INFO-TYPERS · FREE GUIDE

how much does it cost to build an app?

What an app really costs (and what nobody tells you)

Where your app can launch, what you pay once and what keeps coming back, what Apple and Google ask for before it goes live, and the first-month list to get it quoted.

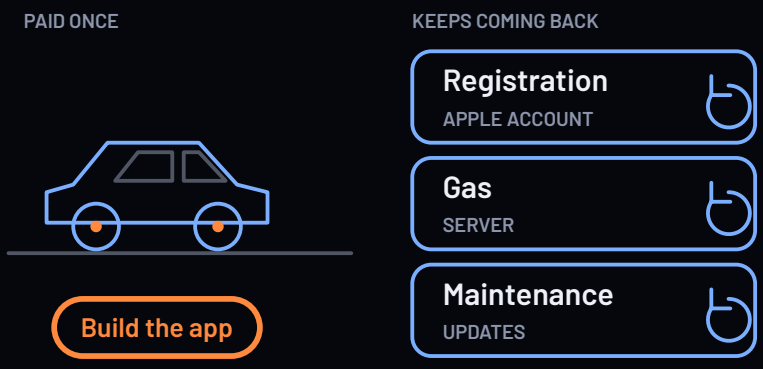
INTERACTIVE VERSION

typersagency.com/en/blog/what-an-app-really-costs

TYPERS

THE IDEA IN ONE SENTENCE

An app is like a car



Build it once. Keeping it running repeats

Buying the car is one payment. Registration, insurance, gas and maintenance keep coming back for as long as you drive it. An app works the same way: building it is the first payment; the Apple account, the server that grows with your users, the updates Apple and Google require and support are what keep coming back.

- First, where it launches: on the web (an installable app), on the App Store or on Google Play.
- Second, what it does: user accounts, payments, phone notifications, an admin panel so you can run it.
- Third, testing before launch: Google and Apple each have their own rules before your app goes live.
- And what keeps coming back: the Apple account, the server, updates and support.
- Your task: build the list of what your app must do in its first month and ask for quotes you can compare.

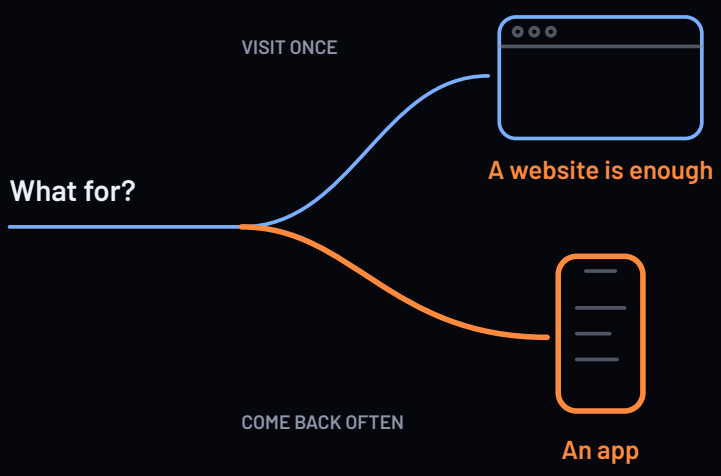
This guide has no Typers prices. We don't have a price list: first we do a diagnosis, then we send a proposal built for you. What you do get is what drives the cost, so you can ask for quotes you can actually compare.

What Apple and Google charge and require comes from their official pages, checked on November 19, 2026. Apple says its fee may vary by region and is shown in local currency when you enroll. The first-month list, the checklists and the advice are Typers' own judgment. The drawings are ours.

STEP 1 OF 7

01

App, website or both? When you don't need an app



- An app is worth it when people will open it often: to take a daily lesson, order, book, pay or get notifications. If they'll visit once to learn about you or contact you, a website is enough.
- Ask yourself what a person does on day one and what brings them back. Without a reason to come back, an installed app gets forgotten on the phone.
- An app needs upkeep: accounts that renew, a server you pay for and updates the stores require. A website needs upkeep too, just with fewer moving parts.
- Both: many apps start on the web and move to the stores later. If the codebase allows it, you don't start from scratch.

