ToolGPA

NOVEMBER 2026

Tinode

The Insider's Guide

Open-source instant messaging server you host or rent



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

Made by Tinode LLC · 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 Tinode's own pages, its app-store listings and our grades. Every fact in it is on Tinode'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

Tinode is an open-source instant messaging platform with a Go server, web, Android and iOS clients and a documented API. A company can install it on its own servers or have Tinode run it as a cloud service, and developers can attach bots and plugins.

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

> "
>
> **Self-hosting means installing and running a server yourself.**
>
> From our grade for ease of use

1 **Best for a chat server you host for your own app**

Tinode is an open-source instant messaging server with web and phone clients.

2 **Paid plans start at $1.50 a month for each person**

As its pricing page puts it: $1.50 per user / month (Cloud).

3 **There is a free plan**

Basic self-hosted edition is free for small teams: no more than 500 push notifications a day, roughly 350 messages a day.

4 **It runs on 3 platforms**

Web, iOS and Android.

5 Open-source clients and server

The server is written in Go and can run as a cluster; the site says client software is under the Apache 2.0 license.

6 Self-hosting tools

TnAdmin gives a graphical console for looking up and suspending users, a push gateway handles mobile notifications and a Grafana dashboard is available for monitoring.

7 Extensible backend

Authentication schemes, database backends, file upload, push and credential validation are pluggable adapters, and bots can connect over gRPC.

8 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.

9 Keep it

To replace Tinode you would be making chat that a whole team counts on staying up. That is not a weekend's work, with an AI app builder or without one.

Tinode at a glance

PRICING
Free plan, from $1.50 per user / month (Cloud)

FREE PLAN
Yes

FREE TRIAL
None stated

RUNS ON
Web, iOS, Android

MADE BY
Tinode LLC

CATEGORY
Team Communication

OUR GRADE
2.2 GPA, fair

The report card

Best for a chat server you host for your own app

Tinode is an open-source instant messaging server with web and phone clients. The free Basic edition is yours to host, with a small-team cap of about 500 push notifications a day. Notifications for the stock apps will not reach your server, and the site footer reads 2023.

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

SUBJECT	GRADE	COMMENT
Value for money	B	Cloud is $1.50 a user a month, which would count as cheap, but it is arranged through a contact form. The free edition needs your own server.
Free plan and trial	C	Basic is free to self-host, but capped at about 500 push notifications a day. You run the server.
Features	C	Chat server, web and mobile clients, an extensible backend and chatbots over gRPC. Branding and the admin tool are paid.
Ease of use	D	No rating on record. Self-hosting means installing and running a server yourself.
Platforms and integrations	B	Web, iPhone and Android clients, with gRPC for bots. No desktop app.
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 Tinode is for

- ✓ Fits if you want to own your chat server and its data
- ✓ Works for developers adding chat to their own app

Who it is not for

- ✗ Not for you if you do not want to run a server, as the free edition is self-hosted
- ✗ Tight if you grow, since free self-hosting stops near 500 push notifications a day
- ✗ Watch out: the stock apps' notifications will not reach your server without your own builds or the push gateway
- ✗ Watch out: Cloud is arranged through a contact form, and the site footer reads 2023
- ✗ Pricey if you want the admin tool and branded apps, which start at $50 a month

Good to know

Good for

- Teams with engineers who want to run their own chat server
- Developers adding messaging or bots to their own product
- Small groups using the free self-hosted edition

Worth knowing

- Self-hosted mobile apps need either your own builds or the push gateway, because the stock apps' notifications will not reach your server otherwise.
- Free self-hosting is for small teams; above roughly 500 push notifications a day a paid plan applies.
- Support contracts exclude third-party integrations, remote administration and support for end users.
- The site's footer reads 2023, and the Cloud plan is arranged through a contact form.

What it costs

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

$1.50

A month to start, for each person.
There is a free plan too

Tinode has a free plan. Paid plans start at $1.50 per user / month (Cloud).

BASIC

$0

You install and run the server yourself. Includes the push gateway, production monitoring and community support.

CLOUD

$1.50

per user / month

Tinode runs it for you with 5 GB of file storage per user, custom-branded clients and gRPC access for chatbots. Arranged through the contact form.

PROFESSIONAL

$50

per month, one self-hosted installation ($500 billed yearly)

Self-hosted. Adds the TnAdmin tool, auto-configured and custom-branded mobile apps and dedicated support. $25 a month per extra cluster node.

ENTERPRISE

$1,500

per year for a standalone installation

Everything in Professional plus assisted installation and email support; $2,500 a year for a 3-node cluster.

The free plan

Basic self-hosted edition is free for small teams: no more than 500 push notifications a day, roughly 350 messages a day.

Read from tinode.co on Nov 13, 2026.

