

App Store complaint report

Bear - Markdown Notes · Shiny Frog Ltd. · current version 3.0.2

Generated 2026-10-19 from the 500 most recent public App Store reviews across 5 storefronts (2018-01-20 to 2026-10-08).

Metric	Value
Reviews analysed	500 (500 classified by AI)
Average stars (these reviews)	3.93
Reviews with a complaint	180 (36%)
Storefronts	US 100, GB 100, CA 100, AU 100, DE 100
All-time App Store rating (US)	4.68 from 6,869 ratings

Complaint categories

Category	Reviews	Avg severity (0-3)	Most affected versions
Feature requests	103	2.1	1.8.3 (8), 1.9.7 (7), 2.6.5 (5)
Bugs	101	2.4	1.9.7 (7), 2.0.17 (6), 2.6.5 (5)
Pricing / subscription	50	2.2	1.9.7 (5), 1.8.5 (5), 2.3.12 (4)
UX / design	38	2.3	2.3.12 (6), 2.6.5 (3), 2.4.5 (3)
Performance	19	2.4	2.8.2 (2), 2.6.5 (2), 2.0.2 (2)
Crashes / freezes	16	2.6	2.0.17 (2), 1.7.6 (2), 2.0.2 (2)

Trend by version (newest first)

Version	Reviews	Avg stars	Complaint share
3.0.1	1	4.0	0%
2.10.1	3	3.7	33%
2.9.4	1	5.0	0%
2.9.2	2	5.0	0%
2.9.1	1	3.0	100%
2.9	2	5.0	0%
2.8.2	8	3.6	50%
2.7.5	2	3.0	50%

Representative quotes

Feature requests

“Quality App Uses Atypical Organization – Bear is a nicely designed app that uses an unusual tagging structure for file organization. I think it will work well for many users looking for an Apple Notes replacement that uses plain text however, certain design de” (2★, v2.3.12, US, 2025-04-27)

“Change text formatting options all you want in the app; the printed or exported version won't match. – I'm stunned that a dedicated writing app—running on what we'd once call a supercomputer—can't replicate a feature Apple perfected over 40 years ago on the 12” (1★, v2.6.5, AU, 2025-12-30)

Bugs

“Love the app but I think the update broke it – I love this app! I’ve used it for years for everything. Shopping lists, journaling, budgeting, scheduling, you name it. Bear is like my personal assistant. It

has great note customisation options but it's still so" (3★, v2.0.2, AU, 2023-07-19)

"Help? - Works great, I love it but for since yesterday the app won't open. Keeps kicking me out whenever I try. All my other apps aren't doing this so I don't think the problem's with my device." (4★, v1.7.6, CA, 2019-10-27)

Pricing / subscription

"Not "in-app" purchase. SUBSCRIPTION based! - EDIT 04/16/25: Annual price raised to \$29.99. Same complaints as before. Software is not a service and I will not RENT it from you. — Previous review: I am sick and tired of all these apps that claim to be free w" (1★, v2.3.12, US, 2025-04-16)

"No Cross Platform - I've been using this app on and off for years to journal but the lack of cross platform (pc or browser version with cloud sync) made me move to Obsidian. It's a shame because I'm choosing to pay double the price of Bear Pro for a subscrip" (3★, v2.4.1, US, 2025-05-09)

UX / design

"Nice UI, horrible UX - Overall, the app presents a visually appealing and thoughtfully designed aesthetic. However, from a functionality standpoint, the experience is significantly lacking. During my evaluation on an iPad, I found the process of attaching phot" (2★, v2.4.1, US, 2025-05-12)

"Used to like this more - There's been a UI revision in the last while that's made it super confusing to do things like add images to notes from my phone (go to BIU, open a keyboard, hold down on a camera icon, etc). It's not at all fluid." (3★, v2.6.3, US, 2025-10-12)

Performance

"What a pity - Bear have taken a fantastic product that was compatible across phones, Mac and iPad and made it useless. It is such a pity when a group of software engineers over complicate a simple neat product into a slow incompatible unreliable mess. After us" (1★, v2.0.5, GB, 2023-08-02)

"Clunky messy ui - Sure it looks "clean" at first but it automatically adds markups that show every time you try to edit a word. So if you delete part of it you end up with bunch of asterisks to delete. That's not clean. Would prefer no markups at all. And havi" (2★, v2.8.2, US, 2026-06-25)

Crashes / freezes

"Freeze freeze - Nach Update nicht mehr nutzbar auf neuestem Iphone - ulysses, lawriter und obsidian können es doch auch - warum gehts bei bear so schlecht Nachtrag: support empfiehlt umschalten in Flugzeugmodus - aber im notmalen Modud gehts dann schon beim zw" (2★, v2.0.17, DE, 2023-11-21)

"Neues Update ist Müll - Das neueste Update lässt meine app freeze. Kann noch nicht mal herum scrollen." (1★, v2.0.2, DE, 2023-07-16)

The 10 most important fixes

1. Stop data / progress loss [Bugs · 38 reviews · avg severity 2.4/3 · versions 1.8.5, 2.0.17]

Reproduce sync and restore paths; add server-side backup and a visible "restore" option.

