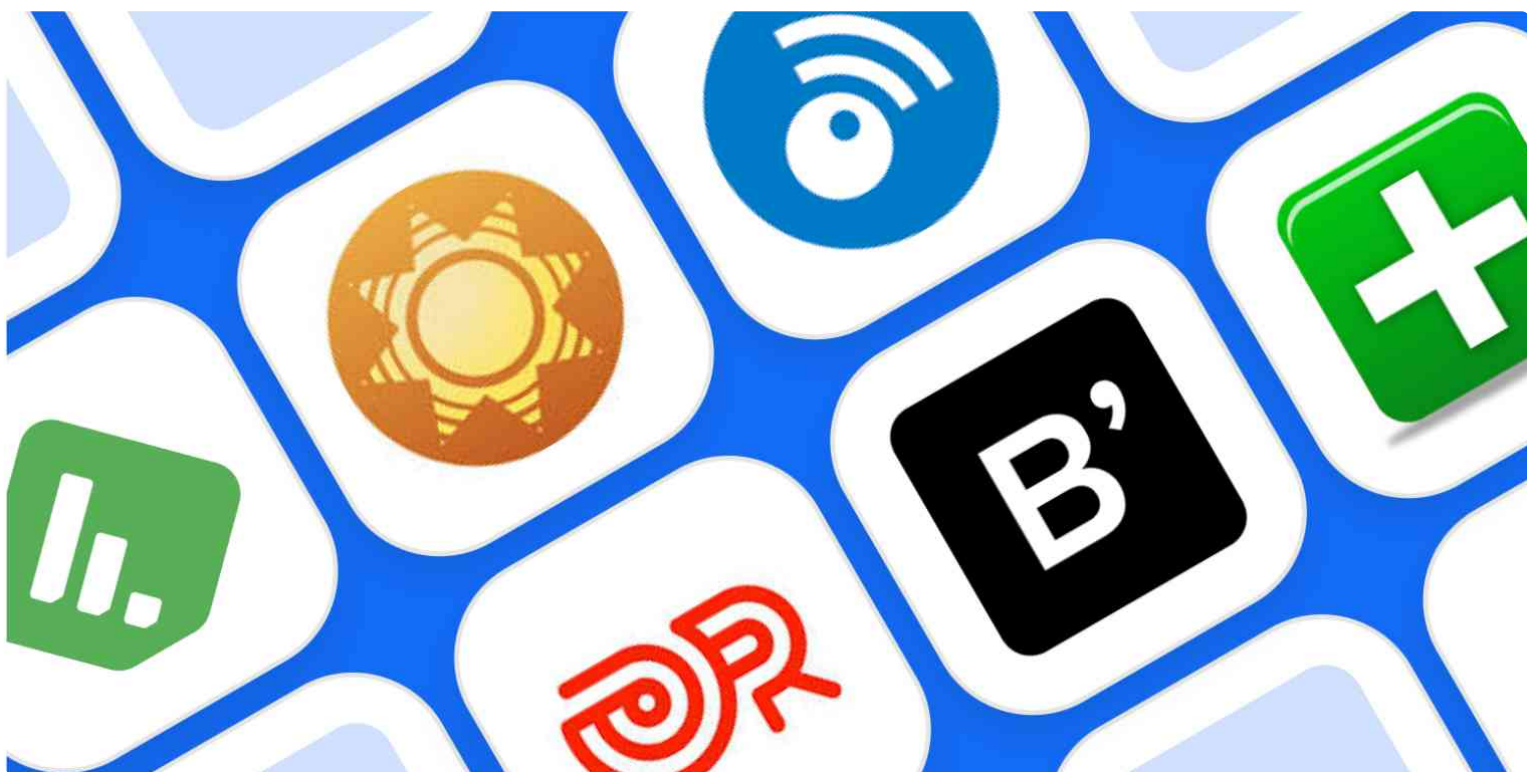


[Best apps](#) 7 min read

## The 5 best free RSS reader apps in 2021

Follow your favorite blogs, sites, and feeds for free

By Vicky Volvovski · May 28, 2021



When you want to follow specific writers, publications, and channels—to see every piece of content they publish—nothing beats an RSS reader app. RSS apps access web feeds published by websites, letting you aggregate and curate content you care about. Instead of visiting multiple sites, just open your favorite RSS app to see all new content in a central source.

