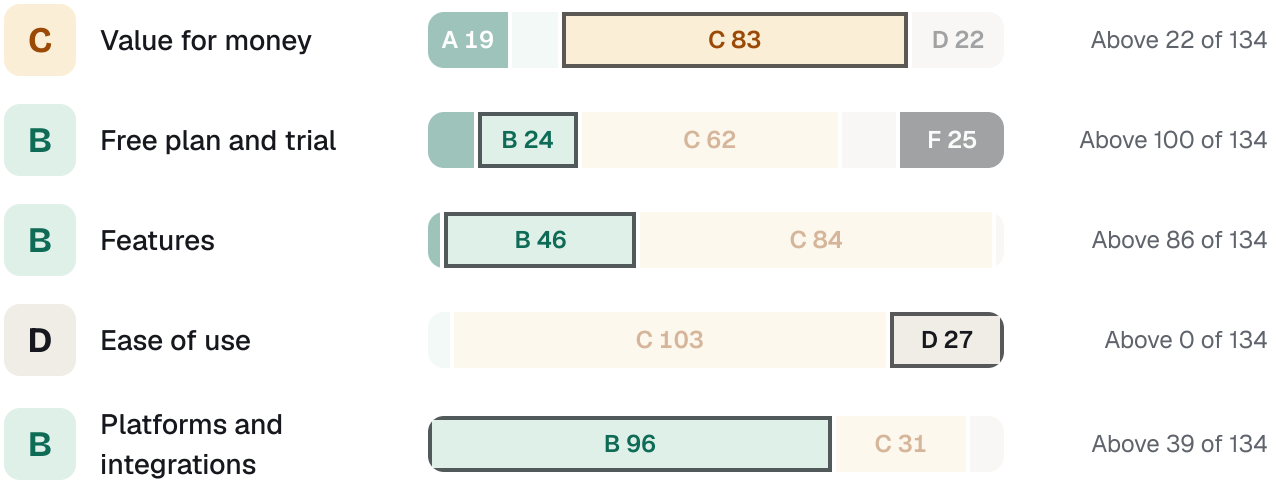
It stands best on free plan and trial (B, above 100 of 134) and worst on ease of use (D, above 0).

Its paid plans start at $100 a month, against a middle price of $22.17 for the category: 54 of the 65 others that charge start lower.

On features, ease of use and platforms it scores 2.3 out of 4. 18 tools score higher and cost less.

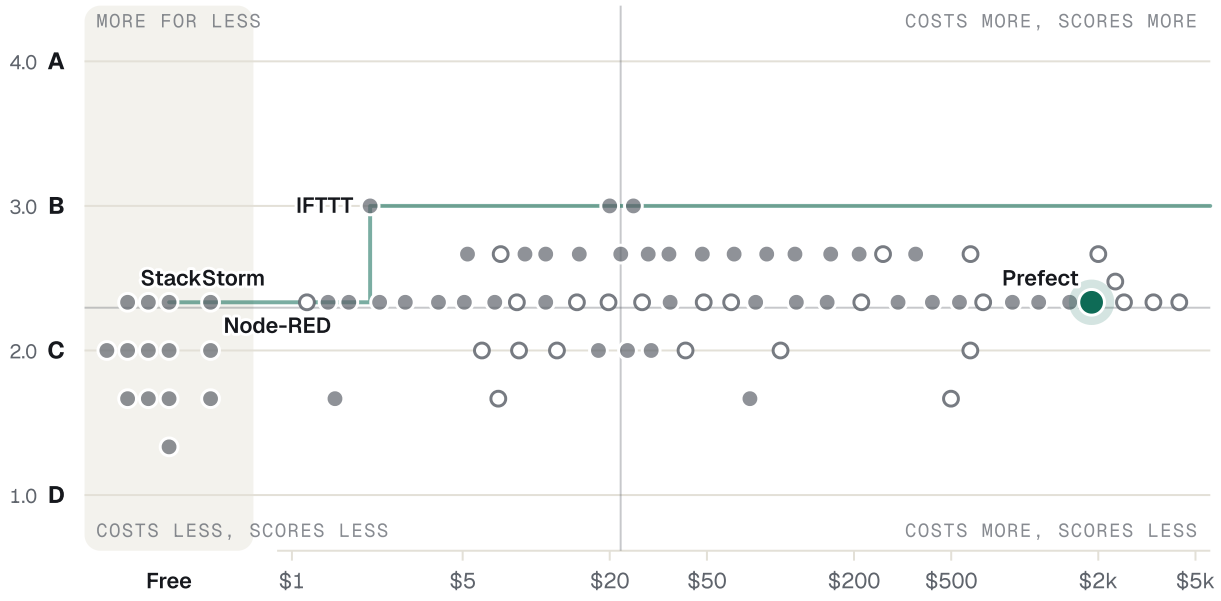
Each grade against the category

Every bar is all 135 automation tools we grade, cut by the letter each got. Prefect's own letter is outlined.