Heads up: If your goal is to show your business or get inquiries, start with a website before you think about an app.

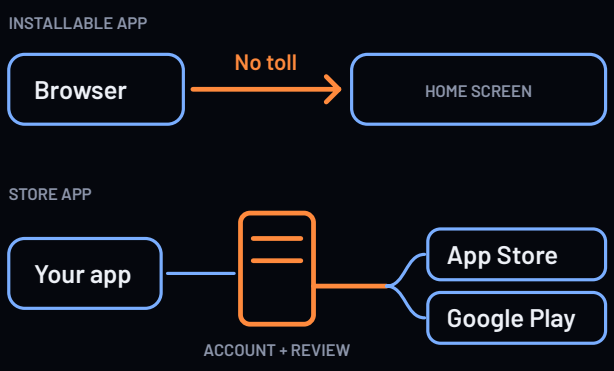
COMMON MISTAKE

Asking for an app because it "looks more modern," when what people need is to find you and contact you.

STEP 2 OF 7

02

Installable app or store app: what changes for you



Each store has its own fee and its own rules

- An installable app (also called a PWA) is a web app: it opens in the browser and can be added to the Home Screen without going through a store. MDN describes it as an app built with web technologies that can be installed on the device.
- A store app is downloaded from the App Store (iPhone) or Google Play (Android). You get the stores' shop window, but each one charges for its account and has its own rules.
- Apple charges US$99 a year for its developer account. Google charges a one-time US$25 fee to register in Play Console.
- Apple reviews every version before it goes live, and Google requires a closed test from new personal accounts (step 5).
- Notifications on iPhone: a web app can send them since iOS 16.4, but only if the person has added it to their Home Screen (WebKit).
- Charging inside the app: in the stores, subscriptions and digital content generally go through Apple's and Google's in-app billing; in some countries, including the US, the rules now allow other options. Things used outside the app (a delivery, an appointment) are charged another way.

Heads up: Apple says its fee may vary by region and is shown in local currency when you enroll. If you're not in the US, check the amount on the enrollment screen.

COMMON MISTAKE

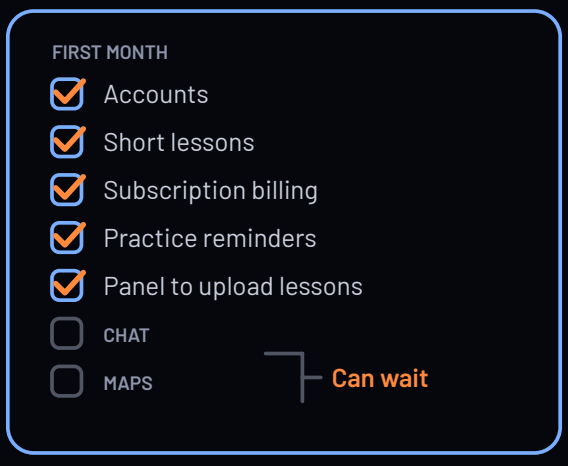
Picking the stores without knowing that Apple charges every year and that digital sales follow its billing rules.

STEP 3 OF 7

03

The first-month list: what your app must do

Example **Language school**



- Don't list everything your app might do someday. List what it must do in month one: the minimum for people to use it and come back.
- Example: a language school with short lessons. In month one it needs accounts, the lessons, subscription billing, daily practice reminders and a panel to upload lessons. Chat and maps can wait.
- To start, the school only needs the web. If it wants people to download it and pay for the subscription on their phones, it moves to the App Store and Google Play.
- Every feature you check is one more piece that gets built, tested and maintained. That's why a short first-month list is what helps you most to get quotes.
- Check below where you want to launch and what your app must do: we build your list, splitting what you pay once from what keeps coming back.

Heads up: The language school is an example to explain the idea, not a real case.

COMMON MISTAKE

Getting a quote for "the whole app" with everything you can think of, instead of what it must do in month one.

THE FIRST-MONTH LIST ON PAPER

What must your app do?