**Learn how to level up your RSS feeds**

**Automate your RSS**

If you're still looking for a replacement for Google Reader, or you're just ready to start experiencing the web chronologically, check out the following five free RSS reader apps that keep you up to date.

Want to look at posts from your favorite social sharers in your RSS app alongside the blogs and channels you follow? Here's how to build an RSS feed for [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#). Once your feed is set up, just add it to your RSS reader app to get all of your favorite content in one place.

# What makes a great RSS reader app?

## How we evaluate and test apps

All of our best apps roundups are written by humans who've spent much of their careers using, testing, and writing about software. We spend dozens of hours researching and testing apps, using each app as it's intended to be used and evaluating it against the criteria we set for the category. We're never paid for placement in our articles from any app or for links to any site—we value the trust readers put in us to offer authentic evaluations of the categories and apps we review. For more details on our process, read the full rundown of [how we select apps to feature on the Zapier blog](#).

For over a decade, Google Reader was the gold standard for RSS apps—at least until July 2013, when Google abruptly stopped supporting the tool. A good chunk of the internet is still mad about that.

But it's not all bad news. There are plenty of polished, high-quality feed reader apps that let you access the content published on your favorite sites exactly how you want to read it.

For this piece, we will focus on the best free, online RSS services—the best alternatives to Google Reader—and we narrowed our recommendations using the following criteria:

- **Free:** Each featured app is either completely free or offers a free plan that rivals the features of most premium plans on the market.
- **Web apps:** Web RSS apps let you read content online using any device by accessing a URL. This is opposed to native RSS apps that sync feeds directly to your device. The apps featured below are all web apps.
- **Traditional:** A traditional RSS reader app does two things: displays content in reverse chronological order and lets you curate the content you want to read. We excluded any apps that use an algorithm to determine the order in which posts are displayed (e.g., popular posts displayed first), and we also excluded tools better described as content discovery platforms (e.g., Flipboard).
- **Full-text:** When creating an RSS feed, publishers elect to show either a preview of their content or the entire article, so it's not always possible for RSS readers to display articles in their entirety. But for sites that have elected to show full-text, RSS readers should display the entire article, *unless* not having full-text is a specific feature that provides value to users (e.g., the app is designed to make it easy to skim lots of headlines). We eliminated any apps that placed access to full-text—when made available by the publisher—behind a premium plan paywall.
- **Usability:** One of the major goals of using an RSS reader app is to simplify the process of seeing content from multiple sites. The apps we chose make it easy to perform basic RSS app functions like following your favorite sites, organizing your feeds into meaningful categories, saving articles, and marking articles as read.

With those criteria in mind, here are our picks for the five best RSS reader apps.

