Fing now won’t let me scan without giving my money, so I forked an old Android app for that (Altia).

reinhart1010.id – 10 August 2024 • (Updated 10 August 2024)

From https://reinhart1010.id/blog/2024/08/10/introducing-altia-open-source-fing-alternative.
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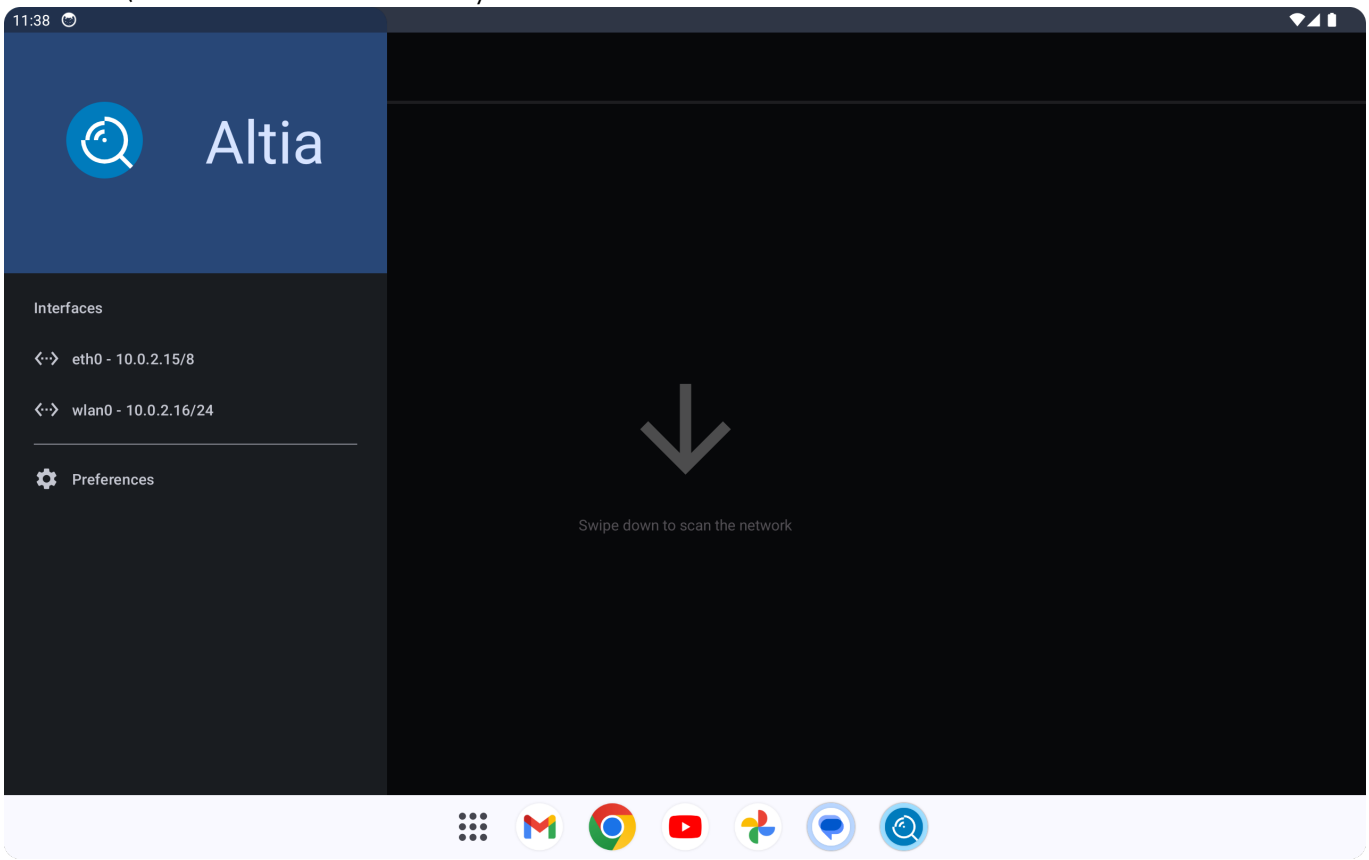

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GET IT ON Google Play

*Altia is currently published under the Open Testing phase of the Google Play Store, so it may not be available on certain regions or when the user testing quota is full.

So, it came to my attention that Fing, the app highly recommended by Forbes, MakeUseOf, and other tech sites, has become so greedy that it now attempts to limit the most basic, essential features of the app: Scanning for devices inside a network.