Check where you want it to launch and what it must do in month one. Everything else can wait.

1. Where do you want it to launch? (one or more)

___ On the web, as an installable app

___ On the App Store (iPhone)

___ On Google Play (Android)

2. What must it do in month one?

___ People create an account and sign in with a username and password

___ Charge for a subscription or digital content inside the app

___ Charge for products or services used outside the app (deliveries, appointments, in-person classes)

___ Send notifications to people's phones

___ Take bookings or appointments

___ An admin panel so you can run it yourself

___ Show your own content: lessons, videos or a catalog

___ Chat or messages

___ Maps or location

___ Work without an internet connection

___ Be available in two languages

___ Measure how many people use it and where they come from

3. If you're going to Google Play: whose name is the account in?

___ Personal, in one person's name

___ A business or organization account

___ I don't know yet

HOW YOUR LIST IS BUILT

Web: the installable web app, the domain and hosting. App Store: the iPhone version, Apple's App Review and the Apple account, paid every year. Google Play: the Android version and the Google account, paid once; if the account is personal (or you don't know), the closed test. Every feature you checked is a piece you pay for once. The server and support always keep coming back. Copy your checks onto the list on the next pages.

Do it online: typersagency.com/en/blog/what-an-app-really-costs#lista

YOUR LIST FOR QUOTES · 1 OF 2

What you pay once

Check the pieces that apply to you and fill in the blanks. Send this same list to every developer.

___ The installable web app: it opens in the browser and can be added to the Home Screen, built mobile-first.

___ The iPhone version and its submission to the App Store.

___ The Android version and its submission to Google Play.

___ Ask whether the versions you picked come from a single codebase or from several: it changes what gets built and what gets maintained.

___ The store listings: name, icon, description, screenshots and the link to your privacy policy.

___ The Google Play developer account: a one-time US$25 fee.

___ Google's closed test: at least 12 testers opted in for 14 days in a row before you can apply for production access. Who finds them and keeps them going?

___ The submission to Apple's App Review: notes for the reviewer, a demo account if the app needs a sign-in, and the fixes if it gets rejected.

___ Sign-up and sign-in, with password recovery.

___ A way to delete the account from inside the app: Apple and Google require it if the app lets people create accounts.

___ Charging for the subscription or the digital content.

___ In store apps, digital purchases generally go through Apple's and Google's in-app billing; in some countries, including the US, other options are allowed. Ask how it will be set up.

___ Charging through a payment processor for what's used outside the app (ask which one and whose account it is).

___ Phone notifications, with each person's permission.

___ Bookings or appointments, with a calendar and reminders for you and for the person booking.

___ The admin panel: where you upload content and see users, payments or orders, without depending on your developer.

___ Loading the starting content: lessons, videos or products. Who creates it, and how many? ____

___ Chat or messages, with a way to flag and block abuse.

___ Maps or location, with each person's permission.

___ Working offline and syncing when the connection comes back.

___ The version in a second language (the app and, if you go to the stores, its listings). Who translates?

___ Measurement: how many people install it, use it and where they come from.

___ Your privacy policy and a clear notice of what personal data you collect and why, with consent where your local law requires it.

YOUR LIST FOR QUOTES · 2 OF 2

What keeps coming back

You keep paying for this as long as your app runs. Ask for quotes that list it apart from what you pay once.

___ The Apple Developer Program membership: US$99 a year. If it expires, your app becomes unavailable on the App Store.

___ The server and the database: the cost grows with users, data and files. Ask how it's billed and when it goes up.

___ The domain and hosting for the web app, and their renewal.

___ The updates Apple and Google require over time (a recent SDK and the target API level), even if your app doesn't change.

