# The Best Android Launchers

If you’re a Droid user, you would probably know that the home screen you see upon unlocking your phone is unique to each Android phone. Every different phone has its own icons, widgets, and wallpapers. However, what you may not know is that this home screen can be changed. You don’t have to use the same boring icons, the same widgets, and best of all, if you don’t like how your folders look on your screen, get a launcher that looks different! Easy as that!

But there’s a problem with that. There are probably many, many launchers that you can choose from. And how exactly are you going to manage to pick the one that’s right for you? I suppose, you could just test every single one out. It would only take, about, a few days or even weeks of extensive testing. But here at AllTech, we’re here to help appease all your techy needs and desires. So we have compiled a list of eight launchers that you can pick from, to make your launcher search a whole lot easier.

A quick note: Your phone won't have to be rooted to use any of these launchers. They can be found on the Google Play Store, and prices of apps will be listed.

Another quick note: Any ratings we put in for “Looks” were *after* customizing it to the best of our ability and making it look as nice as we could.

## Nova Launcher

With the free Nova Launcher, the mantra is customization. From the way the app drawer looks to the number of icons on your dock, mostly everything on your home screen can be changed to suit your needs. And you can also change the way icons look, and even design and import your own icons for your personal use. Some of the fun features of Nova Launcher are:

* more flexibility with icon positioning in the grid, and changing the grid size
* creating tabs (folders) inside your app drawer in addition to on the home screen, to further organize your multitude of apps
* deciding whether to slide up or press an on-screen button to access the app drawer
* even some obscure stuff, like scroll speed inside the app drawer

But the Nova Launcher isn’t absolutely perfect. It does have some flaws that should be corrected at some point or another. These flaws include:

* some settings can be hard to find
* charging money for things that are free in other launchers

Obviously, Nova Launcher gives you plenty of customization options in the free version of the app. However, if you want to have *even* more options, you can buy the Nova Launcher Prime app from the Play Store. The Prime version of the app adds the ability to use eleven different programmable gestures and inputs, such as double-tapping and swiping the screen. You can either program these to open apps, or if that doesn't do exactly what you want, find an app activity and set it to that instead. Either way, Nova Launcher Prime offers a lot, but in my opinion not enough to justify the $4.99 that you have to pay for the app. But overall, the Nova Launcher is a terrific launcher for the people who want maximum control over their phone's aesthetics.

Looks: 10/10

Ease of Use: 7.5/10

Flexibility: 10/10

Features: 9/10

## Solo Launcher

Solo Launcher is one of those launchers that is for the person that really wants to make their home screen more personalized. This app lets you customize just about anything. With the Solo Launcher, you can design your background, app drawer, and gives you multiple options for more customization. In addition to this customization greatness, it also gives you:

* + a type of app store that gives you fonts, backgrounds, themes, and more
  + lots of programmable gestures and finger inputs
  + cool page scroll animations

But no matter how satisfying it may be to change all the themes and fonts of your screen, here at AllTech we look at all aspects of the launcher. We also found that there are some very annoying things about Solo Launcher, such as:

* + ads for lots of apps
  + the search bar uses Yahoo instead of Google
  + lots of Solo bloatware

However, Solo has really done a very good job on making this launcher. You can customize so many things, you have so many different options, it is neat that a launcher like this is out there. So overall, if you want the features of Nova Launcher Prime for free and are willing to sift through some minor setbacks like ads and bloatware, the Solo Launcher is probably for you.