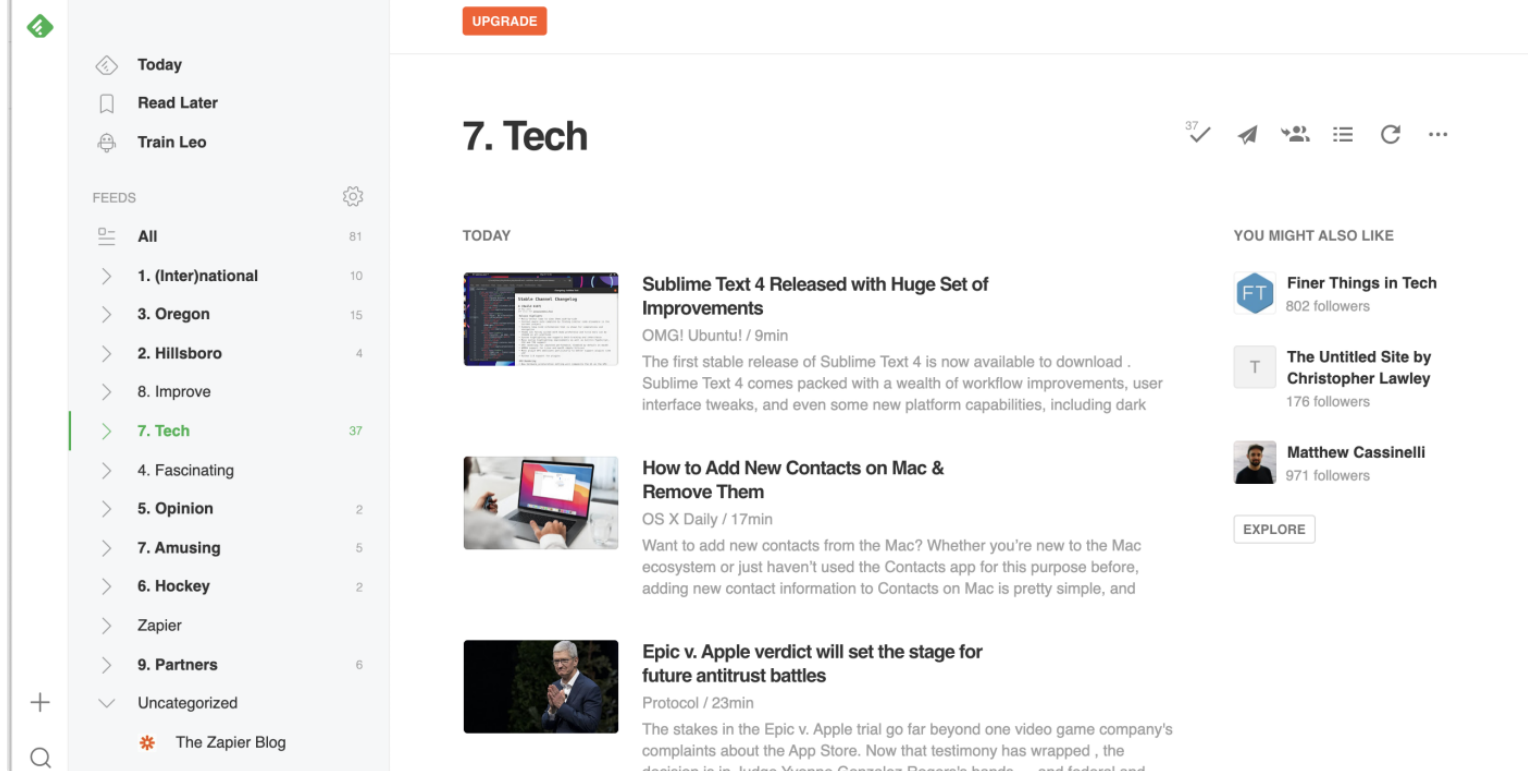
## The 5 best RSS reader apps

- [Feedly](#) for the best all-around free feed RSS reader
- [NewsBlur](#) for filtering your RSS feeds
- [Inoreader](#) for the best free reader with search and archiving
- [The Old Reader](#) for sharing and recommendations
- [Feeder](#) for quickly browsing headlines

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## Best all-around free feed RSS reader

[Feedly](#) (Web, iOS, Android)



[Feedly](#) is the industry standard for web-based RSS readers, and has been for a while. It's not hard to see why—its clean and simple interface is a great solution for both casual readers who just want to see all of their websites in one place and power users who want to take advantage of every feature RSS apps have to offer.

Feedly's free plan offers most of the features casual readers need. Follow up to 100 sources, sort the sites you follow into topical categories, watch YouTube videos, and read full-text articles (when available) in a distraction-free, minimalist view. Plus, Feedly offers mobile apps for Android and iOS devices, so you can access subscriptions easily both at home and on the go.

Remember: If you have to leave your RSS app and visit the source website to view the full text of an article, it's most likely a setting from the publisher and not a limitation set by the RSS provider.

But Feedly is also incredibly scalable, giving you the tools you need to do more than just curate and aggregate content. Upgrade to the Pro plan to search your feeds, get Google Keyword Alerts alongside your subscriptions, add notes to content, and highlight important passages. This is great for professionals who want to use their RSS app as a research hub.

