The 11 best apps for your new Android phone

So you just got a new Android phone. You've probably turned it on, logged into a bunch of apps, downloaded your favorites — Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc. — and logged into all of them as well. But now it's time to dive a little bit deeper. If you're setting up a phone for the first time, here are 11 apps worth downloading that you might have missed.

We've rounded up our favorite and most-used apps and utilities for the technology we use every day. Check out our other picks for iPhones, Android phones, PCs, and Macs. We've also listed our favorite games for iOS and Android from this year, and our top choices for PS4, Xbox One, and the Nintendo Switch.

1Password/LastPass

I'll be the first to admit, using a password manager is more work than using the same, easy-to-type password over and over and over again. But it's not that much more work once you get used to it, and it makes your accounts much more secure. Plus, these two apps make it all relatively easy, especially now that Android Oreo lets them automatically fill usernames and passwords into login forms. Just keep in mind: you'll need to start using these apps on the desktop, too. 1Password is my favorite (it's a little bit easier to use), but LastPass has a free version that isn't missing anything critical, so it may be the one to start with.

Pocket Casts

Android doesn’t come with a built-in podcast app, so if you want one, you’ll have to go to the Play Store. But fortunately, there’s a very good one there: Pocket Casts. We’ve called this app the best podcast app for Android in the past, and for good reason. It’s well designed, easy to use, and it includes advanced features — like sped up playback and silence removal — if you’re into that kind of stuff. The app costs $4, which is nothing compared to the hours you’ll spend listening to podcasts in it.

Weather Timeline

There’s no end to the number of weather apps, but it’s hard to beat Weather Timeline on design, particularly when it comes to the app’s widget. It’s colorful and customizable, and above all, it’s easy to read. More importantly, it uses Dark Sky’s data, so you get the benefits of Dark Sky’s precise rain detection without paying for Dark Sky. (That said, it’s worth paying for Dark Sky too — nothing beats it for figuring out exactly when it’s going to start and stop raining.) The app costs $1.49.

Flamingo

If you’re a really serious Twitter user, Flamingo is the app for you. The big deal here is that it’s super customizable. For one, you can customize the color of every major element of the app and create your own themes, which is totally

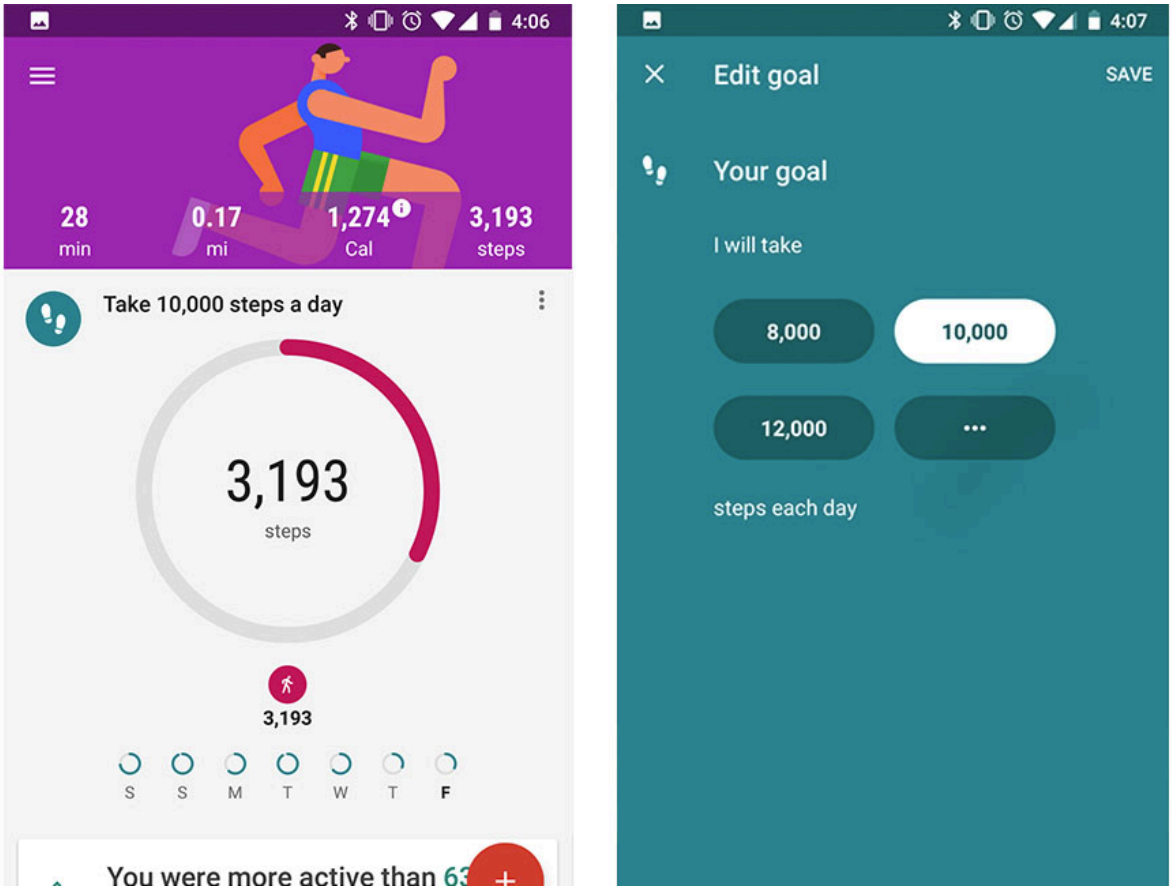
unnecessary but a wonderful touch. On a more useful note, you can customize the feeds you're able to swipe through on the home screen – so I could add a specific list or a search, if I wanted to. The app also has a built-in "read later" feature and a detailed muting system for users and keywords. There's a ton more flexibility than that, and it only costs $2.

