ToolGPA

NOVEMBER 2026

WireGuard

The Insider's Guide

Free, open-source VPN protocol and tunnel software



Every plan, grade, refund rule and rival among VPNs, read from WireGuard's own pages.

Made by Jason A. Donenfeld (ZX2C4) and Edge Security · checked Nov 13, 2026 · toolgpa.com

2.4
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 WireGuard's own pages, its app-store listings and our grades. Every fact in it is on WireGuard'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 22 of the 50 other VPNs we grade

WireGuard is free, open-source VPN software and protocol that connects two machines by exchanging public keys, much as SSH does. It started in the Linux kernel and now has implementations for Windows, macOS, BSD, iOS and Android. It is not a hosted service: you run it yourself, or use it through a VPN provider's app.

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

> **It is not a service: you bring the server and the keys, and it leaves user sign-in and policy to other tools.**
>
> From our report card of WireGuard

1 **Best for a fast tunnel you host yourself**

WireGuard is free, open-source VPN software that connects two machines by swapping public keys.

2 **It is free**

WireGuard has no paid plan at all. Free open-source software; the project accepts voluntary donations.

3 **It runs on 5 platforms**

Windows, macOS, Linux, iOS and Android.

4 **Key-based tunnels**

A connection is made by exchanging public keys between peers, and each peer lists the tunnel IP addresses it is allowed to send from.

5 **Modern cryptography**

Uses the Noise protocol framework, Curve25519, ChaCha20, Poly1305, BLAKE2, SipHash24 and HKDF.

6 **Small codebase**

Designed to be short enough for one person to review, in contrast to the larger IPsec and OpenVPN codebases, the project says.

7 **A 2.4 GPA, above 22 of 50**

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

8 **Keep it**

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

WireGuard at a glance

PRICING Free	FREE PLAN Yes
FREE TRIAL None stated	RUNS ON macOS, Windows, Linux, iOS, Android
MADE BY Jason A. Donenfeld (ZX2C4) and Edge Security	CATEGORY VPNs
OUR GRADE 2.4 GPA, fair	STORE RATING 4.3 on the App Store, 1,043 ratings

The report card

Best for a fast tunnel you host yourself

WireGuard is free, open-source VPN software that connects two machines by swapping public keys. It is not a service: you bring the server and the

keys, and it leaves user sign-in and policy to other tools.

TOOLGPA REPORT CARD	WireGuard	Graded Nov 13, 2026
SUBJECT	GRADE	COMMENT
Value for money	C	Free to download, but there are no provider servers, so you pay for a server of your own. Software that is only free if you host it yourself is a C.
Free plan and trial	A	Free outright, with donations asked for. The software has no plan or cap.
Features	C	Key-based tunnels with a small codebase. It does that job fully, but it is a smaller job: key distribution and pushed configuration are outside its scope.
Ease of use	D	No rating on record, and setup is on you: keys, a server and config files, usually from a command line.
Platforms and integrations	B	Windows, Mac, Linux, iPhone and Android, though the listing names no API or integrations.
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 WireGuard is for

- ✓ Fits if you are happy to run your own server and exchange keys by hand
- ✓ Works for people building a VPN or a provider's app on top of a small protocol

Who it is not for

- ✗ Skip it if you want a hosted VPN, as there are no provider servers
- ✗ Not for you if you want sign-in, users and policy, because those need other tools
- ✗ Too light for a team: pushing configuration to many people is outside its scope
- ✗ Watch out: the site says the project is under heavy development
- ✗ Watch out: the Mac and iPhone apps come from the App Store, and Android from Google Play or an APK

Good to know

Good for

- ✓ Administrators who want to run their own VPN between machines
- ✓ Developers embedding a VPN tunnel into other software
- ✓ Anyone who wants the protocol many VPN providers also offer, directly

Worth knowing

- ⓘ It is software, not a hosted VPN: there are no provider servers, and you supply the server and keys.
- ⓘ Key distribution and pushed configuration are outside its scope, so users, sign-in and policy need other tools.
- ⓘ The site says the project is under heavy development.
- ⓘ The macOS and iOS apps are installed from the App Store, and the Android app from Google Play or as an APK.

What it costs

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

Free

No paid plan at all

WireGuard is free to use.

> **Free to download, but there are no provider servers, so you pay for a server of your own.**
>
> From our grade for value for money

WIREGUARD

$0

Free software you set up and host yourself. The kernel components are GPLv2; other projects use MIT, BSD, Apache 2.0 or GPL licenses.

The free plan

Free open-source software; the project accepts voluntary donations.

Read from wireguard.com on Nov 13, 2026.

PART 03 · FEATURES

What it does

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

5

Places it runs: macOS, Windows, Linux, iOS and Android

Free, open-source VPN protocol and tunnel software. Here is what it does, as its own site describes it, and what it covers: open source, vPN.