Ways to pay less

ANNUAL DISCOUNT

Annual billing for Professional

The self-hosting page lists $50 a month for a standalone installation, or $500 when billed annually.

Stated on tinode.co

What it does

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

3

Places it runs: Web, iOS and Android

Open-source instant messaging server you host or rent. Here is what it does, as its own site describes it, and what it covers: open source, self-hostable, public API, team chat.

> **Chat server, web and mobile clients, an extensible backend and chatbots over gRPC.**

From our grade for features

Open-source clients and server

The server is written in Go and can run as a cluster; the site says client software is under the Apache 2.0 license.

Self-hosting tools

TnAdmin gives a graphical console for looking up and suspending users, a push gateway handles mobile notifications and a Grafana dashboard is available for monitoring.

Extensible backend

Authentication schemes, database backends, file upload, push and credential validation are pluggable adapters, and bots can connect over gRPC.

Mobile and web clients

Android and iOS apps are listed in the stores, and a web client runs at web.tinode.co.

Branded apps

Paid plans can show your own name and logo in the mobile apps and configure the server connection automatically.

Support contracts

Named-contact email support with prioritized bug fixes is sold per installation, with an hourly rate for out-of-scope requests.

Where it runs

Web · iOS · Android

What it works with

Its own pages name no integrations.

Tinode is made by Tinode LLC.

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

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

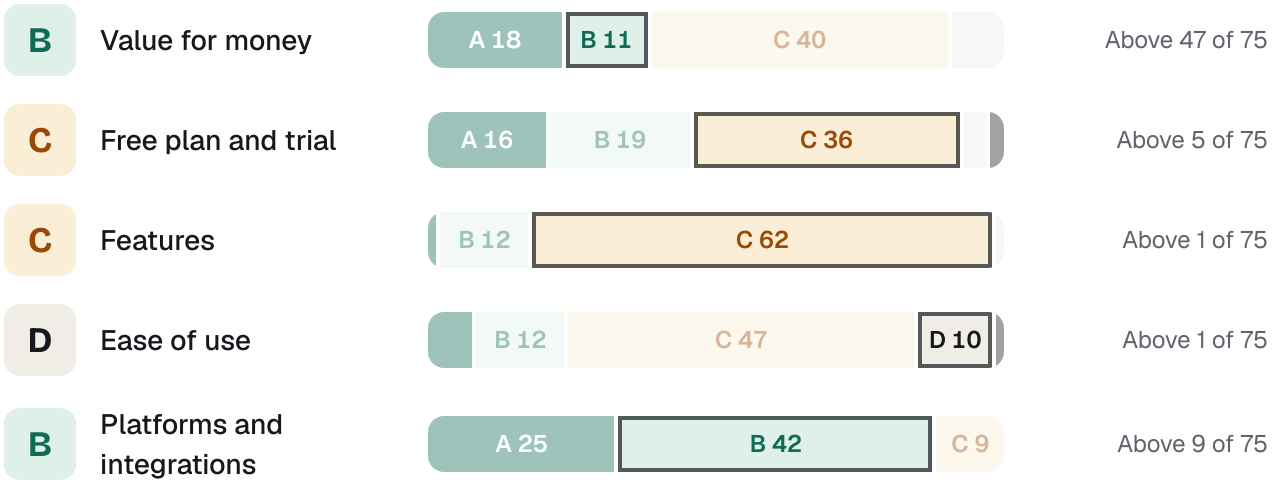
It stands best on value for money (B, above 47 of 75) and worst on ease of use (D, above 1).

Its paid plans start at $1.50 a month for each person, against a middle price of $6.90 for the category: 1 of the 51 others that charge start lower.

On features, ease of use and platforms it scores 2.0 out of 4. 9 tools score higher and cost less.

