ToolGPA

NOVEMBER 2026

Steel

The Insider's Guide

Open-source browser infrastructure for AI agents



Every plan, grade, refund rule and rival among AI agents, read from Steel's own pages.

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

1.6
GPA

Contents

01 Welcome
What it is, who it suits, its grades and the ten things to know first

02 What it costs
Every plan, the free plan, ways to pay less and how prices have moved

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

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

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

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

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

ToolGPA put this guide together from Steel's own pages, its app-store listings and our grades. Every fact in it is on Steel'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

1.6

GPA, above 0 of the 178 other AI agents we grade

Steel is an API for controlling fleets of cloud browsers, built for AI agents that need to browse, scrape or test the web. Steel Browser is the open-source server you can host yourself; Steel Cloud is the managed version with scaling, proxies and CAPTCHA solving. Billing is a small monthly fee plus usage.

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

> "
>
> **You use an API and SDK, or host the server yourself.**
>
> From our grade for ease of use

1 **Best for open-source browser API for agents**

Steel offers browser sessions over an API, as an open-source server you can host or a managed cloud.

2 **Paid plans start at $250 a month**

As its pricing page puts it: $250 per month plus usage (Scale), after a free Launch plan.

3 **You can try it first**

Launch plan: $30 of credits granted once, no card required

4 **It runs on Web**

Web.

5 **Browser sessions over an API**

Start thousands of real browser sessions on demand, each released when the work is done, and control them from agent code.

6 **Stealth and CAPTCHA solving**

The site describes fingerprint rotation, human-like mouse movement and CAPTCHA solving, billed at $3 per 1,000 solves on Launch.

7 **Residential proxies**

Proxy traffic from many countries, billed at $10 per GB on Launch and $6 per GB on Scale.

8 **A 1.6 GPA, above 0 of 178**

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

9 **Keep it**

To replace Steel you would be making an AI agent, with the models and the safeguards behind it. That is not a weekend's work, with an AI app builder or without one.

Steel at a glance

PRICING
Free trial, from $250 per month plus usage (Scale), after a free Launch plan

FREE PLAN
No

FREE TRIAL
Launch plan: $30 of credits granted once, no card required

RUNS ON
Web

MADE BY
Steel

CATEGORY
AI Agents

OUR GRADE
1.6 GPA, weak

The report card

Best for open-source browser API for agents

Steel offers browser sessions over an API, as an open-source server you can host or a managed cloud. The free Launch plan is a one-time $30 in credits and 15-minute sessions, and the next plan is $250 a month plus usage.

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

SUBJECT	GRADE	COMMENT
Value for money	D	Scale is $250 a month plus usage, past the category's $150 dearest-tenth start. Launch is free, but only a one-time credit.
Free plan and trial	C	Launch has $30 of one-time credits, no card, 10 concurrent sessions and 15-minute limits. The open-source server is free but needs your own hosting.
Features	C	Browser sessions, proxies, CAPTCHA solving, a scrape tool and self-hosting. The comparison table marks stealth as Enterprise only.
Ease of use	D	No rating on record. You use an API and SDK, or host the server yourself.
Platforms and integrations	C	Web API with MCP, and a self-hostable server. No desktop or phone app.

Grade point average Weak, out of 4.0 **1.6**

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 Steel is for

- ✓ Fits if you want browser infrastructure you could also run on your own servers
- ✓ Works for developers testing agents on the free credits

Who it is not for

- ✕ Pricey if you outgrow Launch, as Scale is $250 a month plus usage
- ✕ Tight if you stay free: $30 once, 15-minute sessions and 7-day retention
- ✕ Watch out: the comparison table marks the stealth browser Enterprise only, but the homepage describes stealth generally
- ✕ Watch out: browser hours are billed on top, $0.10 on Launch and $0.08 on Scale

Good to know

Good for

- ✓ Developers who want to self-host an open-source browser server for agents
- ✓ Teams running many parallel browser sessions for research or QA
- ✓ Startups that want to begin on free credits and pay as agents run

Worth knowing

- ⓘ Usage is billed beyond included credits: browser hours are $0.10 on Launch and $0.08 on Scale.
- ⓘ The comparison table marks the stealth browser as Enterprise only, while the homepage describes stealth for the product generally.
- ⓘ Launch sessions stop at 15 minutes and 7 days of data retention; Scale allows 1 hour and 14 days.
- ⓘ Dedicated IPs cost $5 each on Scale; reserved browser pools need Enterprise.