Looks: 10/10

Ease of Use: 7.5/10

Flexibility: 10/10

Features: 8.5/10

## Gamebox Launcher

Do you play games often on your phone? Maybe you spend almost every moment on your phone playing something like Clash Royale or NBA Live. If that’s the case, then you’d be blessed to find that there is in fact a launcher made specifically for the gaming connoisseur and avid player. The Gamebox Launcher by Samsung themselves comes with a surplus of cool tricks and features that are unprecedented in the world of launchers, such as:

* game “tiles” much like the start screen in Windows 8
* an enhanced gaming experience with the integrated Game Tools
* a really cool "Game Lab" to give you info about game usage

However, this launcher does come with a few drawbacks. We found that, even with all of its gaming glory, Gamebox Launcher slacks in the areas of:

* customization
* launcher settings can’t be changed very easily

Obviously, the Gamebox Launcher isn't for the average user. This launcher is more of a niche experience, for the person that wants their phone to become a small, but nonetheless powerful gaming machine. But that doesn't mean it doesn't have its uses. It can still be used to do your basic home-screen things, just may be more difficult. So, if you’re an enthusiastic gamer or someone who wants a completely different gaming experience from what the original launcher offers you, Gamebox Launcher probably would be the one to choose for you. If not, however, we strongly advise against this launcher.

Looks: 5.5/10

Ease of Use: 5/10

Flexibility: 2/10

Features: 2.5/10

## Go Launcher

Go launcher has become one of my favorite launchers as soon as I started using it. This launcher has so many different beautification options. It even has its own store for themes for your home screen, keyboard, texting app, and even the primary widget, which is unprecedented for a launcher in my experience. It truly is a unique launcher, with its:

* + own store for themes
  + customizability
  + cool built in page scrolling effects
  + separate currency to buy stuff in the auction center

Granted, the auction center is a bit random in a launcher, but it is there. However there are downfalls to this glorious launcher:

* + you probably can't run this launcher on an old phone as smoothly as todays smartphones
  + using the icon pack of your choice can be hard

it has a lot of ads for apps it wants you to download

* + gestures aren't very useful in this launcher

Go Launcher Prime is $2.99, and you don't get much more. You get a side dock, a few more wallpaper filters, and you won't get those pesky ads. But to Go Launcher, that isn't enough. For $18.99/year, you can get the VIP upgrade, where it gives you all of the official themes. Trust us when we say it probably isn’t worth it. But for $5 more per year, you can get the combination of both Go Launcher Prime and the VIP package. If you choose to buy this, it’s your decision, but we strongly recommend against it. But if you really like all the customization options and you don't mind those ads, Go Launcher (the free one) is probably your best option.

Looks: 9/10

Ease of Use: 8/10

Flexibility: 10/10

Features: 9/10

## Evie Launcher

Evie Launcher is still pretty basic, but the simplicity and ease of use are a great selling point. It doesn't have too much customization, but that isn't why you would want to install this launcher. They say it is an easier way to use your phone, and I have to agree. This does make your phone a bit easier to handle, depending on what launcher you are coming from. Evie has also thrown in some nice little features for the user, like:

* + a really nice search bar which is easily accessible
  + an easily accessible app drawer, accessed similarly to Nova Launcher
  + easily changeable icons
  + the ability to easily import settings from other launchers, making for a more seamless switch between the two

However, even though Evie gives you a nice, simple user experience, it is not perfect. We still want the devs of Evie Launcher to add:

* + hand inputs and gestures
  + basic customization
  + an app dock
  + a native app to manage the settings for the launcher

Overall, Evie Launcher is for you if you want to switch to Android but find your original launcher difficult to manage. The quick and easy import-settings feature makes your transition so simple, and the effortlessness of the launcher itself makes for an easy-to-use home screen for someone who can’t handle the crowd of icons on the original launcher they had.

Looks: 7/10

Ease of Use: 9/10

Flexibility: 5/10

Features: 4/10

## Microsoft Launcher

Formerly known as Arrow Launcher, this setup by Microsoft adds a plethora of nifty features to the standard home screen experience. With some revamped old tricks, coupled with great shortcuts, widgets, and the like, the Microsoft Launcher creates a new home screen with a completely different approach than most standard launchers. Some of the things it gives you are a search bar where *you* choose from Google, Yahoo, or Bing to search from, and also a dock that can be slid up to reveal some quick settings (but since you’re running Android, you can just use the notification bar at the top). In the Microsoft Launcher, some of the great features thrown at you are:

