

AI Assistants in Kenya — Availability & Pricing

The six big AI tools — what each one is, whether it works in Kenya, what the free version gives you, and what the paid plans cost. Companion to the AI Side-Hustle Field Guide.

Good news first: all six work in Kenya. Prices are in US dollars unless a KES price is shown, and they change often — always confirm on the official pricing page before paying. **Start with the free tiers; in 2026 they are genuinely good.**

01 The short answer

TOOL	FREE TIER	CHEAPEST PAID IN KENYA	BEST AT
ChatGPT	Yes — solid daily use	Go ≈ KES 650 (\$5)/mo	All-rounder, everyday questions, study
Claude	Yes — daily limits	Pro \$20/mo (\$17 annual)	Writing quality, careful reasoning, coding
Manus	Yes — 300 credits/day	Pro from \$20/mo	Autonomous multi-step tasks (research, slides)
Gemini	Yes — generous	AI Plus ≈ KES 900/mo	Everyday use + the best free developer API
Le Chat (Mistral)	Yes — ~25 msgs/day	Pro \$14.99 (student \$5.99)	Speed, privacy, cheapest full paid plan
Copilot	Yes — built into Windows	M365 Personal ≈ \$7–10/mo	AI inside Word, Excel, Outlook

If you only ever pay for one thing: the two plans priced for Kenya — **ChatGPT Go** (≈ KES 650) or **Google AI Plus** (≈ KES 900) — give most of the paid experience for a quarter of the usual \$20. Everything else can stay on free tiers until a limit actually blocks your work.

02 OpenAI — ChatGPT

ChatGPT chatgpt.com · openai.com

The most widely used AI assistant. Chat, image generation, file analysis, voice. Current flagship model family: GPT-5.5.

Available in Kenya · Go tier billed at local KES-friendly pricing

- **Free — \$0** — everyday use with daily limits; enough to learn and work lightly.
- **Go — ≈ KES 650 (\$5)/mo** — Kenya-priced tier: extended GPT-5-class access, image generation, memory, bigger uploads.
- **Plus — \$20/mo** — full feature set: deep research, agent mode, Sora video, connectors, Codex coding agent.
- **Pro — \$200/mo** — heavy professional use; not relevant on a budget.

Worth knowing: Go was launched specifically for markets like Kenya, Nigeria and India and skips the expensive extras (no Sora, deep research, agent mode or connectors). For learning, studying and writing help, most people won't miss them. The API (platform.openai.com) is billed separately per token.

03 Anthropic — Claude

Claude claude.ai · anthropic.com

AI assistant known for high-quality writing, careful long-document work and strong coding. Web, mobile and desktop apps.

Available in Kenya · billed in USD — card needed

- **Free — \$0** — chat with current models, file uploads, web search — with daily usage limits.
- **Pro — \$20/mo (\$17/mo annual)** — much higher limits, Projects, and includes Claude Code — the terminal coding agent.
- **Max — \$100 or \$200/mo** — 5x / 20x Pro usage for power users; not needed when starting out.

Worth knowing: Claude Pro including Claude Code is a strong deal once you start learning to program — one subscription covers chat and a serious coding assistant. The API (console.anthropic.com) is billed separately per token. Check current plans at claude.com/pricing.

04 Manus AI

Manus manus.im

An autonomous AI agent: give it a goal ("research X and make a slide deck") and it browses, writes code and builds the output itself. Web, desktop and mobile.

Available in Kenya · billed in USD — card needed

- **Free — \$0** — 300 credits refreshed daily + a one-time starter pack; access to the Lite agent model. Roughly one simple task per day.
- **Pro — from \$20/mo** — 4,000 monthly credits (a \$40 tier gives 8,000 with a 7-day trial; a \$200 tier gives 40,000). Full model access, website deployment, slides, research.

Worth knowing: Credit warning: everything Manus does burns credits, and a single deep-research task can consume 900+ credits, so the free tier and even the \$20 plan run out fast. Treat Manus as a tool to try on the free tier, not a budget priority — ChatGPT, Claude and Gemini now do much of the same agent-style work within their normal plans.

Gemini gemini.google.com · aistudio.google.com

Google's assistant, built into Android, Search, Gmail and Docs. Current flagship: Gemini 3.1 Pro. Includes NotebookLM (a superb free study tool).