PART 02 · PRICING

What it costs

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

$250

A month to start

Steel is a paid product with a free trial, starting at $250 per month plus usage (Scale), after a free Launch plan.

> **Launch is free, but only a one-time credit.**
>
> From our grade for value for money

LAUNCH

$0

per month, plus usage

$30 of one-time credits, 10 concurrent sessions of up to 15 minutes, up to 3 seats, email and community support.

SCALE

$250

per month, plus usage

$100 of credits every month, 100 concurrent sessions of up to 1 hour, unlimited seats, Slack channel and HIPAA-ready BAA.

ENTERPRISE

Custom

1,000+ concurrent sessions, sessions up to 24 hours, reserved browser pools, SLAs and SSO.

Trying it first

Launch plan: $30 of credits granted once, no card required

Read from steel.dev 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

Open-source browser infrastructure for AI agents. Here is what it does, as its own site describes it, and what it covers: open source, self-hostable, public API, AI agents.

"

Browser sessions, proxies, CAPTCHA solving, a scrape tool and self-hosting.

From our grade for features

Browser sessions over an API

Start thousands of real browser sessions on demand, each released when the work is done, and control them from agent code.

Stealth and CAPTCHA solving

The site describes fingerprint rotation, human-like mouse movement and CAPTCHA solving, billed at $3 per 1,000 solves on Launch.

Residential proxies

Proxy traffic from many countries, billed at $10 per GB on Launch and $6 per GB on Scale.

Open-source and self-hosting

Steel Browser is open source on GitHub, and Steel Outpost runs the platform in your own cloud with your own keys.

Scrape tool

A browser tools endpoint for scraping is billed at $5 per 1,000 requests on every plan.

Where it runs

Web

What it works with

MCP

Steel is made by Steel.

PART 04 · STANDING

Where it stands

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

0/178

Other AI agents it is graded above

Steel's GPA of 1.6 is higher than 0 of the 178 other AI agents we grade, and level with 29.

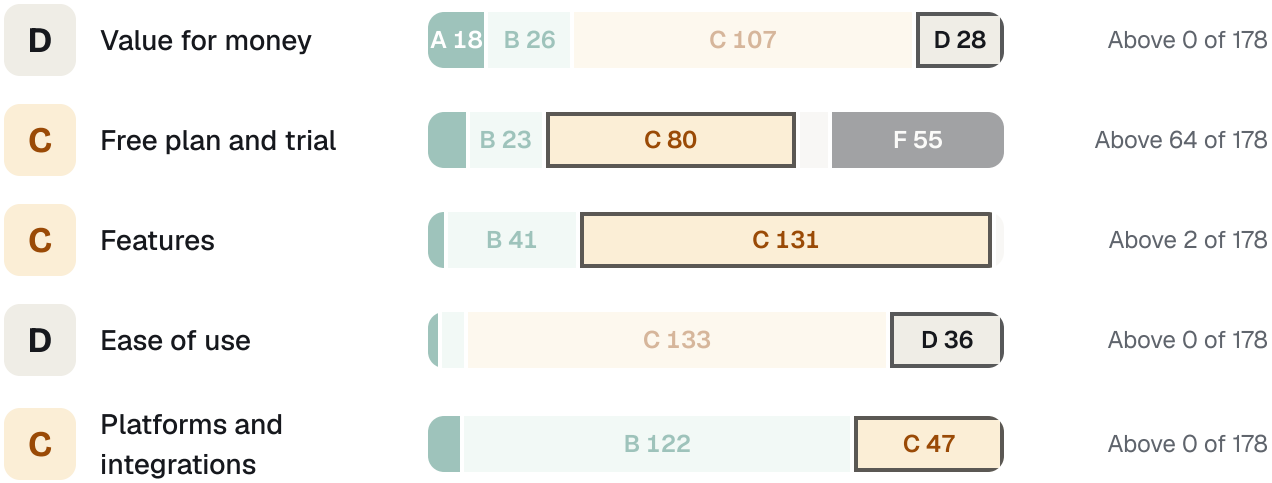
It stands best on free plan and trial (C, above 64 of 178) and worst on value for money (D, above 0).

