VIBE CODING · BEGINNER · 12 MIN READ

App builders: Lovable, Bolt, v0 and Replit

How prompt-to-app builders work, what each is known for, and how to get your project out of the builder when you outgrow it.

Pass the check (4 of 5) online to earn the “App Builder” badge:
https://digitalbuilders757.com/university/study/app-builders-lovable-bolt-v0-replit

What a prompt-to-app builder gives you

A prompt-to-app builder is a website where you chat with an AI that builds a working app, shows it in a live preview beside the chat, and can publish it to a real web address. Many connect to a database and sign-in system for you (often Supabase) and can push the code to GitHub.

Most use credits or message limits: each request to the AI spends some. Vague prompts and 'fix it' loops burn credits fast, so clear, small prompts save money as well as time.

The main options

Tools change quickly, so judge them by trying your own small project. As of late 2026:

- Lovable: builds full web apps (React front end) from chat, with built-in hosting and a close Supabase integration for database and sign-in. Popular with non-technical founders.
- Bolt (bolt.new, by StackBlitz): builds and runs full apps in the browser and gives you more of a developer view of the files.
- v0 (by Vercel): strong at polished interfaces and Next.js apps, and deploys to Vercel in one click.
- Replit: an online coding workspace with an AI agent that can build, run and deploy apps in many languages.
- Others you'll hear about: Base44, Firebase Studio (Google), Figma Make.

A good first session

- Start with a one-sentence goal: who it's for and the one job it does.
- Ask for the simplest version first, with fake sample data.
- Test on your phone as well as your computer.

- Add one feature per prompt. When something works, save a version (most builders have history or a GitHub sync).
- Before real users: turn on sign-in, check who can read what in the database, and remove any secret keys from the front end.

Owning your code

Connect your builder project to GitHub early. Then the code lives in a repository you own, you have a full history of changes, and you can move the project into a coding agent like Cursor or Claude Code, or deploy it to Vercel, when it grows past what the builder handles well.

Key terms

Prompt-to-app builder
A browser tool that builds, previews and often hosts an app from your chat description.

Bolt
A prompt-to-app builder (bolt.new, by StackBlitz) that builds and runs apps in the browser.

Replit
An online coding workspace with an AI agent that builds, runs and deploys apps.

Credits
The units many AI tools charge in; each AI request spends some.

Supabase
A back-end platform on Postgres with auth, instant APIs, storage, edge functions and realtime.

Lovable
A prompt-to-app builder that creates full web apps from chat, with hosting and Supabase integration.

v0
Vercel's AI builder, strong at interfaces and Next.js apps, with one-click deploys to Vercel.

Preview
A live, working view of your app while you build it.

GitHub
A website that hosts Git repositories online for backup, sharing and teamwork.

Front end
The part of an app people see and touch: pages, buttons, forms.

Try it: Build a tiny real tool

1. Pick a real annoyance: a chore chart, a club sign-up list, a study timer.
2. In a builder, ask for the simplest version with sample data.
3. Add exactly two improvements, one prompt each, testing after each.
4. Connect GitHub (if the builder offers it) and look at the files it created.

KNOWLEDGE CHECK

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5 questions. Circle one answer for each; 4 or more correct passes. Answers are at the back.

1. Which builder is made by Vercel and deploys easily to Vercel?

A. Bolt
B. Replit
C. v0
D. Lovable

2. Why connect your builder project to GitHub early?

A. It makes the app load faster
B. GitHub automatically reviews the code and fixes any bugs the builder creates
C. It's required to use the internet
D. You own the code, keep a full history, and can move it to other tools later

3. What usually spends credits in an AI app builder?

A. Each request you send to the AI
B. Every minute the preview stays open in your browser
C. Inviting a friend to see your project
D. Changing your profile picture

4. Which service do builders like Lovable commonly connect to for database and sign-in?

A. Google Sheets
B. Supabase
C. Stripe
D. Figma

5. What should you check before letting real users into your builder-made app?

A. That the home page loads in under a second
B. That it has dark mode
C. Sign-in, who can read what in the database, and that no secret keys are in the front end
D. Nothing, the builder's security scan handles everything

Official sites

Lovable: https://lovable.dev
Bolt: https://bolt.new
v0: https://v0.app
Replit: https://replit.com

Last reviewed 2026-11-25. AI tools change fast; check each tool's own site for current features, plans and prices.

ANSWER KEY

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1. C: v0
v0 is Vercel's builder; it is especially strong at interfaces and Next.js apps.

2. D: You own the code, keep a full history, and can move it to other tools later
GitHub gives you ownership, history and portability.

3. A: Each request you send to the AI
Requests to the AI cost credits, so clear, small prompts save money.

4. B: Supabase
Supabase provides a Postgres database, auth and storage, and many builders integrate with it.

5. C: Sign-in, who can read what in the database, and that no secret keys are in the front end
Access control and secrets are the two most common gaps in vibe-coded apps.