"Never improving is one thing, now sync failed as well - I've been a subscriber for years, and now I am going to cancel it. Sync failed, data possibly lost. That's the last straw, this is just not worth it, there are probably way better tool" (2★, DE)

2. Ship the most requested feature [Feature requests · 42 reviews · avg severity 1.9/3 · versions 1.8.3, 2.6.5]

Read the quotes below for the exact request; consider a public roadmap.

"I want to love it so badly - Bear would be my perfect notes app, and I would gladly pay the subscription for it. However, the keyboard toolbar/text editor on iPhone is so bad, especially when compared with the default Apple notes. (Please" (4★, US)

3. Justify or adjust the price [Pricing / subscription · 31 reviews · avg severity 2.1/3 · versions 2.3.12, 1.6.6]

Test a cheaper tier, annual discount or one-time purchase; show what paid users get.

"Not very functional and expensive - Honestly, it's too expensive for what it offers. I can get better functionality from apps like Notion or Miro without having to pay more. I actually pay for apps that are really worth it, like GoodNotes, " (1★, DE)

4. Soften the redesign backlash [UX / design · 19 reviews · avg severity 2.3/3 · versions 2.0.4, 2.0.2]

Explain the change in-app, restore the most-missed option, or offer a setting for the old behaviour.

"I WANT THE OLD VERSION BACK - Really don't like this new version of design and it's not concise and not as convenient before. I used to use bear everyday for writing but now I'm really

disappointed and have to look for an alternative now.” (2★, GB)

5. Simplify navigation [UX / design · 18 reviews · avg severity 2.3/3 · versions 2.3.12, 2.0.4]

Run a quick usability test on the screens users mention; remove extra taps and pop-ups.

“Complicated – Tries to do too much. As a result i find it cluttered and hard to use.” (2★, GB)

6. Fix in-use crashes and freezes [Crashes / freezes · 13 reviews · avg severity 2.7/3 · versions 2.0.2, 1.7.6]

Match quoted actions to crash reports; ship a hotfix for the top stack trace.

“stressful – this app ALWAYS freezes whenever i try use the search function. i’m now trapped in a loop of trying to get out of the search function, force closing the app, the app opening on the search function, freezing, repeat. i can’t use ” (1★, GB)

7. Fix features broken by the latest update [Bugs · 14 reviews · avg severity 2.3/3 · versions 2.5, 2.3.7]

Add regression tests for the features users name in these reviews before the next release.

“App is stutters and very buggy after mathjax update – This is a great app normally, but I hope the mathjax feature gets more polished soon, or please just revert this app back to previous version until the feature is more ready. As it is, ” (3★, US)

8. Ease payroll pressure [Pricing / subscription · 7 reviews · avg severity 2.5/3 · versions 2.3.12, 1.9.7]

Keep core features usable for free users or explain clearly what is paid; show the payroll less often.

“Not worth the coin. You have to pay to store to iCloud?! – You have to pay to store to iCloud?!

That’s silly and greedy. I have been developing software for over 40 years. I can understand wanting to get paid for your work. But this li” (1★, US)

9. Fix crash on launch [Crashes / freezes · 6 reviews · avg severity 3.0/3 · versions 1.7.6, 2.0.17]

Check crash logs (Xcode Organizer / Crashlytics) for the affected version and device models first.

“App failing constantly – Hello, I need help. Ever since the last update, the app won’t open. I click on the icon & see the app loading page for a couple seconds before it crashes and closes itself. I don’t want to delete & reinstall” (1★, AU)

10. Speed up loading [Performance · 6 reviews · avg severity 2.5/3 · versions 2.0.2, 1.9.7]

Profile cold start and the slowest screens on older devices; cache content.

“Decent app, a bit latter, needs the new editor asap – It's a decent app, can be a bit laggy if you have a lot of notes and clippings. Definitely needs the updated "Panda" editor but that's been in a never ending beta "coming soon" for years” (3★, AU)

Method: Apple's public customer-reviews RSS feeds (most recent reviews, spread across up to 15 storefronts) and the iTunes Lookup API. Reviewer names are not included. Each review was classified by TypeSafe Jev AI (7 complaint categories, 18 specific issues, severity 0-3); fixes are the specific issues ranked by number of complaining reviews × average severity. Advice lines are generic starting points; the quotes are the evidence. AI can misclassify: check the quotes. Not affiliated with Apple. Reply within 7 days for one free clarification.