

# Try switching everything to open source for a week, you'll be amazed!

One of the biggest attractions of switching to open source software is the cost reduction and freedom it brings.

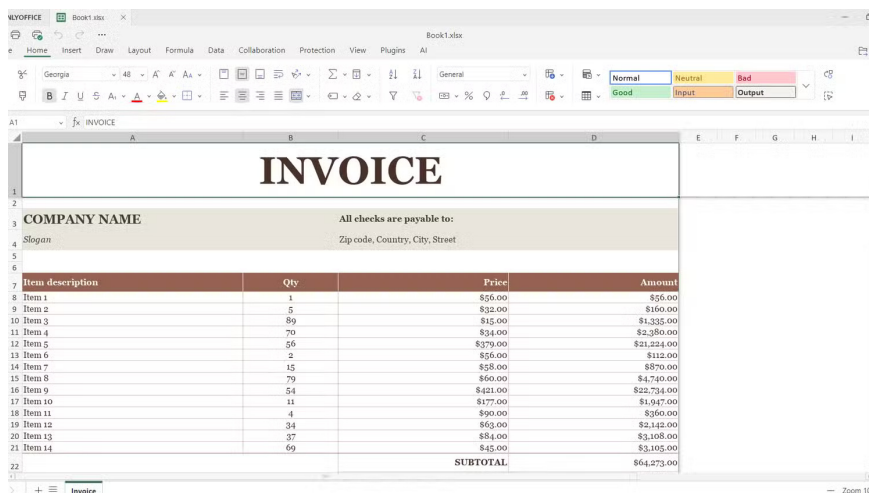
One of the biggest draws to switching to open source software is the cost savings and freedom it offers. No one wants to be stuck with expensive software subscriptions, lengthy and confusing terms of service agreements, and hoping that software vendors will honor their privacy policies.

So many people have tried switching all their Windows productivity apps, from note-taking apps, task managers, browsers, and email clients, to open-source alternatives for a week to see if they are a viable option to escape the constraints of proprietary software.

There are some great positives, but you'll also learn about the hurdles people face when switching to completely open source software. It's certainly not something you should do lightly, especially if you value the online capabilities of the applications you use.

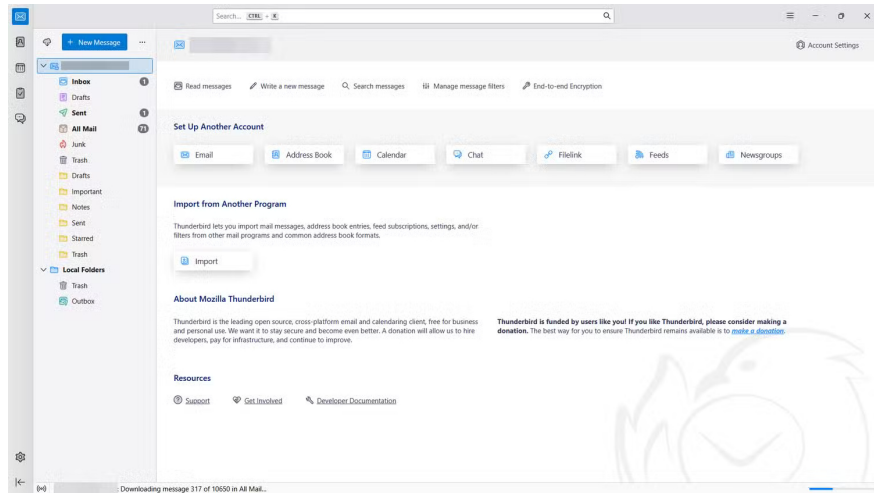
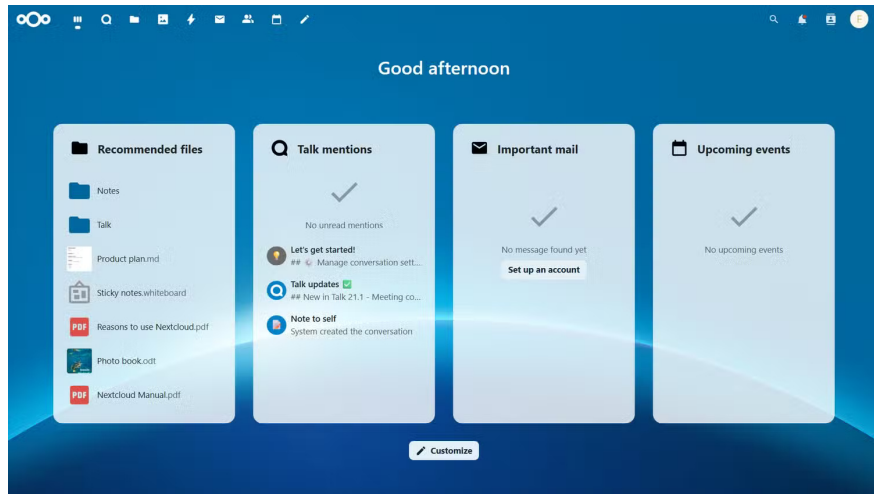
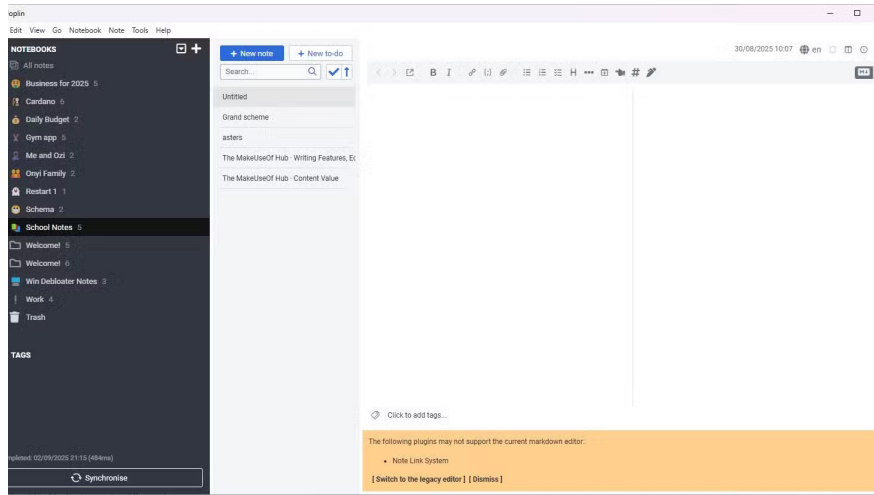
## 3. All your favorite apps have open source alternatives