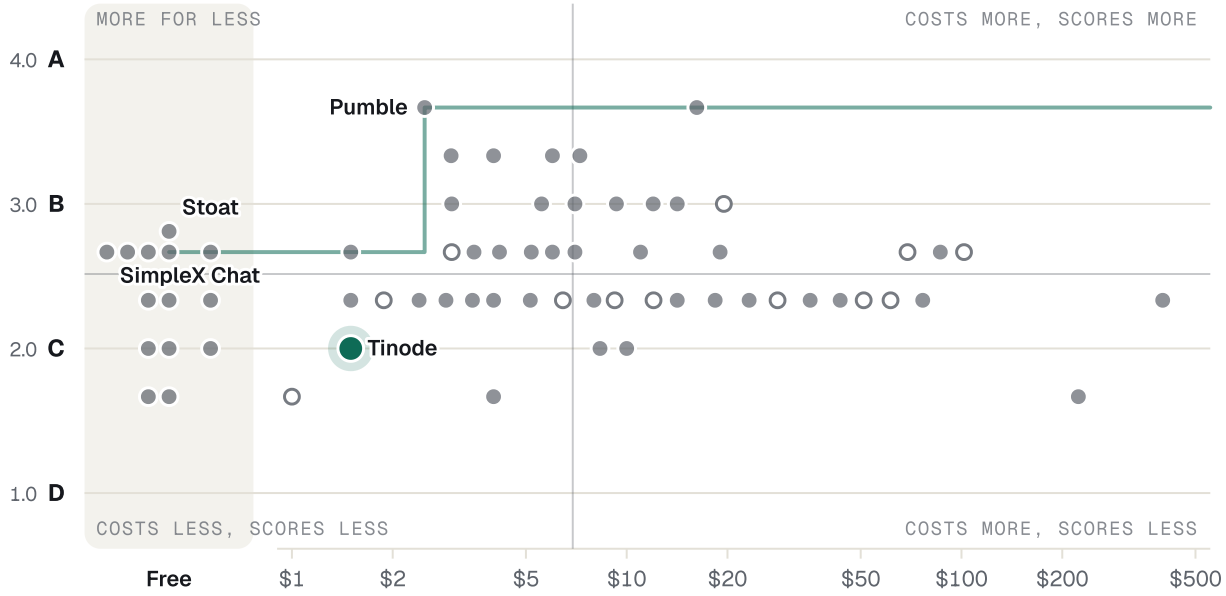
Each grade against the category

Every bar is all 76 team communication apps we grade, cut by the letter each got. Tinode'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. Tinode 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 Tinode you would be making chat that a whole team counts on staying up. 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: 47 of the 75 other team communication apps grade higher. It costs $18 a year. Tinode is open source, so there is a third way: take its code and run it yourself.

What you could not

- ✕ Chat that a whole team counts on staying up.

- ✕ A real app for iOS and Android. Something home-made would be a web page.
- ✕ It is priced for each person, which means accounts and billing for a team.
- ✕ An API that other software can build on.

What this rests on. Tinode'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



Matrix, Mattermost, Zulip, Rocket.Chat and OpenIM

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

3.0 GPA

Matrix

Free

Open, decentralized network for chat and calls.

- Only Matrix lists macOS, Windows and Linux apps.
- Matrix is end-to-end encrypted, according to its own site.

Tinode and Matrix compared in full

2.4 GPA

Mattermost

Free plan

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

- Only Mattermost lists macOS, Windows and Linux apps.
- Mattermost also covers kanban boards, workflow automation and AI agents.

Tinode and Mattermost compared in full



2.8 GPA

Zulip

Free plan · from $3.50/mo

Open-source team chat that organizes channels by topic.

- Only Zulip lists macOS, Windows and Linux apps.
- Zulip also covers file sharing.

Tinode and Zulip compared in full



2.4 GPA

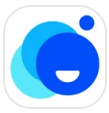
Rocket.Chat

Free plan

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

- Only Rocket.Chat lists macOS, Windows and Linux apps.
- Rocket.Chat is end-to-end encrypted, according to its own site.
- Rocket.Chat also covers file sharing.

Tinode and Rocket.Chat compared in full



2.2 GPA

OpenIM

Free plan

Open-source chat, voice and video infrastructure for apps.

- OpenIM also covers video calls.

Tinode and OpenIM 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 Tinode free?

Tinode has a free plan. Basic self-hosted edition is free for small teams: no more than 500 push notifications a day, roughly 350 messages a day.

How much does Tinode cost?

Tinode lists 4 plans. Basic: $0.

What platforms does Tinode work on?

Tinode is available on Web, iOS and Android.

Does Tinode offer any discounts?

Tinode publicly lists the following: Annual billing for Professional.

Does Tinode have a Windows app?

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

Does Tinode have a macOS app?

No macOS app was listed when its pages were read on Nov 13, 2026. Tinode is listed for Web, iOS and Android.

Is Tinode open source?

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

Does Tinode have an API?

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

Who makes Tinode?

Tinode is made by Tinode LLC.

What are the alternatives to Tinode?

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

How does Tinode compare with other team communication apps?

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

Is Tinode good value for money?

ToolGPA grades Tinode B for value for money. Its paid plans start at $1.50 a month for each person, against a middle price of $6.90 for the category: 1 of the 51 others that charge start lower.

Could I make my own version of Tinode?

To replace Tinode you would be making chat that a whole team counts on staying up.

Where this guide comes from

The prices, plans, platforms and features were read from Tinode'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 Tinode'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 Tinode LLC. Prices change, so check tinode.co before you buy.

tinode.co/products.html
tinode.co/support.html
tinode.co/selfhosting.html
tinode.co/

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
tools graded

95
categories

739
price changes on record

579
apps priced in 12 countries

What else is on toolgpa.com

Tinode, kept up to date

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

toolgpa.com/tools/tinode

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

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

ToolGPA elsewhere: youtube.com/@toolgpa

See our other guides

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