VSCO

I have a love-hate relationship with VSCO, but I have to admit that it has the best photo filters around. It has an overwhelming breadth of filter options that'll make your photos look closer to the film masterpieces you envisioned them as, and it has some basic editing tools built in beyond that to finish up your post-processing work. The downside to VSCO is that company behind it insists on changing its interface in new and puzzling ways every couple months. Some of the screens and icons are completely inscrutable. But the filters are so good you just have to deal with it.

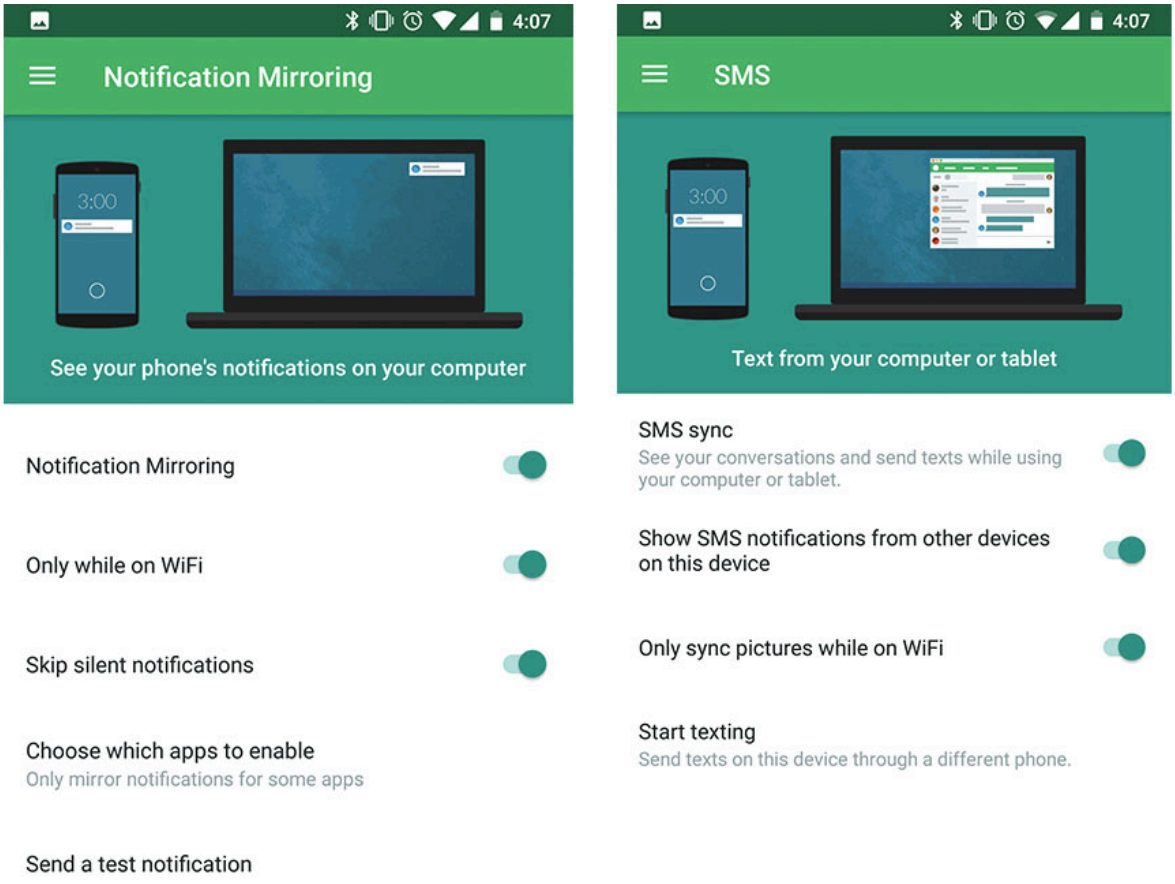
Inbox by Gmail

This is Google's *other* email app. It isn't a huge departure from Gmail, but it has a number of handy features that make life a little more