And if you want to share your RSS feeds with others, Feedly's Business plan lets you do just that. Share feeds, boards, notes, and highlights with other members of your team so you can all collaborate to uncover interesting research and share ideas.

Want to connect Feedly to the other apps you use? You can do that with [Zapier's Feedly integration](#), which can connect the RSS reader with thousands of apps. This lets you do things like push articles to your Buffer queue, share articles on Slack, or save tagged articles to a Google Sheet.



**Add New Feedly Article From a Category to Buffer Queue**  
Buffer + Feedly

Use this Zap



**Share new articles in Feedly feeds on Slack**  
Feedly + Slack

Use this Zap



**Save tagged articles in Feedly to new rows in Google Sheets**  
Feedly + Google Sheets

Use this Zap

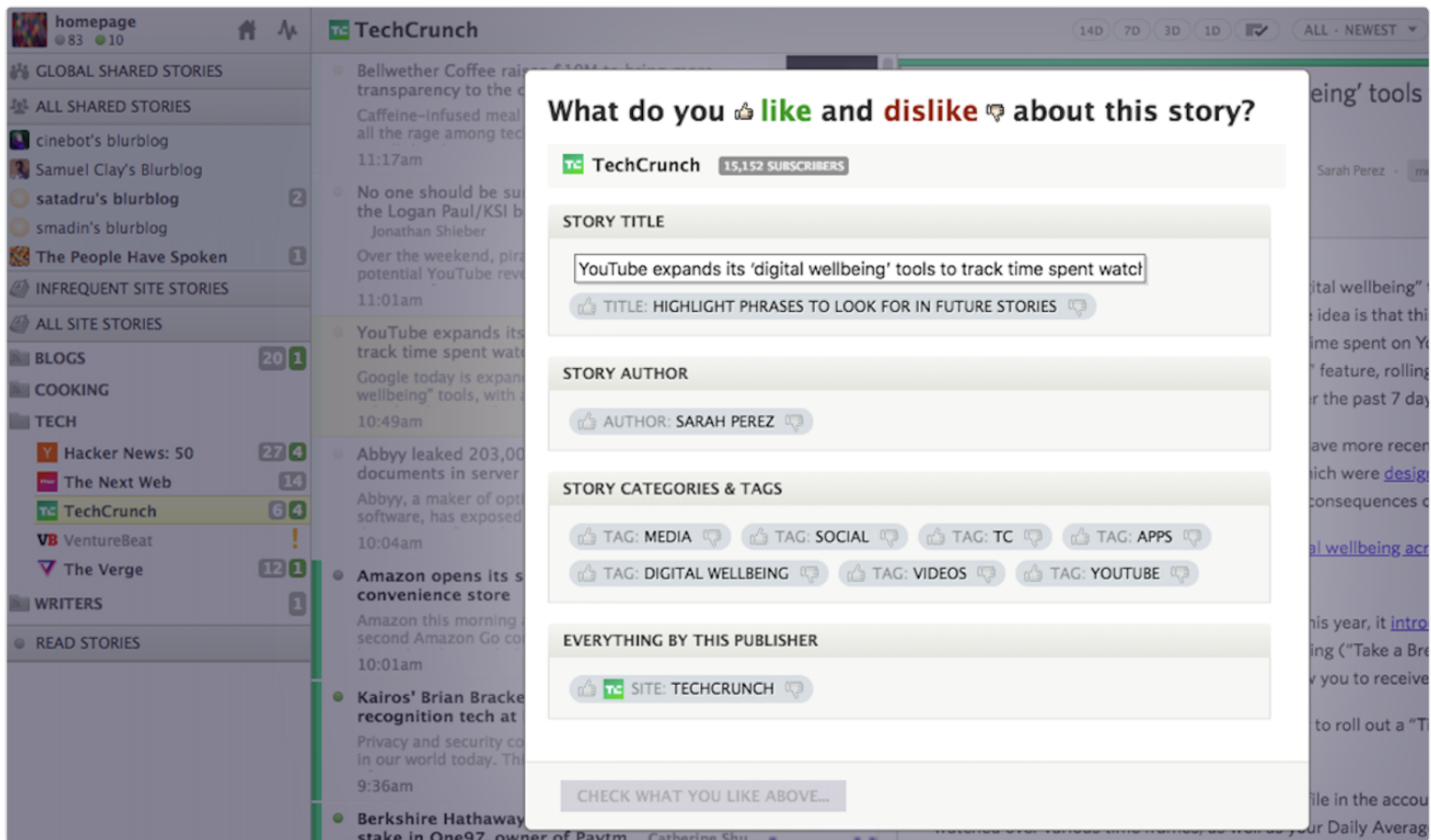
Not seeing what you're looking for?