Its paid plans start at $250 a month, against a middle price of $25 for the category: 92 of the 98 others that charge start lower.

On features, ease of use and platforms it scores 1.7 out of 4. 95 tools score higher and cost less.

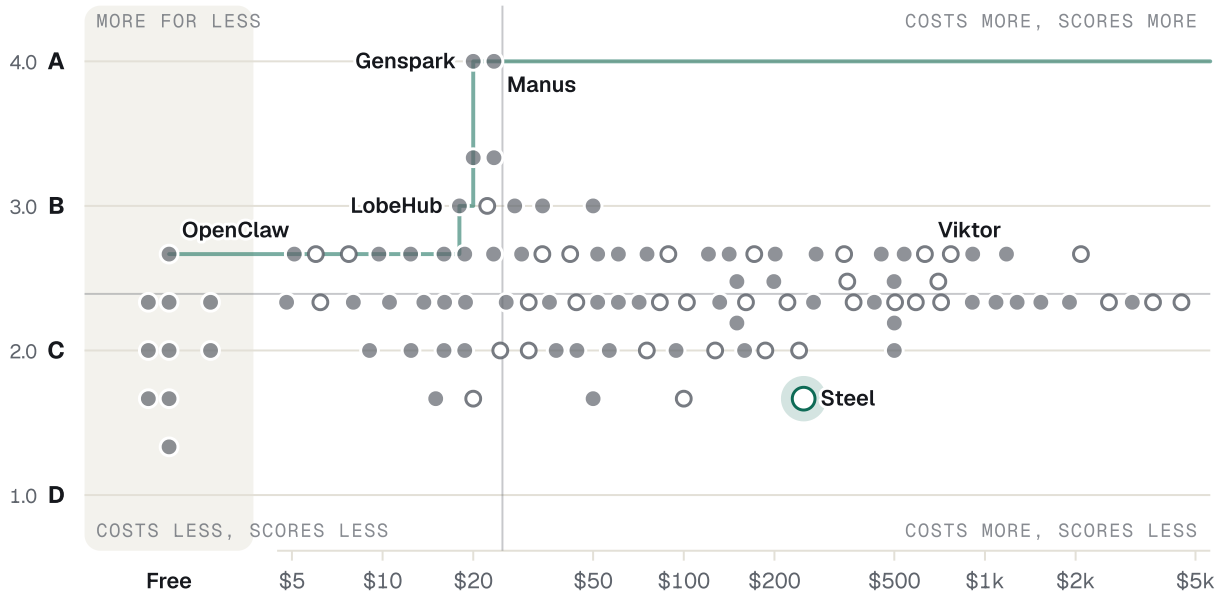
Each grade against the category

Every bar is all 179 AI agents we grade, cut by the letter each got. Steel's own letter is outlined.



Price against what you get

Each dot is one of 109 AI agents. Further left costs less; higher up scores better on features, ease of use and platforms. Steel 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 Steel you would be making an AI agent, with the models and the safeguards behind it. That is not a weekend's work, with an AI app builder or without one.

That makes this kind of software worth paying for, not this one in particular: 149 of the 178 other AI agents grade higher. It costs $3,000 a year. Steel is open source, so there is a third way: take its code and run it yourself.