convenient if you often find yourself with a crowded inbox. Inbox automatically sorts many emails into groups, so you can scroll right past promotional emails and other things the app deems less important and focus on the messages you actually need to read.



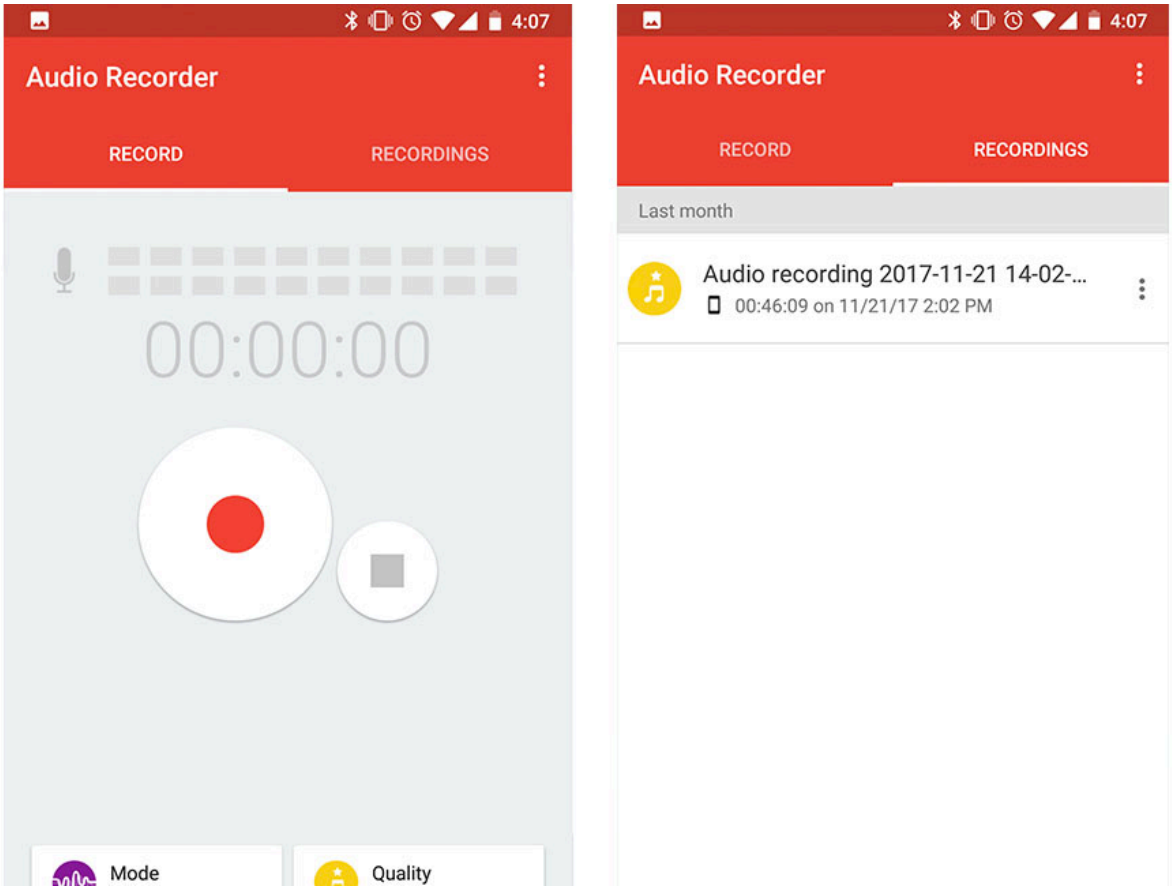
Google Fit

I didn’t realize my phone was capable of counting my steps until I found Google Fit. The app is pretty simple – and to be totally honest, I’ve never checked to see how accurate it is – but it provides everything I want: a quick and simple way to get an idea of how much I’ve walked each day. It lets you set goals, and you can set it up to bug you if you don’t reach them. The app also lets you know how you compare to other people in your area, which is pretty neat.