___ Every new version goes through Apple's App Review again.

___ Apple's and Google's commission on digital sales made through their billing: ask which rate applies to you.

___ The payment processor's fee on every charge.

___ The maps service: ask whether it charges by usage as your traffic grows.

___ New content every month: lessons, videos or products. Who makes it?

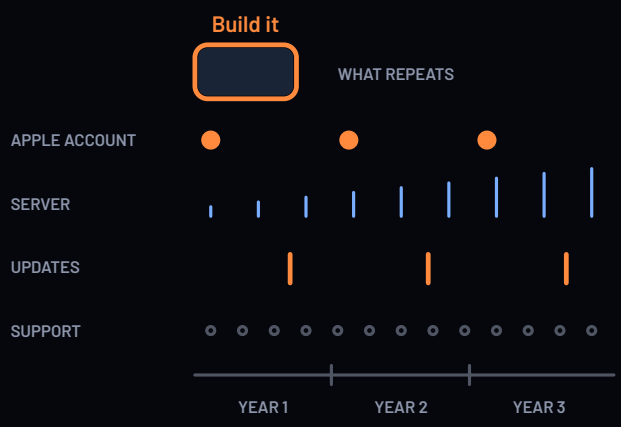
___ Support and maintenance: fixing bugs, answering users and small changes. Ask what's included and what costs extra.

Ask for the total in your currency and whether taxes are included. What Apple and Google charge is separate.

STEP 4 OF 7

04

What you pay once and what keeps coming back



- Once: building each piece (accounts, payments, notifications, panel), the store listings and the Google Play registration (a one-time US$25 fee).
- Every year: the Apple membership (US$99 a year). Apple says that if your membership expires, your apps become unavailable on the App Store; apps already on people's phones stay installed.
- As long as you have users: the server and the database. Like gas, they grow with use: more users, more data and more files.
- Over time, even if your app doesn't change: Apple requires building with a recent SDK (since April 28, 2026, Xcode 26 and the iOS 26 SDK) and Google Play raises the target API level every year (since August 31, 2026, Android 16, API level 36; in 2025 it was Android 15).
- Support: fixing bugs, answering users and making small changes. Ask what's included and what costs extra.
- If you charge inside the app: Apple and Google keep a commission on digital sales made through their billing. Ask which rate applies to you.

Heads up: Building it is the first payment. Keeping it running is the one that repeats: add it up before you decide.

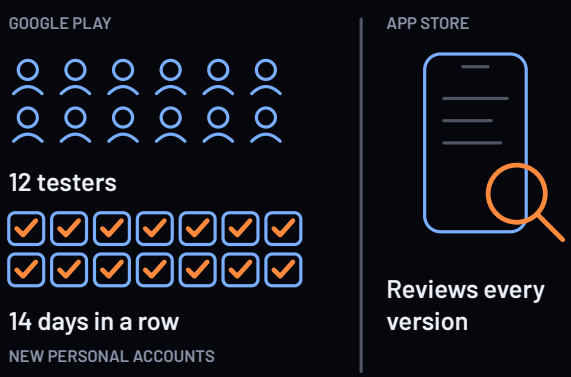
COMMON MISTAKE

Comparing only what it costs to build the app and forgetting what you pay every month and every year to keep it working.

STEP 5 OF 7

05

Test before launch: Google's closed test and Apple's App Review



No one can promise when they approve

- Google: if your developer account is personal and was created after November 13, 2023, you must run a closed test with at least 12 testers who stay opted in for 14 days in a row before you can apply for production access.
- Those 12 testers have to be found, invited and kept engaged. Ask who does it and how much time it adds to your launch date.
- Apple: it reviews all apps and all app updates before they go live. If information is missing or something doesn't follow its guidelines, it sends the app back and you have to fix it.
- No one can promise when Apple or Google will approve your app: that's their call. What can be promised is when it's ready to submit.
- Test with people from your audience too: have them install it, sign up and pay. What breaks in testing is cheaper to fix than what breaks after launch.

Heads up: Google's closed-test rule is for new personal accounts; an organization account doesn't fall under it. Decide whose name the account goes in before you start.

COMMON MISTAKE

Announcing your launch date before you've passed Google's closed test and Apple's App Review.