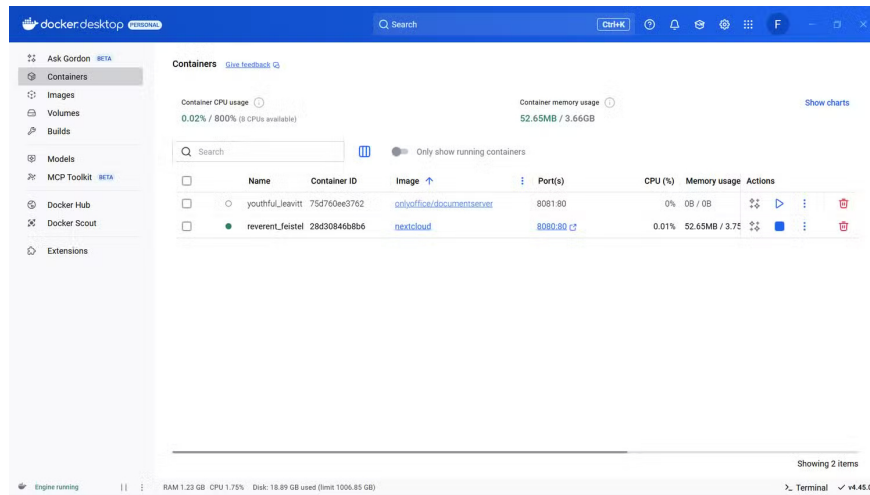
And it's all completely free!



The screenshot shows a spreadsheet application window titled 'Book1.xlsx'. The spreadsheet contains an invoice template with the following data:

Item description	Qty	Price	Amount
Item 1	1	\$55.00	\$55.00
Item 2	5	\$35.00	\$165.00
Item 3	89	\$15.00	\$1,335.00
Item 4	70	\$34.00	\$2,380.00
Item 5	56	\$370.00	\$21,224.00
Item 6	2	\$55.00	\$112.00
Item 7	15	\$58.00	\$870.00
Item 8	79	\$60.00	\$4,740.00
Item 9	54	\$421.00	\$22,734.00
Item 10	11	\$177.00	\$1,947.00
Item 11	4	\$90.00	\$360.00
Item 12	34	\$63.00	\$2,142.00
Item 13	37	\$84.00	\$3,108.00
Item 14	69	\$45.00	\$3,105.00
SUBTOTAL			\$64,273.00





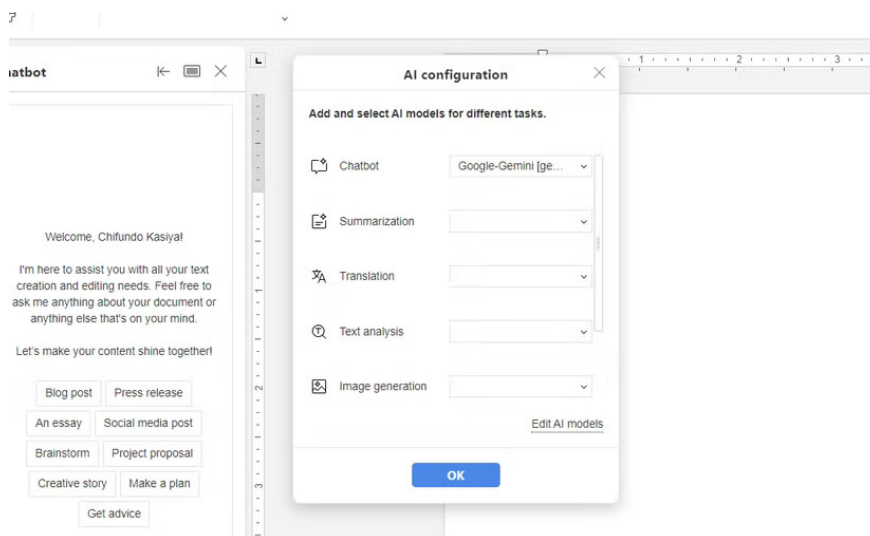
This test will use free and open source applications like OnlyOffice , Firefox , Joplin , Thunderbird , and Nextcloud . Install everything on your Windows machine — except Nextcloud, which requires Docker and a custom image. These applications handle core productivity tasks quite well, as they have all the basic features you need.