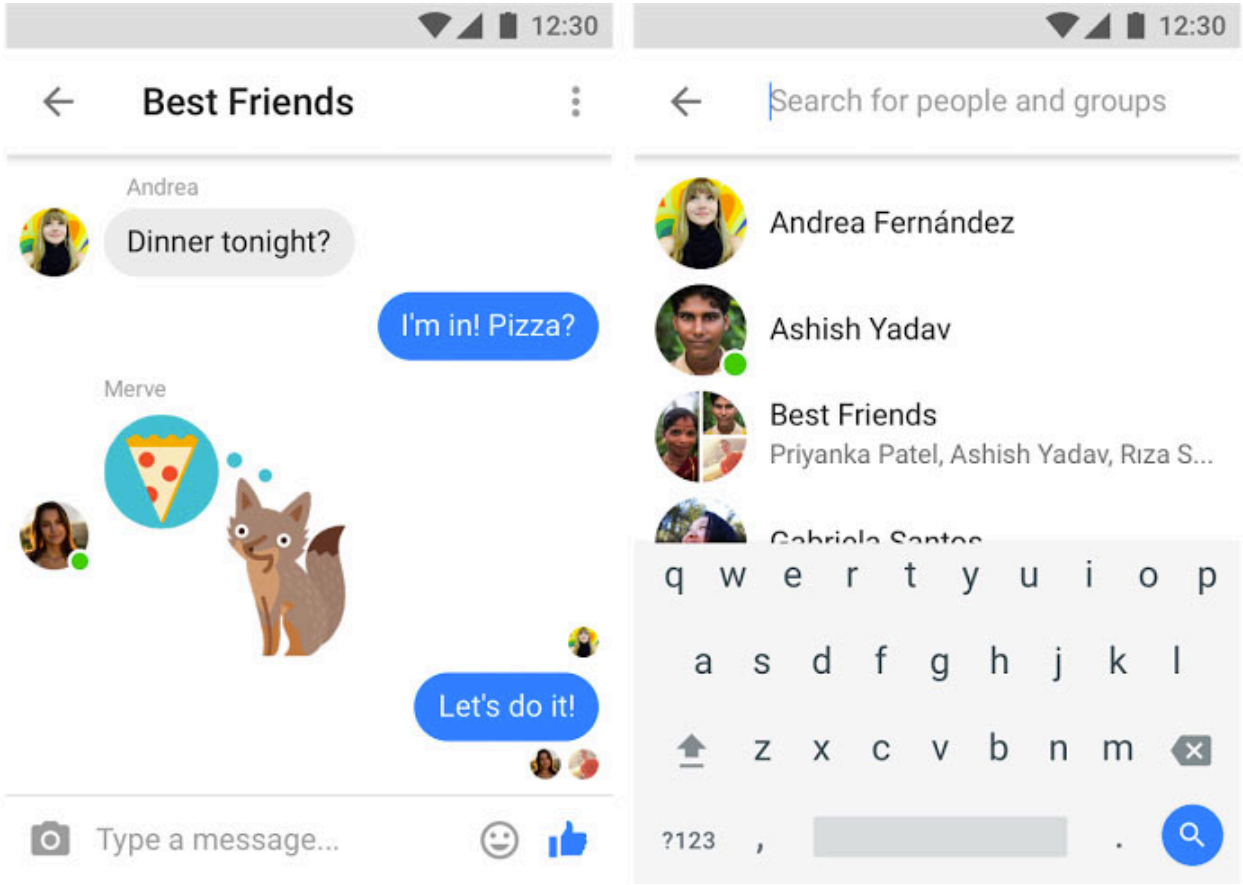
Pushbullet

One of the best things about using an iPhone and a Mac is that some of the iPhone's notifications will show up on your computer, and you can even interact with them from there. There's nothing like that built into Android, but Push Bullet can make that happen. Install it on your phone and then install the desktop client on your Mac or PC, and your phone's notifications should get sent through. Push Bullet isn't perfectly reliable, but it works more often than it doesn't – and the feature is too convenient to pass up.



