ToolGPA

NOVEMBER 2026

TestDisk and PhotoRec

The Insider’s Guide

Free open-source tools for lost partitions and deleted files



Every plan, grade, refund rule and rival among desktop utilities, read from TestDisk and PhotoRec’s own pages.

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

2.6

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

2.6

GPA, above 69 of the 186 other desktop utilities we grade

TestDisk and PhotoRec are two free, open-source recovery programs shipped together. TestDisk repairs partition tables and boot sectors and can undelete files from some file systems. PhotoRec ignores the file system and carves lost files out of the raw data using file signatures.

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

> **They run in a text window, and PhotoRec generally doesn't bring back file names or folders.**
>
> From our report card of TestDisk and PhotoRec

1 **Best for free recovery of lost partitions and deleted files**

TestDisk and PhotoRec are free, open-source tools for repairing partition tables and recovering deleted files on Windows, Mac and Linux.

2 **It is free**

TestDisk and PhotoRec has no paid plan at all. Free software under the GNU GPL v2 or later, with no paid edition.

3 It runs on 3 platforms

Windows, macOS and Linux.

4 Partition table repair

TestDisk can fix a partition table, recover a deleted partition and make a disk bootable again when faulty software or human error caused the problem.

5 Boot sector and table repair

Rebuilds or restores FAT and NTFS boot sectors from backups, fixes FAT tables, repairs the NTFS MFT from its mirror, and locates ext backup superblocks.

6 Undelete and copy files

TestDisk can undelete files from FAT, exFAT, NTFS and ext2 and copy files off deleted FAT, exFAT, NTFS and ext partitions.

7 A 2.6 GPA, above 69 of 186

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

8 Keep it

TestDisk and PhotoRec is free, so making your own would save you nothing.

TestDisk and PhotoRec at a glance

PRICING Free	FREE PLAN Yes
FREE TRIAL None stated	RUNS ON macOS, Windows, Linux
MADE BY CGSecurity	CATEGORY Desktop Utilities
OUR GRADE 2.6 GPA, good	

The report card

Best for free recovery of lost partitions and deleted files

TestDisk and PhotoRec are free, open-source tools for repairing partition tables and recovering deleted files on Windows, Mac and Linux. They run in a text window, and PhotoRec generally doesn't bring back file names or folders.

TOOLGPA REPORT CARD

TestDisk and PhotoRec

Graded Nov 13, 2026

SUBJECT	GRADE	COMMENT
Value for money	A	Free under GPL v2 or later, with no paid edition.
Free plan and trial	A	Free outright with no cap. No cap, no trial and no paid tier.
Features	C	Partition repair, undelete and signature-based recovery on many media, but PhotoRec recovers by type and names and folder structure are generally not restored.
Ease of use	D	No rating on record. The main programs are text-based and menu-driven, and the graphical QPhotoRec ships separately.
Platforms and integrations	C	Windows, Mac and Linux, desktops only. Windows, Mac and Linux desktops only; no phone or web version.

Grade point average Good, out of 4.0 **2.6**

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 TestDisk and PhotoRec is for

- ✓ Fits if you've lost a partition and can work in a text menu
- ✓ Works for people who care about getting files back and not about their names

Who it is not for

- ✗ Not for you if you want a graphical tool, as the main programs are text-based
- ✗ Skip it if you need file names and folders back, since PhotoRec generally doesn't restore them
- ✗ Watch out: the 7.2 Mac build listed is 64-bit Intel and M1 Macs can run it
- ✗ Too light on hand-holding for a first-time rescue, as the site points graphical-tool seekers to a partner product

Good to know

Good for

- ✓ Recovering lost partitions or fixing a disk that no longer boots
- ✓ Pulling photos and documents off a formatted card or drive for free
- ✓ Technical users comfortable with a text-based interface

Worth knowing

- ⓘ PhotoRec recovers files by type, so names and folder structure are generally not restored.
- ⓘ The main programs are text-based; a graphical front end, QPhotoRec, is shipped separately.
- ⓘ The 7.2 download page lists a 64-bit Intel macOS build (macOS 10.15 or later) and notes Apple M1 Macs can run it.
- ⓘ The site's own pages point buyers who want a graphical Mac or Windows tool to a partner product, Disk Drill.