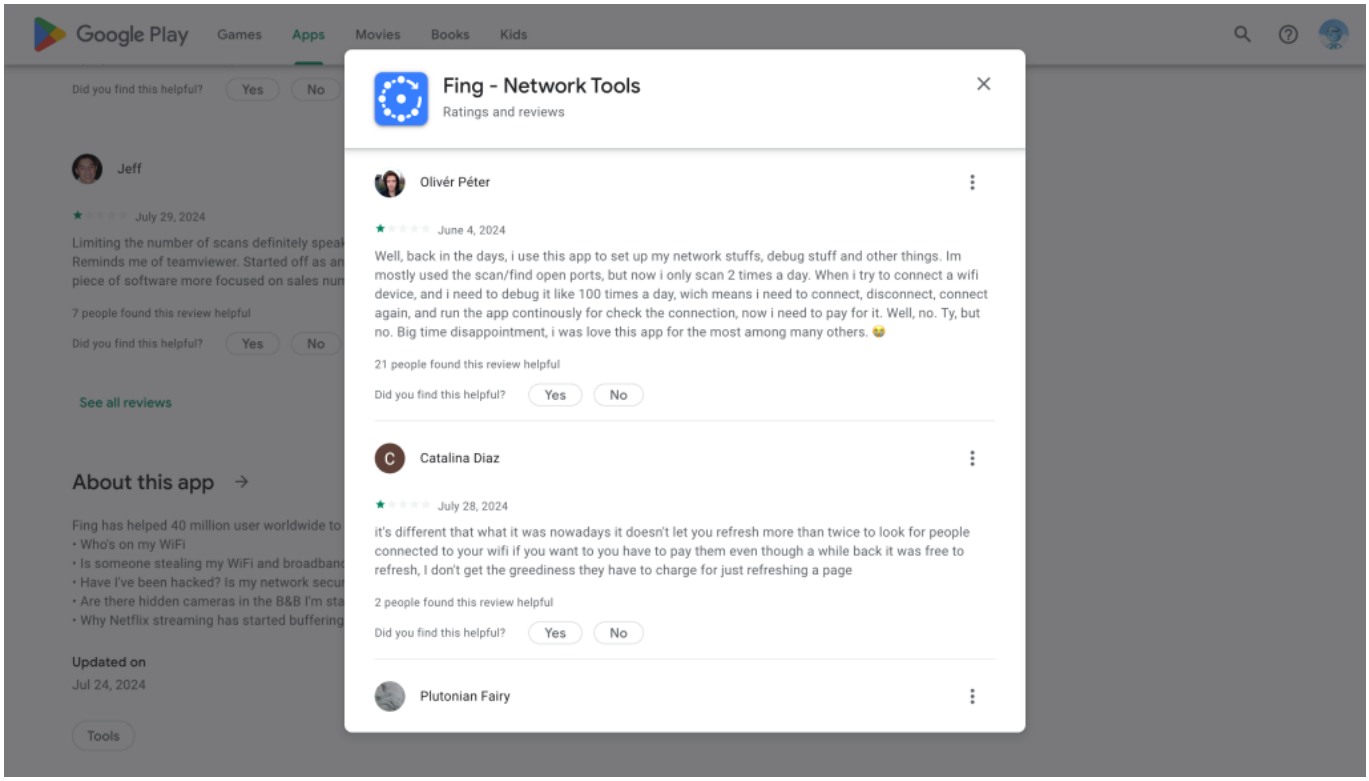
> Fing Premium continuously scans your network so you don't have to initiate a scan for up-to-date information, and **Fing Starter users get up to 3 scans per day.**

https://help.fing.com/hc/en-us/articles/14633200346268-Scan-Your-Network

The help article was last updated on **July 16th 2024** (see archived page), but the change was already in effect at least on **July 7th**, where I first found out the issue, or even **June 6th**, where . This news is just hidden under the radar of common tech news websites, whether it.

Of course, the article itself doesn't seem to be helpful,

And the Google Play reviews are now coming up **really, really bad.**



> **Note:** Unlike Apple's App Store, where developers can ask Apple to reset their rating on new releases, Google Play doesn't, so bad ratings will always stay and featured over the next few releases.

In fact, you can use a desktop and a tool named Nmap to scan practically on every connected computer network, and without having to log in to an Nmap account. Nmap has become a staple tool for many Kali Linux users, but it can also work on Linux and macOS devices, too.

