

Free & Low-Cost Tools

Being a freelancer means wearing a lot of hats. And sometimes those hats need extremely over-priced software to stay on your head. (You look great in hats btw.)

But good tools don't have to break the bank. Whether you're tracking time, designing a quick mockup, sending invoices, or just trying to stay on top of your work-life chaos, there are plenty of affordable (or totally free!) tools out there to help you do it all with less stress and more style.

This resource rounds up some of our favorite free and low-cost tools for getting things done. As always, prices change FAST and OFTEN, so always be sure to check pricing at the time of subscription!

L&D Specific

- [H5P](#) (Free)– Create interactive content like quizzes, presentations, and interactive videos without coding.
- [Adapt Learning](#) (Free)– Open-source authoring tool for responsive e-learning courses.
- [SCORM Cloud](#) (Free for small-scale use)– Test SCORM-compliant courses without needing an LMS.
- [Twine](#) (Free)– An open-source tool for crafting interactive, nonlinear stories without needing to code. Ideal for creating choose-your-own-adventure narratives, Twine publishes directly to HTML, making it easy to share your work anywhere.

Project Management

- [MindMeister](#) (Free or \$6.50/month)– A simple but effective tool for brainstorming and mapping out ideas.
- [Trello](#) (Free or \$5/month)– A visual task management tool that works great for tracking learning projects.
- [Asana](#) (Free or from \$10.99/month)– More structured project management with task dependencies and automations.
- [ClickUp](#) (Free or from \$7/month)– A versatile tool with built-in docs, whiteboards, and task tracking.
- [Notion](#) (Free or from \$10/month)– Combines project management, knowledge sharing, and note-taking in one.
- [Airtable](#) (Free or paid tiers)- A flexible platform that combines the simplicity of a spreadsheet with the power of a database, allowing teams to organize, collaborate, and manage data in a highly customizable way.

Video & Animation

- [Vyond](#) (From \$25/month, billed annually)– Create professional animated training videos with ease.
- [Loom](#) (Free or \$15/month)– Quick and easy screen recording and video messaging for instructional content.
- [Zight](#) (previously CloudApp) (Free or \$9/month)– Capture and share screen recordings, GIFs, and annotated screenshots instantly.
- [Snagit](#) (\$39/year)– A powerhouse for capturing screenshots and screen recordings with detailed annotation tools—perfect for walkthroughs, tutorials, and giving clear feedback.
- [OBS Studio](#) (Free)– A powerful open-source tool for high-quality screen recording and live streaming. Ideal for creating tutorials, webinars, and instructional videos, OBS Studio offers advanced features like scene transitions, audio mixing, and real-time video/audio capturing!
- [SynFig Studio](#) (Free)- An open-source 2D vector animation software designed to produce film-quality animations with fewer resources.

Graphics & Design

- [Canva](#) (Free or \$15/month)– Drag-and-drop design tool for presentations, social media, and training assets.
- [Pexels](#) (Free)– A massive library of high-quality stock images and videos.
- [Freepik](#) (Free & Paid)– Free and premium graphics, illustrations, and templates.
- [Unsplash](#) (Free or \$7/month)– A large collection of beautiful, high-resolution stock photos.
- [Flaticon](#) (Free or \$8.25/month)– A great resource for icons, vector graphics, and UI elements.
- [Icons8](#) (Free & Paid)– A diverse library of icons, illustrations, and music.
- [LottieFiles](#) (Free & Paid)– Animated assets to add motion to digital training content.
- [GIMP](#) (Free)- As close as you can get to Photoshop without the price tag, GIMP is a powerful open-source image editing tool. While it might not have all the bells and whistles of Photoshop, it does have an impressive set of features for tasks like photo manipulation, graphic design, and digital painting.

Collaboration

- [Google Forms](#) (Free) – Simple and effective for gathering learner feedback and assessments.
- [Zoom](#) (Free & Paid) – A widely used video conferencing tool for live training sessions.
- [Slack](#) (Free or from \$7.25/month) – Instant messaging and collaboration tool for teams.
- [Miro](#) (Free & Paid) – Online whiteboard for brainstorming and collaboration.
- [Mural](#) (Free & Paid) – Digital whiteboarding tool for teamwork and brainstorming.
- [Trello](#) (Free or from \$5/month)– A visually intuitive task and project management tool that works great for collaborative efforts, keeping everyone on the same page

Audio Tools

- [Audacity](#) (Free)– A powerful, open-source tool for recording and editing audio.
- [Descript](#) (Free & Paid)– Transcribe, edit, and enhance audio and video content with AI-powered features.

AI-Powered

- [Grammarly](#) (Free or \$12/month)– AI-powered writing assistant for clear and error-free content.
- [ChatGPT](#) (Free & Paid)– Helps generate ideas, draft content, and refine instructional materials.
- [Gemini](#) (Free & Paid)– AI-powered text and image generation, useful for brainstorming and content enhancement.
- [ElevenLabs](#) (Free or \$5/month for 30k characters)– AI text-to-speech tool for voiceovers in training content.
- [Canva Magic Media](#) (Free & Paid)– AI-powered text generator right within Canva for quick content creation.
- [Synthesia](#) (Free or \$18/month)– AI-generated video avatars that can deliver training content in different languages.
- [Runway ML](#) (Free or \$12/month)– AI-powered video and content editing for creating training materials.
- [Otter.ai](#) (Free or \$8.33/month)– AI transcription tool for meetings, lectures, and interviews.