What it costs

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

Free

No paid plan at all

TestDisk and PhotoRec is free to use.

FREE

$0

Both programs, as portable downloads with no installer.

The free plan

Free software under the GNU GPL v2 or later, with no paid edition.

Read from cgsecurity.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

Free open-source tools for lost partitions and deleted files. Here is what it does, as its own site describes it, and what it covers: open source, works offline, file management.

> **Windows, Mac and Linux desktops only; no phone or web version.**

From our grade for platforms and integrations

Partition table repair

TestDisk can fix a partition table, recover a deleted partition and make a disk bootable again when faulty software or human error caused the problem.

Boot sector and table repair

Rebuilds or restores FAT and NTFS boot sectors from backups, fixes FAT tables, repairs the NTFS MFT from its mirror, and locates ext backup superblocks.

Undelete and copy files

TestDisk can undelete files from FAT, exFAT, NTFS and ext2 and copy files off deleted FAT, exFAT, NTFS and ext partitions.

Signature-based recovery

PhotoRec searches for known file headers, so it still works when a file system is damaged or reformatted. Its file list covers more than 480 extensions.

Read-only access

PhotoRec reads the drive or card read-only and warns you not to save recovered files to the same partition.

Many media types

Works with hard disks, SSDs, memory cards, USB drives, CD-ROMs and raw or EnCase E01 disk images.

Where it runs

macOS Windows Linux

What it works with

Its own pages name no integrations.

TestDisk and PhotoRec is made by CGSecurity.

Where it stands

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

69/186

Other desktop utilities it is graded above

TestDisk and PhotoRec's GPA of 2.6 is higher than 69 of the 186 other desktop utilities we grade, and level with 46.

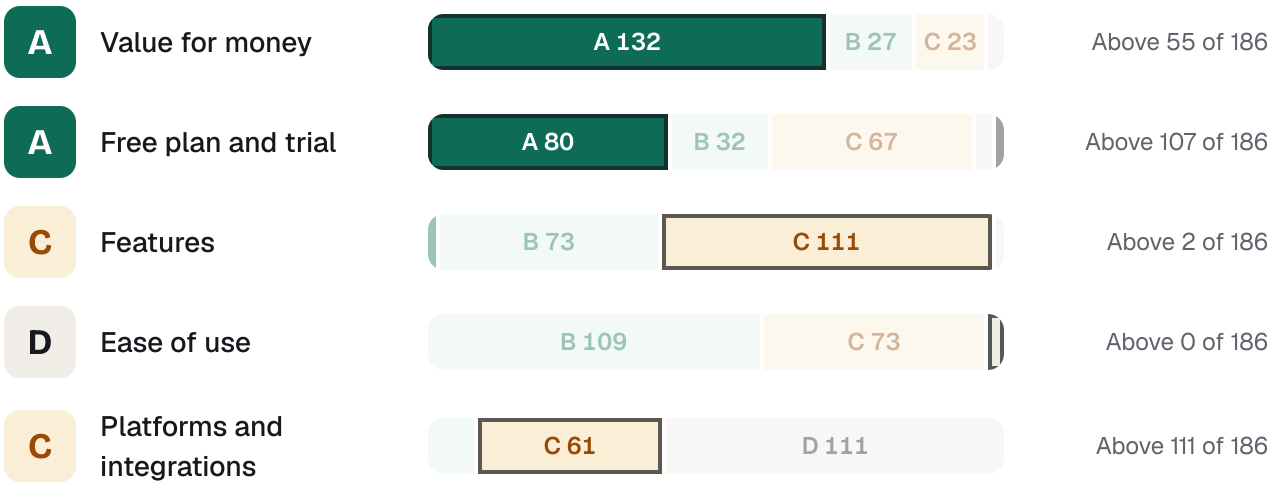
It stands best on free plan and trial (A, above 107 of 186) and worst on ease of use (D, above 0).