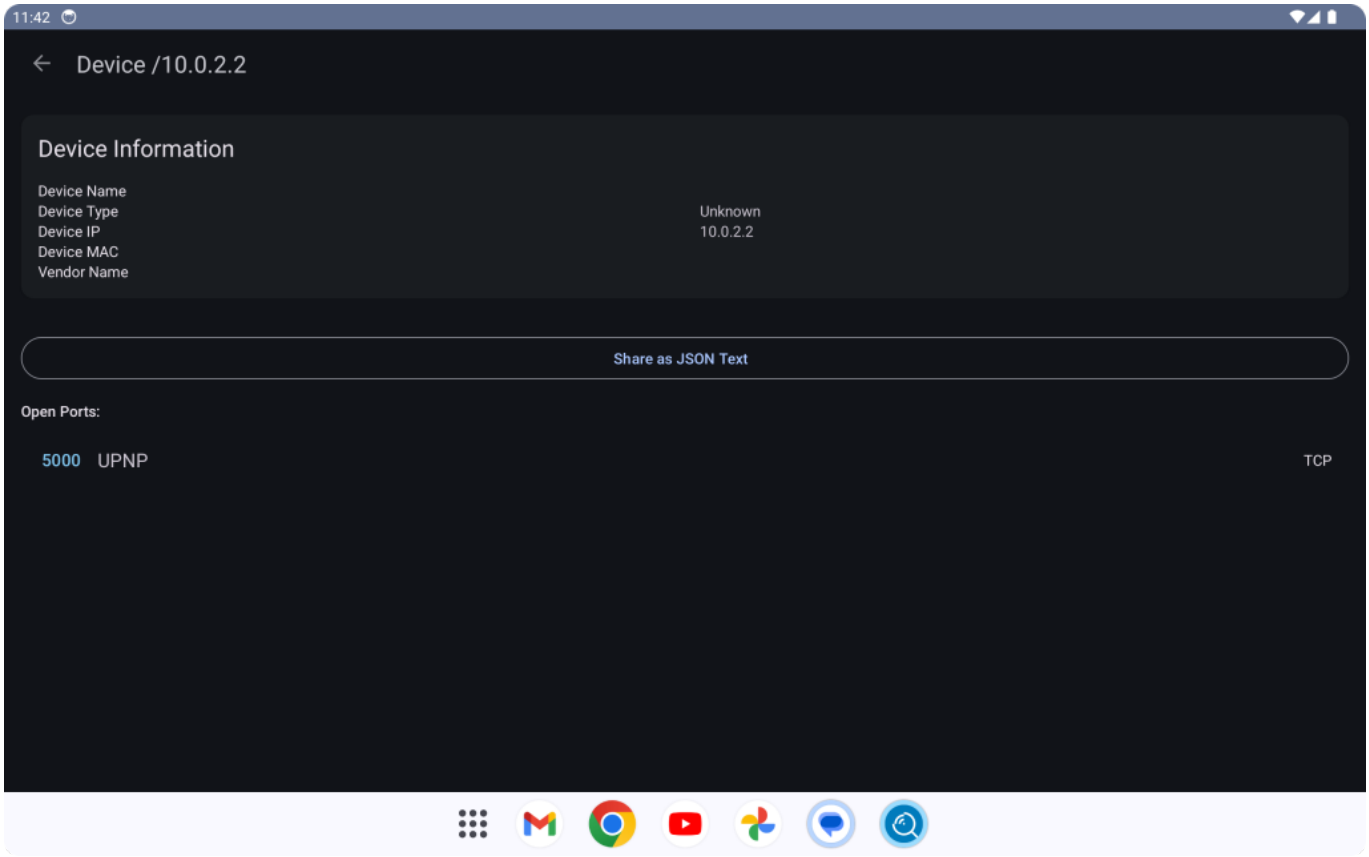
So, why Nmap can infinitely scan for things while Fing seems cannot? Because computer network protocols are openly documented. You can monitor for ICMP messages to "ping" a device or to detect network problems, and rapid-firing some TCP and UDP connections to test which computer ports are open. Some MAC address ranges are well-known to belong to a certain company or a computer device type (e.g. Smart TV), too.

There's no other magic in Fing, except for the then-optional Cloud Sync feature, that make Fing more superior than Nmap. Actually, it's the otherwise, because Apple and Google now limits apps to run in the background and get a list of MAC addresses for privacy reasons. **So, that "three scans per day" policy is just mere an artificial limitiation.** And I can't less agree with others that believed this is nothing but greed.

To fork or to contribute?

Finding through F-Droid, there's at least one open-source alternative to the unfaithful app: Ning. Not the one in Google Play Store, because it was uploaded by someone else. But the development of Ning has stalled for about 2 years (considering the developer is still active on GitHub, and many Dependabot suggestions were ignored), and I found some potential in the open-source app, like adding a Wi-Fi signal scanning utility, that might not be the intentions of the original developer.

So I decided to fork it. And improve it by a little.



As an added feature (and to counterdetect automated plagiarism checking while the open-source license legally allows to do so), Altia can also export a list of open ports into a JSON text. Material Design 3 support is also currently underway.

Today you can download the forked app **Altia** on Google Play Store, and the GPLv3-licensed source code at https://github.com/shiftinecmd/altia.

Altia works best for older Android devices (running Android 7 (Nougat) to Android 11) as they still allow Altia to get the detailed MAC address information for each device.