> **Key-based tunnels with a small codebase.**
>
> From our grade for features

Key-based tunnels

A connection is made by exchanging public keys between peers, and each peer lists the tunnel IP addresses it is allowed to send from.

Modern cryptography

Uses the Noise protocol framework, Curve25519, ChaCha20, Poly1305, BLAKE2, SipHash24 and HKDF.

Small codebase

Designed to be short enough for one person to review, in contrast to the larger IPsec and OpenVPN codebases, the project says.

Roaming

A connection can keep working as a peer's IP address changes.

Wide platform support

The install page lists Windows, macOS, Android, iOS and many Linux and BSD distributions, plus OpenWRT.

Where it runs

macOS · Windows · Linux · iOS · Android

What it works with

Its own pages name no integrations.

WireGuard is made by Jason A. Donenfeld (ZX2C4) and Edge Security.

Where it stands

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

22/50

Other VPNs it is graded above

WireGuard's GPA of 2.4 is higher than 22 of the 50 other VPNs we grade, and level with 8.

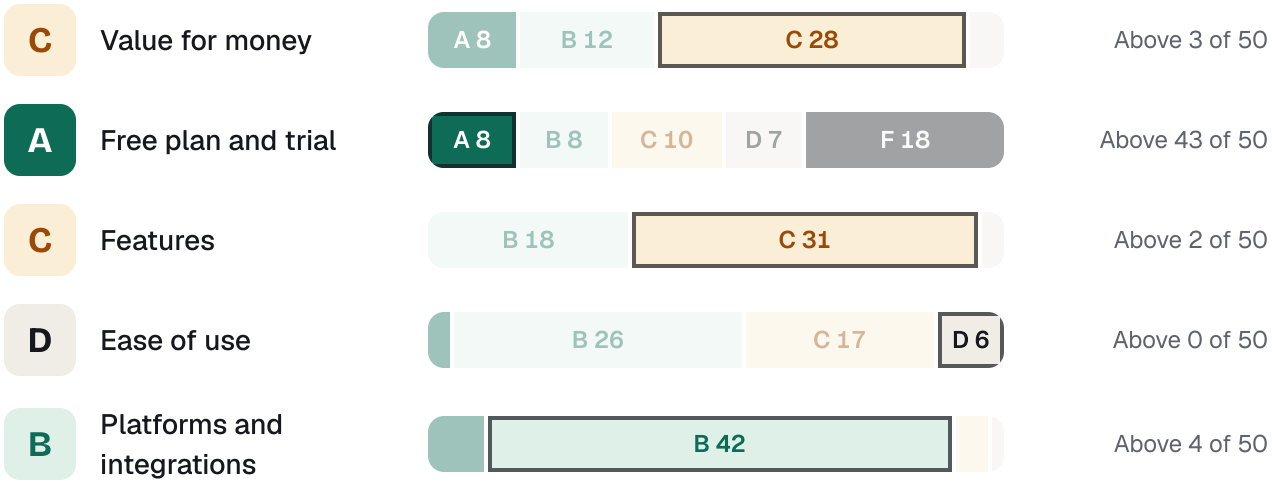
It stands best on free plan and trial (A, above 43 of 50) and worst on ease of use (D, above 0).

WireGuard 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.