TestDisk and PhotoRec 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.

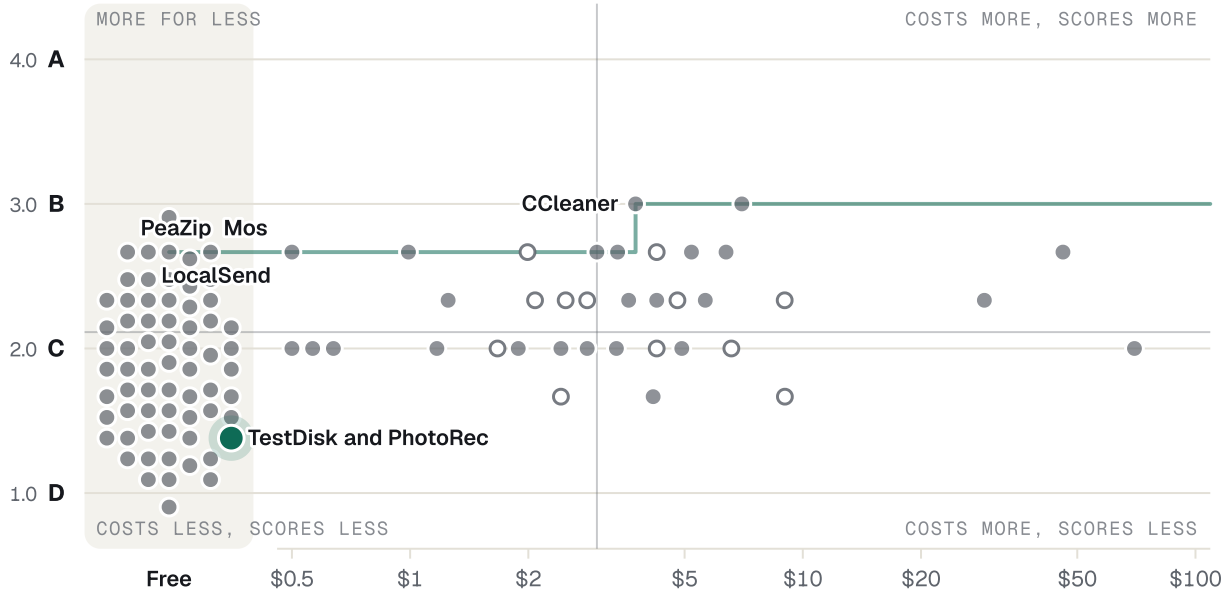
Each grade against the category

Every bar is all 187 desktop utilities we grade, cut by the letter each got. TestDisk and PhotoRec's own letter is outlined.



Price against what you get

Each dot is one of 103 desktop utilities. Further left costs less; higher up scores better on features, ease of use and platforms. TestDisk and PhotoRec 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

TestDisk and PhotoRec is free, so making your own would save you nothing.

What you could not

- ✕ A file manager working directly on your disk.
- ✕ Apps for macOS, Windows and Linux that stay in step with each other.

What this rests on. TestDisk and PhotoRec'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.

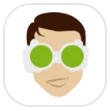
The alternatives

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



Disk Drill, Recoverit, Stellar Data Recovery, R-Studio and GParted

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



2.6 GPA

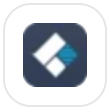
Disk Drill

Free plan · from $49/yr

Data recovery app for Mac and Windows with free disk tools.

- Only TestDisk and PhotoRec lists a Linux app.
- TestDisk and PhotoRec is open source, according to its own site.
- Disk Drill can be bought with a one-time purchase.

TestDisk and PhotoRec and Disk Drill compared in full



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Recoverit

Free plan · from $45.99/mo

File recovery software for Windows and Mac from Wondershare.

- Only TestDisk and PhotoRec lists a Linux app.
- TestDisk and PhotoRec is open source, according to its own site.

TestDisk and PhotoRec and Recoverit compared in full



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Stellar Data Recovery

Free plan · from $39.99

Data recovery for deleted files and drives on Windows and Mac.