[Create from scratch](#) or [learn more](#)

**Feedly Price:** Free for the [Basic plan](#) that lets you follow up to 100 sources and use the web, Android, and iOS apps; the Pro plan starts at \$6/month and includes up to 1,000 sources, search, and third-party integrations (including Zapier).

## Best free RSS reader for filtering your feeds

[NewsBlur](#) (Web, Self-Hosted Web, iOS, Android)



With a free [NewsBlur](#) account, you can subscribe to up to 64 different feeds, read full-text content of those sites in its web reader, and save stories to read or access in the future. And you don't even need to click that much while reading in NewsBlur. Just keep scrolling: articles display one after another for action-free reading.

But NewsBlur's most interesting feature is its sophisticated filtering, which can automatically highlight or hide stories based on certain criteria. If you spend some time training your filters, the system will learn your preferences and try to surface the stories that interest you most. That way, you can subscribe to as many sites as you want—even the ones that publish 100 articles a day—and still only see the content you're interested in.

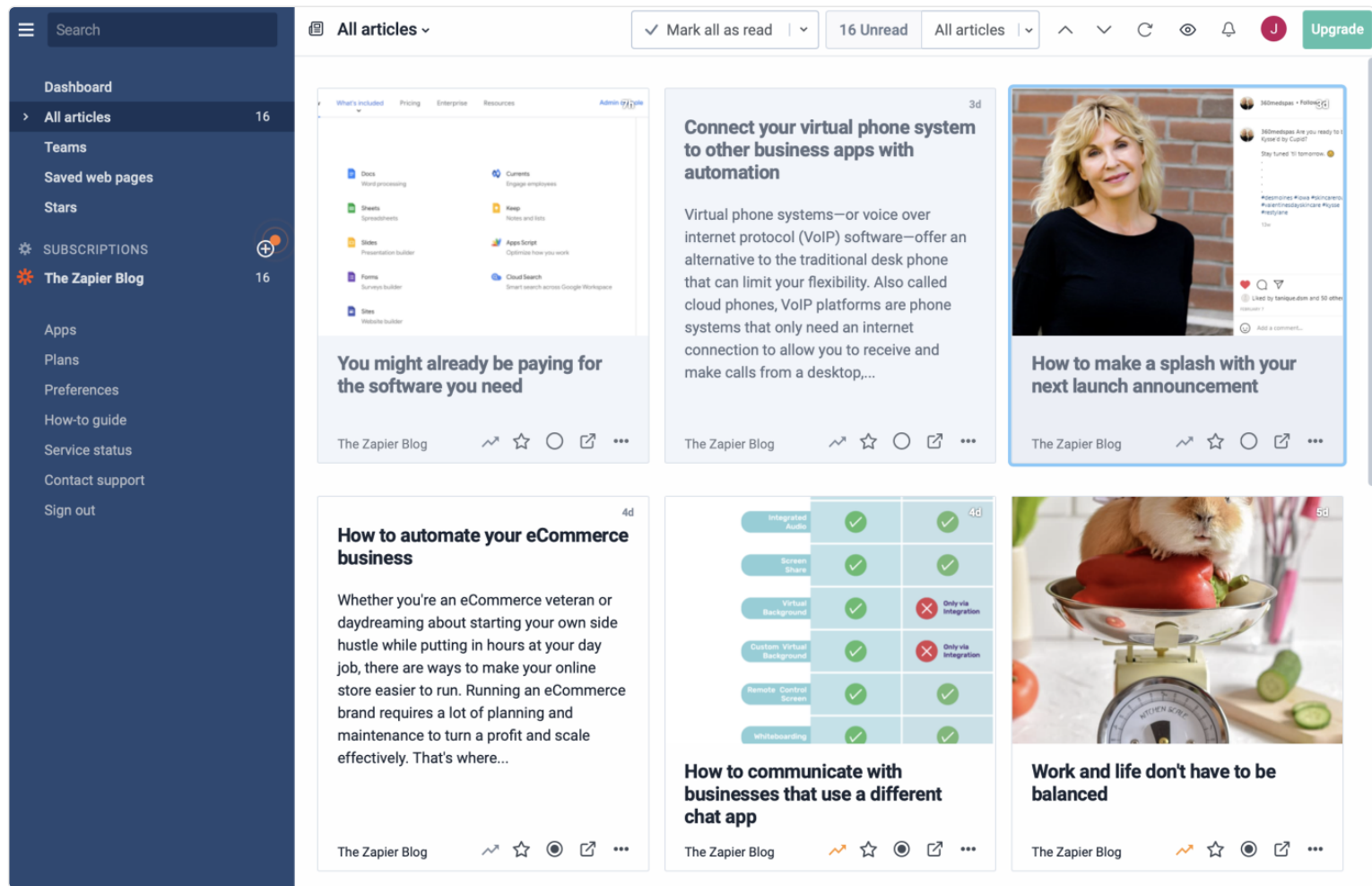
NewsBlur also lets you share your favorite stories, either on social networks or inside of NewsBlur. Within the app, you can add stories that you read and like to your personal "blurblog," or find people with similar interests and follow their blurblogs as well. Or, you can run NewsBlur on your own server for free.