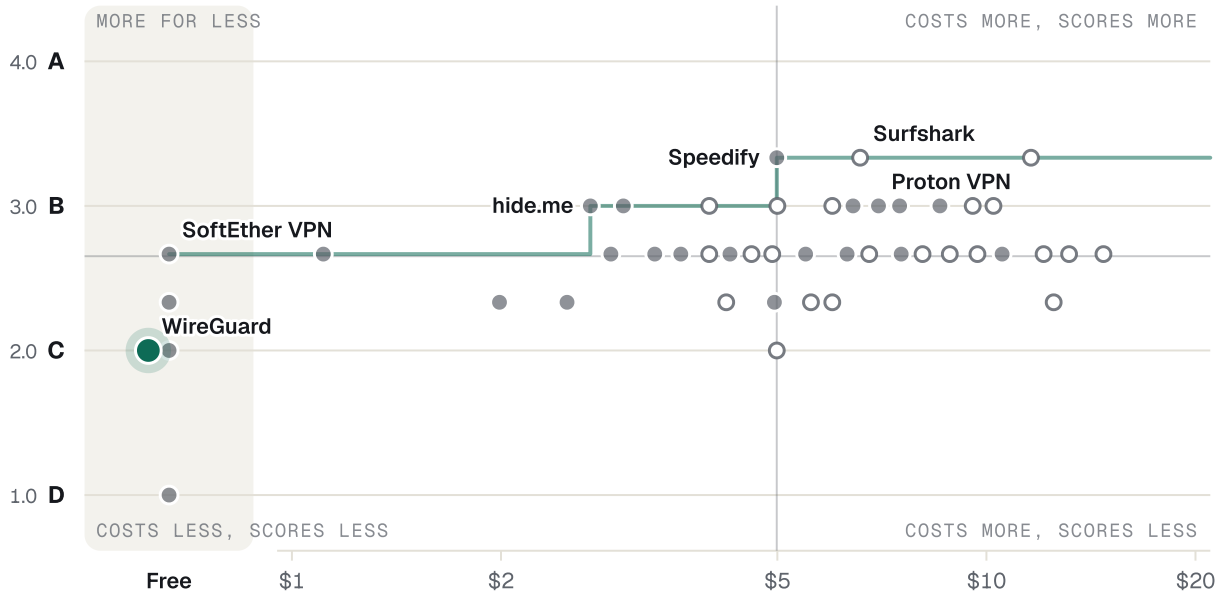
Each grade against the category

Every bar is all 51 VPNs we grade, cut by the letter each got. WireGuard's own letter is outlined.



Price against what you get

Each dot is one of 46 VPNs. Further left costs less; higher up scores better on features, ease of use and platforms. WireGuard 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

WireGuard 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

- ✕ Servers in dozens of countries, kept fast and private.
- ✕ Apps for macOS, Windows, Linux, iOS and Android that stay in step with each other.

What this rests on. WireGuard'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



OpenVPN, SoftEther VPN, Firezone, Outline VPN and Mullvad VPN

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

2.8 GPA

OpenVPN

Free plan · from $7/mo

Open-source VPN protocol plus business VPN products built on it.

- OpenVPN is self-hostable, according to its own site.

WireGuard and OpenVPN compared in full

S

2.8 GPA

SoftEther VPN

Free

Free multi-protocol VPN server and client from a Japanese university.

- SoftEther VPN is self-hostable, according to its own site.

WireGuard and SoftEther VPN compared in full

2.6 GPA

Firezone

Free plan · from $50/yr

WireGuard-based zero-trust remote access for teams.

WireGuard and Firezone compared in full



2.0
GPA

Outline VPN

Free

Open-source software for running your own VPN server.

- Outline VPN is self-hostable, according to its own site.

WireGuard and Outline VPN compared in full



1.8
GPA

Mullvad VPN

From €5/mo

Flat-rate Swedish VPN with anonymous numbered accounts.

- WireGuard has a free plan. Mullvad VPN does not.
- Mullvad VPN also covers ad and tracker blocking.

WireGuard and Mullvad VPN compared in full

Quick answers

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

10

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 WireGuard free?

Yes. WireGuard is free to use.

How much does WireGuard cost?

WireGuard lists one plan. WireGuard: $0.

What platforms does WireGuard work on?

WireGuard is available on Windows, macOS, Linux, iOS and Android.

How is WireGuard rated?

WireGuard's iPhone and iPad app averages 4.3 out of 5 from 1,043 ratings on the App Store in the United States, as read on Nov 13, 2026.

Is WireGuard open source?

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

Who makes WireGuard?

WireGuard is made by Jason A. Donenfeld (ZX2C4) and Edge Security.

What are the alternatives to WireGuard?

The closest alternatives to WireGuard in our directory are OpenVPN, SoftEther VPN, Firezone, Outline VPN and Mullvad VPN.

How does WireGuard compare with other VPNs?

WireGuard's GPA of 2.4 is higher than 22 of the 50 other VPNs we grade, and level with 8.

Is WireGuard good value for money?

ToolGPA grades WireGuard C for value for money. WireGuard has no paid plan.

Could I make my own version of WireGuard?

WireGuard 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 WireGuard'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 WireGuard'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 Jason A. Donenfeld (ZX2C4) and Edge Security. Prices change, so check wireguard.com before you buy.

wireguard.com
wireguard.com/donations/
wireguard.com/install/

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

WireGuard, kept up to date

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

toolgpa.com/tools/wireguard

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, "WireGuard: The Insider's Guide",
checked Nov 13, 2026.
https://toolgpa.com/tools/wireguard
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Know someone choosing between VPNs?

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

ToolGPA elsewhere: youtube.com/@toolgpa

See our other guides

The best-graded VPNs after WireGuard, each with an Insider's Guide of its own.

VPNs Insider's Guide

Every one of the 51 VPNs we grade, compared

Cloudflare WARP Insider's Guide

Free Cloudflare app that encrypts traffic, with an optional paid tier

3.2 GPA

Ultrasurf Insider's Guide

Free censorship-circumvention VPN from UltraReach

3.2 GPA

hide.me Insider's Guide

Malaysia-based VPN with a no-signup free plan and flat renewal prices

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 WireGuard'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. WireGuard is a trademark of its owner, and this guide is not made, paid for or approved by Jason A. Donenfeld (ZX2C4) and Edge Security. Prices and plans change: check wireguard.com before you buy.