- Only TestDisk and PhotoRec lists a Linux app.
- TestDisk and PhotoRec is open source, according to its own site.
- Stellar Data Recovery also covers system monitor.

TestDisk and PhotoRec and Stellar Data Recovery compared in full



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R-Studio

Free trial · from $49.99 one-time

Data recovery software for Windows, Mac and Linux with RAID support.

- TestDisk and PhotoRec has a free plan. R-Studio does not, though it has a free trial.
- TestDisk and PhotoRec is open source, according to its own site.
- R-Studio can be bought with a one-time purchase.

TestDisk and PhotoRec and R-Studio compared in full



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GParted

Free

Free graphical partition editor for Linux, run from a live disc.

- Only TestDisk and PhotoRec lists Windows and macOS apps.
- GParted also covers disk cleanup.

TestDisk and PhotoRec and GParted compared in full

PART 06 · QUESTIONS

Quick answers

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

12

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 TestDisk and PhotoRec free?

Yes. TestDisk and PhotoRec is free to use.

How much does TestDisk and PhotoRec cost?

TestDisk and PhotoRec lists one plan. Free: $0.

What platforms does TestDisk and PhotoRec work on?

TestDisk and PhotoRec is available on Windows, macOS and Linux.

Does TestDisk and PhotoRec have an Android app?

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

Does TestDisk and PhotoRec have an iPhone app?

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

Is TestDisk and PhotoRec open source?

Yes. TestDisk and PhotoRec is open source, according to its own site.

Does TestDisk and PhotoRec work offline?

Yes, according to its own site. What works without a connection differs by plan and platform, so check the vendor's page for the detail.

Who makes TestDisk and PhotoRec?

TestDisk and PhotoRec is made by CGSecurity.

What are the alternatives to TestDisk and PhotoRec?

The closest alternatives to TestDisk and PhotoRec in our directory are Disk Drill, Recoverit, Stellar Data Recovery, R-Studio and GParted.

How does TestDisk and PhotoRec compare with other desktop utilities?

TestDisk and PhotoRec's GPA of 2.6 is higher than 69 of the 186 other desktop utilities we grade, and level with 46.

Is TestDisk and PhotoRec good value for money?

ToolGPA grades TestDisk and PhotoRec A for value for money. TestDisk and PhotoRec has no paid plan.

Could I make my own version of TestDisk and PhotoRec?

TestDisk and PhotoRec is free, so making your own would save you nothing.

Where this guide comes from

The prices, plans, platforms and features were read from TestDisk and PhotoRec'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 CGSecurity'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 CGSecurity. Prices change, so check cgsecurity.org before you buy.

cgsecurity.org/
cgsecurity.org/wiki/PhotoRec
cgsecurity.org/wiki/TestDisk
cgsecurity.org/wiki/TestDisk_Download

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

TestDisk and PhotoRec, kept up to date

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

toolgpa.com/tools/testdisk-and-photorec

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, "TestDisk and PhotoRec: The
Insider's Guide", checked Nov 13, 2026.
https://toolgpa.com/tools/testdisk-
and-photorec
```

Know someone choosing between desktop utilities?

Send them this guide: toolgpa.com/tools/testdisk-and-photorec/guide

ToolGPA elsewhere: youtube.com/@toolgpa

See our other guides

The best-graded desktop utilities after TestDisk and PhotoRec, each with an Insider's Guide of its own.

Desktop Utilities Insider's Guide

Every one of the 187 desktop utilities we grade, compared

Just Color Picker Insider's Guide

Free portable color picker and editor for Windows and macOS

3.2 GPA

LocalSend Insider's Guide

Open-source file sharing between nearby devices, no cloud

3.2 GPA

Mos Insider's Guide

Free Mac menu bar utility for smooth mouse wheel scrolling

3.2 GPA

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Choosing software? Every tool graded, every price dated.

Compare tools at toolgpa.com ›

Everything in this guide is ToolGPA's own summary of what TestDisk and PhotoRec'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. TestDisk and PhotoRec is a trademark of its owner, and this guide is not made, paid for or approved by CGSecurity. Prices and plans change: check cgsecurity.org before you buy.