**NewsBlur Price:** Free for subscribing to up to 64 sites; \$36/year for a [Premium account](#) that includes unlimited subscriptions, search functionality, and private sharing; free [open-source](#) to run on your own server.

If you like the idea of a self-hosted RSS app but aren't sure if NewsBlur is right for you, there are other options to consider: [selfoss](#), [FreshRSS](#), [Tiny Tiny RSS](#), and [Winds](#) are all free to install on your own server, if you have one.

# Best free RSS reader with search and archiving

**Inoreader** (Web, iOS, Android)



**Inoreader** is one of the most feature-packed free RSS readers on this list. Without paying a cent, you can follow 150 feeds, and you can even search within your subscriptions.

And while most RSS apps only cache content for the short-term, Inoreader doesn't have limited-time archives. Your content—even the stuff you've already read—is stored permanently. To stay organized, you can group your feeds in folders and use tags to separate out individual articles as you read them.

This makes Inoreader a great tool for power users, but it's very accessible for beginners as well. After signing up, you're guided through a tutorial that shows you how to use the app's major features, making it easy to get up and running even if you have no previous RSS experience.

If you upgrade to one of Inoreader's premium plans, you get even more features. Add feeds for Twitter profiles or Facebook Pages, write advanced rules for sorting your content into folders and tags, and customize your dashboard to see exactly what interests you the most when you log in.

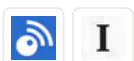
Inoreader offers [a Zapier integration](#), meaning you can connect it to thousands of other apps. This lets you do things like automatically save starred articles to Pocket and Instapaper, or compile saved articles in a Google spreadsheet.



**Save starred Inoreader articles to Pocket**

Inoreader + Pocket

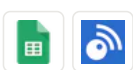
Use this Zap



**Create Instapaper pages for new starred Inoreader articles**

Inoreader + Instapaper

Use this Zap



Not seeing what you're looking for?

[Create from scratch](#) or [learn more](#)

**Inoreader Price:** Free with ads for 150 subscriptions and search functionality; from \$1.67/month for the [Supporter plan](#) for 500 subscriptions, no ads, a customizable dashboard, and custom rules.