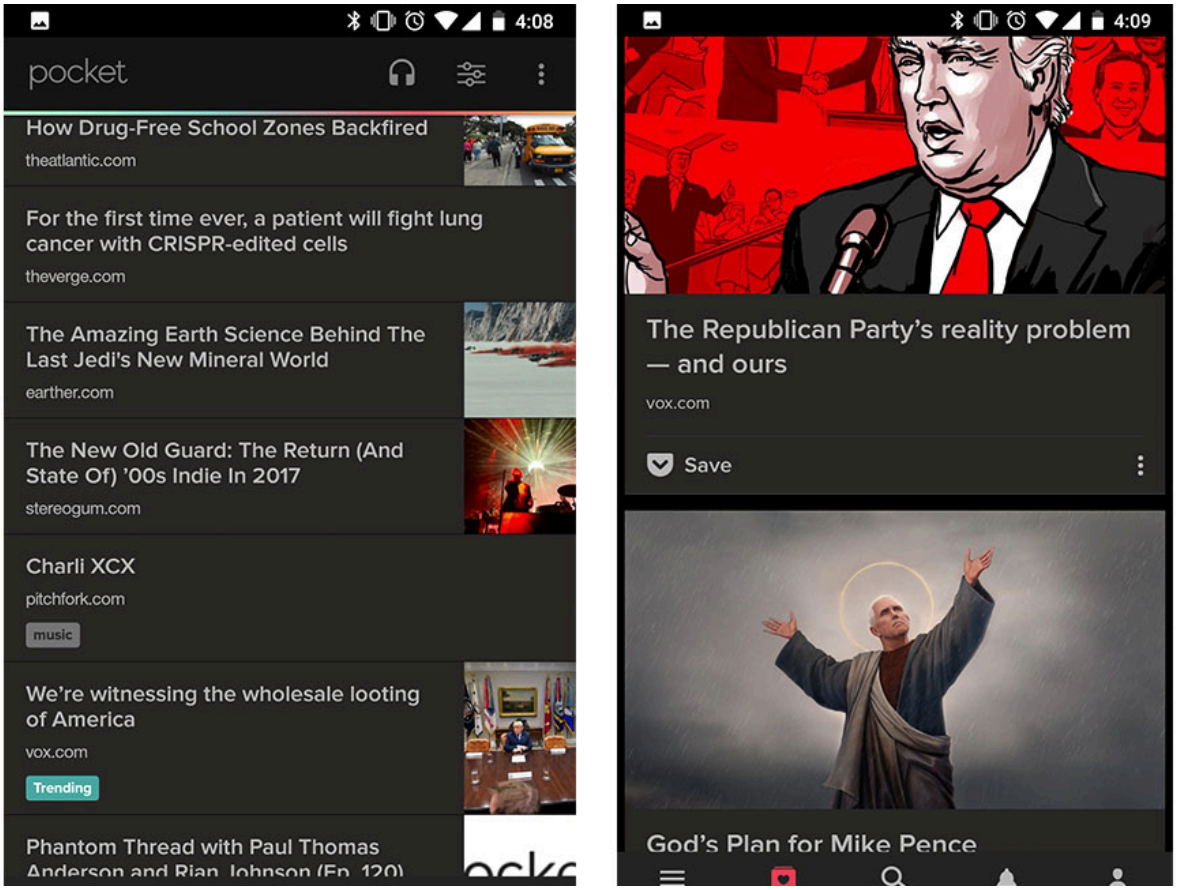
Audio Recorder

For some reason, Android doesn’t come with a voice recorder (not stock Android, at least). I’ve tried a bunch of them, and this nondescript one from Sony is the best. It’s simple, it’s free, and it has some straightforward and simple options. One quick word of warning: don’t record in the top quality unless you need it – it’s a nice option, but the files take up a ton of space.



Messenger Lite

If you're a big Facebook Messenger user, it's worth considering Messenger Lite over the standard Messenger app. As the name implies, Lite is a stripped down version of the app, getting rid of all the bells and whistles that make the main app kind of sluggish. As long as you don't mind losing out on some of the app's more complicated features – polls, app integrations, and video chatting, for instance – you'll be good here, and you'll get a far faster experience in exchange.



Pocket

If you aren't using Pocket already, it's time to get started. Pocket lets you save articles that you find while browsing the web, Twitter, Facebook, and so on so that you can read them later. If you're someone who likes to read on their commute or catch up on articles later in the day when they're off work, Pocket's the way to go. Just pull up Android's share sheet, tap the Pocket icon, and the article will be waiting for you later.

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