What you could not

- ✕ An AI agent, with the models and the safeguards behind it.

- ✕ It plugs into other products, MCP among them, and has an API.

What this rests on. Steel'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



Browserbase, Browser Use, Hyperbrowser, Kernel and Notte

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

2.2 GPA

Browserbase

Free plan · from $20/mo

Cloud browsers and APIs for agents that use the web.

- Browserbase has a free plan. Steel does not, though it has a free trial.
- Steel is open source and self-hostable, according to its own site.
- Browserbase also covers workflow automation.

Steel and Browserbase compared in full

2.6 GPA

Browser Use

Free plan · from $5

Browser agents and cloud browsers for AI apps.

- Browser Use has a free plan. Steel does not, though it has a free trial.
- Steel is self-hostable, according to its own site.

Steel and Browser Use compared in full



2.2
GPA

Hyperbrowser

Free trial · from $30/mo

Cloud browsers, sandboxes and web APIs for AI agents.

- Steel is open source and self-hostable, according to its own site.
- Hyperbrowser also covers workflow automation and screenshots.

Steel and Hyperbrowser compared in full



2.0
GPA

Kernel

Free plan · from $30/mo

Cloud browser infrastructure for web agents and automations.

- Kernel has a free plan. Steel does not, though it has a free trial.
- Steel is self-hostable, according to its own site.
- Kernel also covers workflow automation and screen recording.

Steel and Kernel compared in full



1.8
GPA

Notte

Free trial · from $20/mo

Cloud browsers, identities and agents for web automation.

- Steel is open source and self-hostable, according to its own site.
- Notte also covers workflow automation.

Steel and Notte 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 Steel free?

No, Steel is a paid product, but you can try it first. Launch plan: $30 of credits granted once, no card required.

How much does Steel cost?

Steel lists 3 plans. Launch: $0 per month, plus usage.

What platforms does Steel work on?

Steel is available on Web.

Does Steel have an Android app?

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

Does Steel have an iPhone app?

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

Is Steel open source?

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

Does Steel have an API?

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

What does Steel integrate with?

Steel's listing names MCP. A listing names up to eight integrations, so it may connect to more.

Who makes Steel?

Steel is made by a company of the same name.

What are the alternatives to Steel?

The closest alternatives to Steel in our directory are Browserbase, Browser Use, Hyperbrowser, Kernel and Notte.

How does Steel compare with other AI agents?

Steel's GPA of 1.6 is higher than 0 of the 178 other AI agents we grade, and level with 29.

Is Steel good value for money?

ToolGPA grades Steel D for value for money. Its paid plans start at $250 a month, against a middle price of $25 for the category: 92 of the 98 others that charge start lower.

Could I make my own version of Steel?

To replace Steel you would be making an AI agent, with the models and the safeguards behind it.

Where this guide comes from

The prices, plans, platforms and features were read from Steel'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 Steel'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 Steel. Prices change, so check steel.dev before you buy.

steel.dev/pricing

steel.dev

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

Steel, kept up to date

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

toolgpa.com/tools/steel

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:

```
ToolGPA, "Steel: The Insider's Guide", checked
Nov 13, 2026. https://toolgpa.com/tools/steel
```

Know someone choosing between AI agents?

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

ToolGPA elsewhere: youtube.com/@toolgpa

See our other guides

The best-graded AI agents after Steel, each with an Insider's Guide of its own.

AI Agents Insider's Guide

Every one of the 179 AI agents we grade, compared

Genspark Insider's Guide

AI workspace with an agent for research, slides, sheets and docs

3.2 GPA

Manus Insider's Guide

General AI agent for research, slides, websites and browser tasks

3.2 GPA

OpenClaw Insider's Guide

Open-source personal AI agent you run yourself and message in chat

3.2 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 Steel'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. Steel is a trademark of its owner, and this guide is not made, paid for or approved by Steel. Prices and plans change: check steel.dev before you buy.