## Best free RSS reader for sharing and recommendations

[The Old Reader](#) (Web)

The screenshot shows the 'The Old Reader' web interface. At the top left is the logo, and at the top right is a search bar. Below the logo is a sidebar with a red plus icon and the text 'ADD A SUBSCRIPTION'. The sidebar contains a list of navigation options: Home, All items (42), Starred, Liked, Shared, Bookmarked, Trending, SUBSCRIPTIONS (8), The Zapier Blog (8), THE OLD READER PICKS (34), and Lifehacker (34). The main content area displays a list of articles. The first article is from Lifehacker, titled 'If You Have a Food Processor, You Can Make This Watermelon Sherbet', posted 2 hours ago. The second article is also from Lifehacker, titled 'How to Send a Secret Image in Plain Sight', posted 2 hours ago. The third article is from The Zapier Blog, titled 'Payment Processor Showdown: Stripe vs. PayPal', posted 3 hours ago.

If you and your friends all enjoy reading the same types of content, [The Old Reader](#) makes it easy to share your recommendations with each other. Just connect your Facebook or Google account, follow friends who also have accounts, and The Old Reader will show you content recommended by your friends.

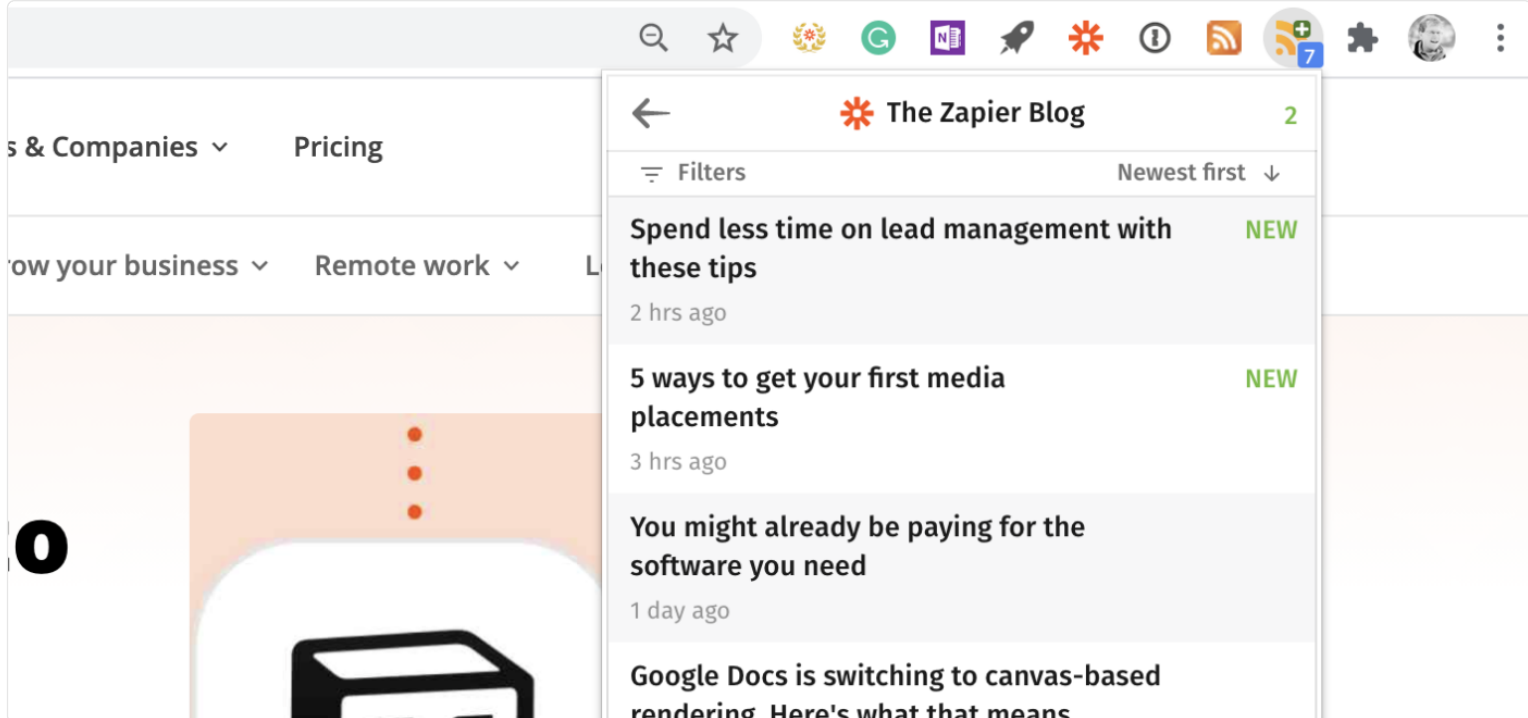
This is a great way to discover new blogs, sites, and channels to follow—as well as share your favorites with your friends. And even if you don't have any friends using The Old Reader to connect with, you can check out the content in its *Trending* tab to see a list of the pieces that have received the most recent likes from other people who use The Old Reader.