ONLYOFFICE handles spreadsheets and presentations quite well, Joplin organizes notes with a minimalist interface, and Firefox with its privacy extensions makes for a secure browsing experience. Thunderbird handles multiple email accounts and calendars efficiently, and while Nextcloud is a complex setup, its file syncing works reliably once configured (as best it can).

The apps are also highly customizable, with plenty of options for themes, plugins, and scripts to extend functionality.

## 2. There are some trade-offs

**But nothing is impossible**

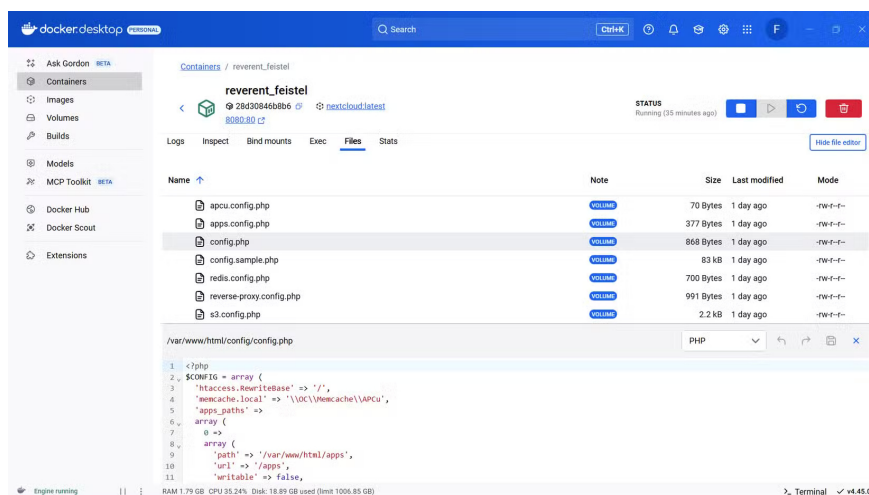


The biggest complaint people have is that the open source experience feels disjointed. For example, when using Microsoft Office, it is well integrated into its ecosystem, with OneDrive for cloud storage and Copilot for AI. In a desktop app like OnlyOffice, you have to set up AI yourself (which requires an API key) and use Nextcloud or ownCloud for cloud syncing.

Open source tools often prioritize stability and security over flashy, polished features. That means sleek user interfaces, AI assistants, seamless cloud syncing, and even mobile integration are often overlooked. Notable new features may be added later or require manual configuration (more on that later). Needless to say, you won't find Microsoft Office's advanced formatting and automation options in OnlyOffice.

## 1. The Worst Part of Going Completely Open Source

### Freedom comes with complexity



With freedom comes complexity. This is an eye-opening experience during your experimentation. Some features that you take for granted with proprietary software require IT expertise to set up when using open source alternatives.

For example, synchronizing Nextcloud between the desktop server and the mobile app is not easy. Install Nextcloud on Windows using Docker, but when trying to connect the mobile app to the server, an error appears. The big problem is that the server on the Windows computer is using HTTP, while the mobile app requires the secure HTTPS protocol, rejecting insecure connections.

Solving this problem requires knowledge of the process of tweaking configuration files and managing certificates — beyond the expertise of many people. Finally, access the Nextcloud server on your phone using a browser. But even then, you still have to tweak a configuration file to make your computer's IP address a trusted domain.

4:59



## Secure collaboration & file exchange



Log in

Sign up with provider

Host your own server

5:03



< Back



https://[redacted]:8080



The link to your Nextcloud web interface when you open it in the browser.

### Connection error

An SSL error has occurred and a secure connection to the server cannot be made.

OK

5:06

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# Good afternoon

## 📁 Recommended files

- 📁 Notes
- 📄 Things I need to do.md
- 📁 Talk
- 📄 Product plan.md
- 🏠 Sticky notes.whiteboard
- 📄 PDF Reasons to use Nextcloud.pdf

← → + 5 ...

You can also set up OnlyOffice in Nextcloud and enable real-time collaboration. For devices on the same network as the server, this is as easy as using the computer's IP address. But for public or remote access, this can get complicated, as it requires information like a domain name, SSL certificate, and configuration knowledge.

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