THE DEFINITIVE COMPARISON

The Ultimate Trading App Guide

Zerodha · Dhan · INDmoney · Groww · Paytm Money · ICICI Direct

Choosing a trading platform isn't about finding the app with the highest rating. The right platform depends on what you actually do in the market — a long-term investor, an options trader, a beginner and a US-stocks investor all have different needs.

"Which is the best trading app?" is the wrong question. Ask instead: "Which platform fits my style of investing or trading?"

01 ZERODHA

Best All-Rounder for Active Traders & Investors

Kite is one of India's most established platforms — a clean interface, strong charting, a mature ecosystem and a large user base.

Why it stands out:

- Clean, focused trading interface with strong charting
- Large ecosystem around investing and trading
- Free equity delivery brokerage; direct mutual funds at zero commission
- Flat Rs. 20 per executed options order
- Rs. 20 or 0.03% per executed order for intraday/futures, whichever is lower *(Zerodha)*

Best for: Intermediate traders + long-term investors + people who want an established ecosystem.

Remember: No broker should be judged purely on past downtime. Always keep a contingency plan when actively trading.

VERDICT — S-TIER for an all-round trading and investing experience.

02 DHAN

Best Pick for Options-Focused Traders

Built heavily around active trading and derivatives rather than simple buy-and-hold, with advanced option-chain tools, strategy building and basket orders. *(Dhan)*

Pricing:

- Rs. 0 brokerage on equity delivery
- Rs. 20 or 0.03% for equity intraday and MTF, whichever is lower
- Rs. 20 per executed order for equity and commodity F&O *(Dhan)*

Best for: Options traders, active traders and users who want trading-oriented tools.

Limitation: For the largest ecosystem of third-party content and community discussion, Zerodha's ecosystem is easier to navigate.

VERDICT — S-TIER for options-focused traders.

03 INDMONEY

Best for Indian + US Investing in One Ecosystem

A broader wealth-management approach — access Indian investments alongside US stocks and ETFs in a single platform.

US-stock features:

- Zero account-opening fee, zero annual maintenance fee
- Fractional US stock investing, limit & stop-loss orders
- Watchlists and price alerts
- 0.25% brokerage per trade + applicable forex conversion costs *(INDmoney)*

Best for: Investors who want Indian and US exposure in one ecosystem.

Trade-off: The broader feature set can feel information-heavy versus a focused trading terminal.

VERDICT — A-TIER for multi-market investors.

04 PAYTM MONEY

Best Considered for IPO & Investment Ecosystem

Part of the larger Paytm ecosystem, offering stocks, mutual funds, IPOs and more. Don't judge a broker by its parent group's share-price performance — what matters is regulatory status, custody arrangements, operational controls, pricing and the products you actually use.

Before choosing, compare:

- Brokerage & DP charges
- AMC
- Trading tools
- Customer support
- Product availability

Best for: Investors already in the Paytm ecosystem who want a consolidated experience.

VERDICT — WORTH COMPARING — don't choose it purely for the IPO feature.

05 GROWW

Best for Beginners

Groww's biggest strength is simplicity — approachable for people who don't yet know technical trading terminology.

Pricing:

- Rs. 0 account opening and AMC
- Equity brokerage: Rs. 20 or 0.1% per order, whichever is lower (min-charge rules apply)
- Rs. 20 per executed F&O order *(Groww)*
- Now also offers stocks, F&O, MTF, mutual funds, ETFs, IPOs and more *(Groww)*

Best for: Beginners, long-term investors and users who prioritise simplicity.

Advanced traders may prefer: Better charting, order workflows, options analytics, strategy tools and API capabilities elsewhere.

VERDICT — A-TIER for beginners and casual investors.

06

ICICI DIRECT

Best for a Traditional Bank + Brokerage Ecosystem

Its major advantage is integration with the ICICI financial ecosystem — convenient for existing ICICI customers who want banking, demat and investing together. Pricing needs careful attention: it runs multiple plans rather than one universal structure.

Example (iValue plan):

- Rs. 20 per order for equity intraday, futures, options and commodities
- Delivery brokerage varies by plan
- Standard brokerage can run significantly higher than discount brokers under certain plans *(ICICI Direct)*

Best for: Existing ICICI customers and investors who value an integrated banking + investing experience.

Important: Don't assume a traditional broker is "bad" for a higher headline brokerage — compare the actual plan and services.

VERDICT — B / C-TIER depending on user and pricing plan.

SO WHICH ONE SHOULD YOU CHOOSE?

BEGINNER

Groww

Prioritise simplicity and market understanding before advanced tools.

ACTIVE ALL-ROUND TRADER

Zerodha

A mature ecosystem balancing trading and investing well.

OPTIONS TRADER

Dhan

Product design and tools focused on active derivatives traders. (Dhan)

INDIAN + US INVESTOR

INDmoney

US investing + broader wealth platform for international exposure. (INDmoney)

EXISTING ICICI CUSTOMER

ICICI Direct

Valuable banking integration — compare the exact brokerage plan first.

THE 7 THINGS TO CHECK BEFORE OPENING AN ACCOUNT

Don't choose a broker based only on Instagram rankings.

1	**Brokerage** — How much will you actually pay for your type of trading?
2	**Other charges** — STT, exchange transaction charges, GST, SEBI charges, stamp duty, DP charges, AMC, MTF interest, call & trade charges.
3	**Trading tools** — Charts, option chain, order types, basket orders, alerts, trading layouts, strategy tools.
4	**Reliability** — Look beyond one-off app reviews — consider infrastructure, support, and your fallback plan.
5	**Customer support** — Matters far more when something goes wrong.
6	**Product availability** — Stocks, mutual funds, IPOs, F&O, commodities, ETFs, US stocks, MTF, APIs — choose accordingly.
7	**Regulatory & security checks** — Verify current regulatory/registration info through official sources before depositing money.

THE FINAL RANKING — BEST BY USE CASE

USER TYPE	PLATFORM
Beginner	**Groww**
All-round trader / investor	**Zerodha**
Options-focused trader	**Dhan**
Indian + US investor	**INDmoney**
Bank-integrated investor	**ICICI Direct**
IPO-focused investor	**Compare Paytm Money + alternatives**

*The “best” trading app isn't the one with the highest ranking. It's the one whose **cost + tools + reliability + product range + interface** match your actual investing style.*

A better trading app cannot turn a bad trading strategy into a profitable one. Your broker is infrastructure — your strategy, risk management and discipline determine what you do with it.

FOR MORE ON TECH, CYBERSECURITY & AI

@ankurdecodes

Follow Ankur Chandrakant on Instagram · Free cybersecurity & tech classes