Beyond its social aspects, The Old Reader's free plan does everything you need an RSS app to do. View full-text articles when available, read all posts in reverse chronological order, and subscribe to as many as 100 feeds. But if you want full-text search functionality, need to follow more than 100 feeds, or prefer to use the app without ads, you'll need to upgrade to Premium.

**The Old Reader Price:** Free with ads for up to 100 subscriptions; from \$3/month for a [Premium Account](#) (login required to view page) that includes up to 500 subscriptions, one year of post storage, and full-text search.

## Best free RSS reader for quickly browsing headlines

[Feeder](#) (Web, Chrome, Firefox, iOS, Android)



Feeder's web app isn't all that different from any of the other apps on this list, outside its more modern aesthetic. Like all traditional RSS reader apps, it lets you subscribe to sites and view their posts in reverse chronological order. There's support for setting up rules, for paid users, and some collaboration features. What makes Feeder stand out, though, is its [browser extension](#) that lets you browse headlines.

Using Feeder's browser extensions for Chrome or Firefox is perhaps the simplest way to read RSS feeds—one that's especially popular with those who want to quickly read the headlines and get on with their day. Just click your RSS icon to see recently published headlines from any page of your browser. Tap an article to read it, or just quickly skim through the latest updates without reading everything.

You can also take your RSS feeds on the go with Feeder's mobile apps for iOS and Android, where you'll get both the headlines and a simplified view of the full articles. It's a great way to stay informed of what's going on wherever you happen to be when you're looking to catch up on the news you care about.

**Feeder Price:** Free with ads for the [Feeder Basic plan](#) that includes access to all of Feeder's apps and 10 feeds; Pro starts at \$2.50/month and includes faster updates, 30 feeds, and no ads.

RSS is one of the oldest technologies of the internet; it's kind of like email in that way. But also like email, newer advances in technology haven't reduced its importance. RSS remains one of the best ways to make sure you see *everything* your favorite sites publish.

#### Related Reading:

- [How to filter, combine, and customize RSS Feeds](#)
- [4 popular ways to use RSS by Zapier](#)
- [Ways to use RSS to boost your productivity](#)

*Originally published in September 2015, this post has had contributions from Matthew Guay, Jessica Greene, and Justin Pot.*

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Vicky Volvovski

Vicky Volvovski lives in Madison, Wisconsin. When she's not testing the latest apps, you can find her in the kitchen working on her food blog.

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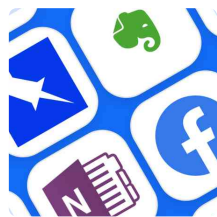


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## The 3 best RSS readers for Mac in 2021

RSS feeds are the ultimate power user tool for keeping up with the news. And if there's one thing a power user can't stand, it's clumsy software. For Mac users, that means the best choice is a native app. Here are the three best RSS readers for Mac.

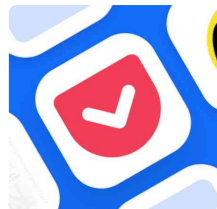
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