STEP 6 OF 7

06

What must be in your name



You own it, with your own logins

- The developer accounts with Apple and Google: in your name or your business's name. Your developer can be invited in without being the owner.
- The domain for the web app and your privacy policy.
- The server and the database: the account where your users and their data live, on your card or with admin access for you.
- The code: ask them to hand over the source code or access to the repository where it lives.
- The logins: for the admin panel, measurement and the accounts. Keep them somewhere safe.

Heads up: At Typers, the accounts and the domain are set up in your business's name (typersagency.com/en/web-and-apps).

COMMON MISTAKE

Leaving the Apple or Google account in your developer's name: if they leave, your app is left without an owner.

STEP 7 OF 7

07

How to ask for quotes you can compare



SAME LIST FOR EVERYONE

If it's not written, ask first

- Send every developer the same first-month list: where it launches and what it does. The tool in this guide builds it for you.
- Ask them to split what you pay once (building it) from what keeps coming back (accounts, server, updates and support).
- Ask for the total in your currency and whether taxes are included. What Apple and Google charge is separate.
- Ask who handles Google's closed test and Apple's App Review, and what date they promise for submission, not for approval.
- Ask what you get at the end: the code, the accounts in your name and the logins.

Heads up: If a quote leaves out something on the list, ask about it before you compare prices: what isn't written down usually costs extra.

COMMON MISTAKE

Picking the cheapest quote without noticing it leaves out the panel, the server or the yearly updates.

COMPARE QUOTES

What does each quote say?

Check what each one says in writing. If it doesn't say it, ask before you compare prices.

WHAT IT SHOULD SAY	A	B	C
Where it launches: web, App Store, Google Play, and whether it's a single codebase.	☐	☐	☐
What the app does in month one, feature by feature.	☐	☐	☐
Whether it includes the admin panel so you can run it yourself.	☐	☐	☐
Who loads the starting content, and how much.	☐	☐	☐
What you pay once, listed apart from what keeps coming back.	☐	☐	☐
What the server costs today and how it grows with users.	☐	☐	☐
Who pays and renews the Apple and Google accounts, in your name.	☐	☐	☐
Who handles Google's closed test and Apple's App Review.	☐	☐	☐
What the yearly updates and support include.	☐	☐	☐
That the code, the domain and the database stay in your name.	☐	☐	☐
The date it's ready to submit for review, without promising approval.	☐	☐	☐
The total, in your currency, and whether taxes are included.	☐	☐	☐

Do it online: typersagency.com/en/blog/what-an-app-really-costs#comparar

LEARN MORE

So how much does it cost with Typers?

We don't have a price list: first we do a diagnosis, then we send you a proposal built for you, with what you pay once and what keeps coming back listed separately.

We publish on the App Store and Google Play with a single codebase for iPhone, Android and the web. We've already been down that road with God History, our own app.

Get your free diagnosis. Tell us what your app needs to do and we'll tell you where to start.

How we do it at Typers

At Typers we build installable apps and apps for the App Store and Google Play, with a single codebase for iPhone, Android and the web. We did it with God History, our own app. We don't have a price list: in the free diagnosis we tell you where to start and send you a proposal built for you. See how we work in Web and apps.

FAQ

Quick answers

How much does it cost to build an app?

It depends on where it launches (web, App Store, Google Play), what it does (accounts, payments, notifications, panel) and what keeps coming back (the Apple account, the server, updates and support). That's why we don't give one number: build your first-month list and ask for quotes you can compare.

How much do Apple and Google charge to publish an app?

Apple charges US$99 a year for the Apple Developer Program. Google charges a one-time US$25 fee to register in Play Console. Apple says its fee may vary by region and is shown in local currency when you enroll.

Do I need an app, or is a website enough?

If people will visit once to learn about you or contact you, a website is enough. An app is worth it when they'll open it often: to take lessons, order, book, pay or get notifications.

What is an installable app?

It's a web app (PWA) that opens in the browser and can be added to the Home Screen, without going through the App Store or Google Play. No store accounts to pay and no store review.

What is Google Play's closed test?

If your developer account is personal and was created after November 13, 2023, Google requires you to test the app with at least 12 testers for 14 days in a row before you can apply for production access.

How long do Apple and Google take to approve my app?

