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The Free Stack

What people pay for, and the free version that does the same job. Three audiences, three tables, one rule: every figure is a real price, and every limit named is the point where free actually stops.

Members get $10 off a website build — code MEMBER10

STUDENTS

Study, write, and submit without a subscription

Most student spending goes on one assistant and one design tool. Both have a free tier that covers coursework; the limits below are where it stops.

PAID TOOL	PRICE	FREE ALTERNATIVE	WHAT YOU GET	WHERE FREE BREAKS
ChatGPT Plus	$20/mo	ChatGPT Free	Unlimited chats, ~3 file uploads a day, 27K context	File uploads run out; newest model not guaranteed
Claude Pro	$20/mo	Claude Free	Full chat, web search, file creation, code	Usage resets every 5 hours and again weekly
Gemini AI Pro	$19.99/mo	Gemini Free	Flash-Lite model, 32K context, 15GB storage	Smaller model is the whole catch
Notion Plus	$10/mo	Notion Free	Personal workspace, 5MB uploads	AI is a trial only; history ends at 30 days
Canva Pro	$18/mo	Canva Free	1.6M templates, 5GB, ~20 AI uses a month	20 AI uses vanish in one afternoon

The 60-second version

Use the free assistant for drafts and rewriting, paste text instead of uploading files (uploads are the scarce resource), and export finished documents to your own storage because free history is short.

JOB SEEKERS

CV, cover letters and interview prep at $0

Nothing in a job application needs a paid plan except volume. One assistant, one search tool and one design tool, all on free tiers, covers the whole process.

PAID TOOL	PRICE	FREE ALTERNATIVE	WHAT YOU GET	WHERE FREE BREAKS
ChatGPT Plus	$20/mo	ChatGPT Free	Drafting, rewriting, interview answers	No document uploads beyond ~3 a day
Perplexity Pro	$20/mo	Perplexity Free	Unlimited basic searches with sources	3 Pro searches/day, 1 deep research a month
ElevenLabs Starter	$6/mo	ElevenLabs Free	10,000 credits (~10 min of speech)	No commercial licence on free
Claude Pro	$20/mo	Claude Free	Long emails, cover letters, code review	Hits the 5-hour limit in a busy morning
Canva Pro	$18/mo	Canva Free	CV and portfolio layouts	No background remover, 3-colour brand kit

The 60-second version

Write the CV once with a free assistant, then tailor the top third for each role. Use free search for company research instead of paid tools. Keep one design file and export a PDF, because layouts change and free history does not keep versions.

BUSINESS OWNERS

Run the boring parts of a business for free

This is where the money actually leaks: automation platforms, writing tools, design seats and a website. All four have a free path, and the catch is in the last column.

PAID TOOL	PRICE	FREE ALTERNATIVE	WHAT YOU GET	WHERE FREE BREAKS
Zapier Professional	$19.99/mo	Zapier Free	100 tasks a month, unlimited Zaps	Two-step Zaps only, so real workflows are paid
n8n Cloud	~$24/mo	n8n self-hosted	Unmetered runs, unlimited users	You become the person who maintains the server
Jasper	$59/seat	ChatGPT Plus $20	Most writing work, one seat	No brand-voice templates or campaigns
Copy.ai	$24/mo	ChatGPT Plus $20	Short marketing copy	Five seats bundled either way
Notion Business	$20/seat	Notion Free	Docs, tasks, light databases	AI and 30-day history are the limits
Midjourney Basic	$10/mo	Canva free credits	Simple visuals, social images	About 20 AI uses a month
Website (build)	$59 once	Cloudflare Pages	Hosting free, fast, own domain	You still need someone to build the page

The 60-second version

Start with the free tiers and only pay when a named limit blocks real work. A website does not need a monthly plan, automation does not need per-task billing at low volume, and a $20 assistant replaces most $59 writing seats.

Want the checks run on your own site? The free 48-hour AI audit fetches your pages, reads robots.txt and llms.txt, parses the schema and tests real prompts to see whether an assistant names you. No charge.

voxahq.in/services/ai-audit

Member offer: $10 off any website build (landing page $59, business site $119, WordPress $179). Mention code **MEMBER10** when you enquire: voxahq.in/services/website

Prices are the figures published on each vendor's own pricing page and checked by VOXA. Vendors change plans; the tool pages at voxahq.in/tools link to the source for every number. Free tools, no signup: voxahq.in/free-tools