Available in Kenya · billed in KES

- **Free — \$0** — generous daily use of Gemini, plus NotebookLM and AI Studio: a free developer API key.
- **AI Plus — ≈ KES 900/mo** — Kenya-priced tier (intro offers around KES 500 appear regularly): 2x limits, video generation, Gemini in Gmail/Docs, 200 GB storage.
- **AI Pro — \$19.99/mo** — high limits on Gemini 3.1 Pro, Deep Research, 1M-token context, 2 TB storage.
- **AI Ultra — from ≈ KES 12,500/mo** — power-user tiers; not relevant on a budget.

Worth knowing: Google bills in Kenyan shillings, which avoids the card-decline problem entirely. For anyone learning to build with AI, AI Studio's free Gemini API key is the single best free developer resource — you can build real projects without spending anything. Students should check for Google's free AI Pro student offers before paying.

Le Chat chat.mistral.ai · mistral.ai

The European (French) AI assistant. Very fast responses, strong privacy stance, open-weight models. Web + mobile apps.

Available in Kenya · billed in USD/EUR — card needed

- **Free — \$0** — around 25 messages a day on capable models, image generation, code interpreter, document uploads.
- **Pro — \$14.99/mo** — the cheapest full paid plan from any major lab: top models, far higher limits, deep research, Vibe coding workspace.
- **Student — \$5.99/mo** — full Pro with student verification.

Worth knowing: Mistral's developer platform (La Plateforme) has a free experiment API tier — rate-limited but generous — making it the second-best free way to build after Google AI Studio. Le Chat's free tier is small; treat it as a fast second opinion rather than a daily driver.

Copilot copilot.microsoft.com

Microsoft's assistant (running on OpenAI models), built into Windows, Edge and Office. The main reason to pay is AI inside Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Outlook.

Available in Kenya · billed via Microsoft account — card needed

- **Free — \$0** — full chat assistant on the web, in Windows and in the mobile app; image generation included.
- **M365 Personal** — ≈ **\$7–10/mo** — Word, Excel, PowerPoint + 1 TB OneDrive, with a monthly allowance of Copilot AI credits in those apps.
- **M365 Premium** — **\$19.99/mo** — the consumer plan that replaced the retired Copilot Pro: near-unlimited Copilot in Office apps + 6 TB storage.
- **M365 Copilot** — **\$30/user/mo** — business version grounded on company data; employer territory, not personal.

Worth knowing: The free Copilot is a perfectly good general assistant, and the free tier of GitHub Copilot (github.com/features/copilot) adds AI code-completion once you start programming — with a \$10/mo Pro tier later, free for verified students. The old standalone "Copilot Pro" plan was retired; M365 Premium is its replacement.

08 Paying from Kenya

- **Prefer the KES-billed plans.** ChatGPT Go and Google's AI Plus/Pro are billed locally in shillings — no international card drama, and they're the cheapest anyway.
- **For USD subscriptions** (Claude, Mistral, Manus, Microsoft), Kenyan bank cards are often declined on international sites. A **virtual dollar card** solves this — Safaricom's M-Pesa GlobalPay virtual Visa is the mainstream option (check current availability in the M-Pesa app), and several fintechs offer alternatives. Fund with KES, pay in USD.
- **Watch the FX cost.** A "\$20" plan costs KES 2,500+ once conversion margins are added — another reason the KES-priced tiers win.

ACCOUNT SCAMS TO AVOID

- **Never buy "shared premium accounts"** sold on WhatsApp, Telegram or marketplace sites ("ChatGPT Premium for KES 500!"). Account sharing violates every provider's terms — accounts get banned without refund, and you're handing your chats to a stranger.
- **Never enter your card or M-Pesa details on unofficial "upgrade" pages.** Subscribe only inside the official app or website.
- **The free tiers are official and genuinely free** — anyone charging to "activate" them is scamming you.

09 What I'd actually do on a tight budget

- **Month 1 — spend KES 0.** Use ChatGPT Free + Gemini Free + Copilot Free as daily assistants, NotebookLM for studying, and Le Chat Free as a fast second opinion. Try Manus's free daily credits once to see what an agent is.
- **First money spent** — ≈ **KES 650–900/mo.** Pick **ChatGPT Go** or **Google AI Plus**, whichever you found yourself using more. That's the entire budget.

- **When you start coding** — free Gemini API key (AI Studio) + free Mistral experiment API + free GitHub Copilot cover you completely. Consider **Claude Pro (\$20)** or **Le Chat Pro (\$14.99)** only when a free limit blocks paid work — i.e. when the subscription earns its own money back.

Prices checked 2 July 2026 and change frequently — confirm on each official pricing page before subscribing. Approximate KES figures depend on the day's exchange rate. Companion document to The AI Side-Hustle Field Guide — Kenya Edition.