Price against what you get

Each dot is one of 80 automation tools. Further left costs less; higher up scores better on features, ease of use and platforms. Prefect 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 Prefect you would be making connections to other products, each kept working as those products change. That is not a weekend's work, with an AI app builder or without one.

It is one of the better ones too: its GPA of 2.4 is higher than 90 of the 134 other automation tools we grade. It costs $1,200 a year. Prefect is open source, so there is a third way: take its code and run it yourself.

What you could not

- ✕ Connections to other products, each kept working as those products change.

- ✕ An AI agent, with the models and the safeguards behind it.
- ✕ What a company asks for before it lets staff use something: SOC 2 and HIPAA.
- ✕ The depth: we grade its features B, which means it covers the whole job.

What this rests on. Prefect'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



Dagster, Apache Airflow, Kestra, Windmill and Astronomer

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

2.0 GPA

Dagster

Free trial · from $10/mo

Asset-based data orchestration platform, now part of Prefect.

- Prefect has a free plan. Dagster does not, though it has a free trial.
- Prefect also covers AI agents.
- Dagster also covers dashboards.

Prefect and Dagster compared in full

2.4 GPA

Apache Airflow

Free

Open-source platform for authoring and scheduling workflows in Python.

- Prefect also covers AI agents.

Prefect and Apache Airflow compared in full



2.4
GPA

Kestra

Free plan

Open-source workflow orchestration platform defined in YAML.

- Prefect also covers AI agents.

Prefect and Kestra compared in full



2.6
GPA

Windmill

Free plan · from $10/mo

Open-source platform for scripts, workflows and internal apps.

- Windmill also covers app builder.

Prefect and Windmill compared in full



1.8
GPA

Astronomer

Free trial · from $0.35

Managed Apache Airflow platform (Astro) with usage-based pricing.

- Prefect has a free plan. Astronomer does not, though it has a free trial.
- Prefect is open source and self-hostable, according to its own site.
- Astronomer also covers dashboards.

Prefect and Astronomer compared in full

Quick answers

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

14

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 Prefect free?

Prefect has a free plan. Hobby plan: 2 users, up to 5 deployments, 500 minutes a month of Prefect Serverless and 7 days of run retention.

How much does Prefect cost?

Prefect lists 4 plans. Hobby: $0.

What platforms does Prefect work on?

Prefect is available on Web.

Does Prefect offer any discounts?

Prefect publicly lists the following: Prefect Startup Program.

Does Prefect have an Android app?

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

Does Prefect have an iPhone app?

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

Is Prefect open source?

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

Does Prefect have an API?

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

What does Prefect integrate with?

Prefect's listing names AWS, Databricks, dbt, Docker, Kubernetes, Slack, Snowflake and GitHub.

Who makes Prefect?

Prefect is made by Prefect Technologies, Inc.

What are the alternatives to Prefect?

The closest alternatives to Prefect in our directory are Dagster, Apache Airflow, Kestra, Windmill and Astronomer.

How does Prefect compare with other automation tools?

Prefect's GPA of 2.4 is higher than 90 of the 134 other automation tools we grade, and level with 23.

Is Prefect good value for money?

ToolGPA grades Prefect C for value for money. Its paid plans start at $100 a month, against a middle price of $22.17 for the category: 54 of the 65 others that charge start lower.

Could I make my own version of Prefect?

To replace Prefect you would be making connections to other products, each kept working as those products change.

Where this guide comes from

The prices, plans, platforms and features were read from Prefect'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 Prefect'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 Prefect Technologies, Inc. Prices change, so check prefect.io before you buy.

prefect.io/pricing
docs.prefect.io/integrations/
prefect.io/prefect/open-source

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

Prefect, kept up to date

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

toolgpa.com/tools/prefect

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, "Prefect: The Insider's Guide",
checked Nov 13, 2026.
https://toolgpa.com/tools/prefect
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ToolGPA elsewhere: youtube.com/@toolgpa

See our other guides

The best-graded automation tools after Prefect, each with an Insider's Guide of its own.

Automation Insider's Guide

Every one of the 135 automation tools we grade, compared

Knime Insider's Guide

Open-source visual workflows for data analysis and automation

3.2 GPA

IFTTT Insider's Guide

Simple trigger-and-action automations for apps and smart devices

3.0 GPA

Node-RED Insider's Guide

Open-source, flow-based programming tool for event-driven apps

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 Prefect'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. Prefect is a trademark of its owner, and this guide is not made, paid for or approved by Prefect Technologies, Inc. Prices and plans change: check prefect.io before you buy.