* + a customizable information feed, available with the swipe of a finger
  + a dock that can be slid up to reveal more dock space, for a total of ten dock icons
  + a widget for “frequently used apps” and “recent apps”
  + a Bing wallpaper wheel icon, for if you can’t choose your wallpaper or if you just want a new one to start the day; click the icon and it sets your wallpaper to a selection from random images that it probably has stored somewhere
  + if you have a Windows PC with the Fall Creator’s Update, a feature to “Continue on PC” (I’ll go more into detail on that soon)

But even with Microsoft’s new launcher and features, there are still some things that need correction, such as:

* + the home screen looks somewhat bland
  + it can be really hard to find things sometimes (I accidentally removed my icon that shows the app drawer, and it took me a long time before I realized it was a widget and to look in the widgets section)

Microsoft’s Android launcher is a generally great experience. With the Fall Creator’s Update, Microsoft has added even more support for their launcher, now adding a brilliant “Continue on PC” share feature that shows up in the list of sharing locations. When you click it, it allows you to send a link to your computer’s Action Center, which the computer opens automatically in Microsoft Edge. (Note: this only works if you have done the necessary things to connect your phone to the computer. It’s not as simple as a Bluetooth connection). Overall, if you own Microsoft devices and want to bring your phone and computer together, the Microsoft Launcher’s seamless connection between devices will probably be the most appealing to you.

Looks: 7/10

Ease of Use: 7.5/10

Flexibility: 8.5/10

Features: 10/100

## CM Launcher 3D

When I first came across this launcher by Cheetah Mobile, I was skeptical. I’d never heard of this company before, and wasn’t sure the launcher would be good. But I pushed my opinions out of the way and installed it. Here goes nothing, I thought. But when I first opened it, I was absolutely shell-shocked. The CM Launcher is one of the most beautiful launchers I have ever laid my eyes on, and packed with tons of features to boot. The pièce de résistance of this launcher is its 3D animations for every swipe and click, but that doesn’t mean there aren’t other things. In fact, the major features of this launcher are:

* + the animations for opening folders and swiping between pages
  + everything looks nice
  + it has its own app store for CM themes and icons and stuff
  + you never really have to go looking for anything you need

At this point, I was skeptical that there could be anything wrong with this launcher. Everything felt so nice compared to the other launchers. However, there were three major problems I faced that were instant deal-breakers for me.

* + excessive bloatware
  + it kills the battery life (I went from 15% to 4% in about 10 minutes while using it for the first time)
  + obviously, will not work very well on an old phone (see ^^)

Overall, this launcher is legendary. It looks beautiful, has everything a launcher should have, and is just a great launcher. So if you have a phone with a greatly-above-par battery life and your phone can handle this launcher, go right ahead. Otherwise, I suggest trying something different, because this launcher eats up battery life like nobody’s business.

Looks: 10/10

Ease of Use: 6/10

Flexibility: 8.5/10

Features: 10/10

## Computer Launcher

Modeled after the Windows 10 PC, the Computer Launcher by BlueThemes Studio turns your phone into a PC. Not literally, as in the hardware transforms into a computer (because that hasn’t been invented yet, but we’re hoping), but instead the phone home screen loses its classic icon style and is replaced with the draggable icons of Windows 10, plus a Start Menu to boot. The Computer Launcher is definitely a unique launcher, with things like:

* + a task bar
  + an action center
  + a Start Menu

However, with such a launcher, you can expect there to be some problems, and I found that the problems with the CM launcher were reproduced in this one.

* + battery life trashed
  + excessive bloatware
  + not good on old phones

But the Computer Launcher is overall a great launcher if you’re used to Windows and want more of the way Microsoft does stuff. Like with the CM Launcher, if your phone can handle this launcher, it’s great. If not, best get something else to suit your needs, because your experience will be significantly different from ours.

Looks: 8/10

Ease of Use: 8.5/10

Flexibility: 5/10

Features: 7/10