That's their call, and no one can promise it. Apple reviews every version, and Google requires a closed test from new personal accounts. What a developer can promise is when the app is ready to submit.

What do I keep paying after the app launches?

The Apple membership every year, the server that grows with your users, the updates Apple and Google require over time and support. If you charge inside the app, the stores' commission too.

GLOSSARY

The words you'll see

Installable app (PWA): A web app that opens in the browser and can be added to the Home Screen, without going through a store.

App Store: Apple's app store, for iPhone and iPad.

Google Play: Google's app store, for Android.

Developer account: The account you publish with in a store: the Apple Developer Program or Google Play Console.

Closed test: A test on Google Play only for the people you invite, before you publish to everyone.

App Review: The step where Apple reviews every app and every update before it goes live.

Codebase: The code the app is built from. If it's a single one, it can serve iPhone, Android and the web.

SDK: The tools an app is built with. Apple requires a recent version to accept it.

Target API level: The Android version your app is built for. Google Play raises the minimum every year.

Server and database: Where your app's accounts, data and files live. You pay for it as long as the app is running.

Admin panel: The part of the app where you upload content and see users, payments or orders.

Notifications: The messages the app sends to people's phones, with each person's permission.

Payment processor: The service that charges cards for what you sell outside the stores' billing, for a fee per charge.

What this guide doesn't promise

- Typers prices: we don't give amounts or ranges. We don't have a price list, and we don't make up “market averages.”
- Approval times: Apple and Google set them. No one can promise when your app will be approved.
- Fees in your currency: Apple says its fee may vary by region and is shown in local currency when you enroll.
- That the list decides for you: it helps you get quotes. A diagnosis looks at your whole business.
- Legal advice: we quote Apple's and Google's rules. For the privacy laws where you operate, ask a lawyer.

SOURCES

Where each fact comes from

Everything that isn't Typers' judgment comes from these sources, checked on November 19, 2026:

Typers · Web and apps: installable apps, App Store and Google Play from a single codebase
https://typersagency.com/en/web-and-apps

Apple Developer · Enrollment: the program is 99 USD per membership year
https://developer.apple.com/programs/enroll/

Apple Developer · Resolving access issues: what happens if your membership expires
https://developer.apple.com/help/account/access/resolving-access-issues/

Apple Developer · App Review: Apple reviews all apps and app updates
https://developer.apple.com/distribute/app-review/

Apple · App Review Guidelines 3.1.1, 3.1.3(e) and 5.1.1 (payments, privacy policy and account deletion)
https://developer.apple.com/app-store/review/guidelines/

Apple Developer · Upcoming requirements: Xcode 26 and the iOS 26 SDK since April 28, 2026
https://developer.apple.com/news/upcoming-requirements/

Play Console Help · Get started with Play Console: US$25 one-time registration fee
https://support.google.com/googleplay/android-developer/answer/6112435?hl=en

Play Console Help · App testing requirements for new personal developer accounts
https://support.google.com/googleplay/android-developer/answer/14151465?hl=en

Play Console Help · Target API level requirements for Google Play apps
https://support.google.com/googleplay/android-developer/answer/11926878?hl=en

Google Play policy · Payments (Google Play's billing system)
https://support.google.com/googleplay/android-developer/answer/9858738?hl=en

Play Console Help · Understanding Google Play's app account deletion requirements
https://support.google.com/googleplay/android-developer/answer/13327111?hl=en

MDN · Progressive web apps
https://developer.mozilla.org/en-US/docs/Web/Progressive_web_apps

WebKit · Web Push for Web Apps on iOS and iPadOS (Feb 16, 2023)
https://webkit.org/blog/13878/web-push-for-web-apps-on-ios-and-ipados/

The first-month list, its pieces, the comparison checklist, the order of the steps and the advice are Typers' own judgment. The language school is an example.

GOT YOUR FIRST-MONTH LIST?

We review your list and send you a proposal built for you. Get your free diagnosis.

GET YOUR FREE DIAGNOSIS

More guides at typersagency.com/en/blog. Follow Info-Typers to learn more.