

2018

Bible Translation Comparison Guide

We know how important it is for you to choose the right Bible... that's why we created this Bible Comparison Guide that outlines all of the major Bible translations and briefs you on a few Bible facts, the four main Bible types, and some of the most often used Bible terms.



BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

The Bible was originally written in: **GREEK, HEBREW, and ARAMAIC**

75% There are hundreds of English Bible translations but the 5 most popular ones represent 75% of the market (the NIV and KJV are the 2 most popular)

80% 80% of Bible buyers say that the translation is **VERY IMPORTANT** to their buying decision

TWO PHILOSOPHIES

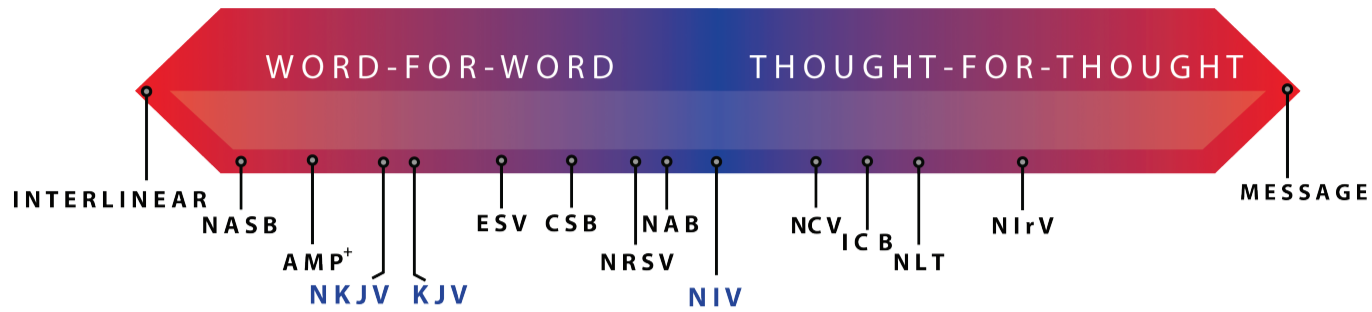
There are two main philosophies of Bible translation with a wide spectrum range between them:

▶ WORD-FOR-WORD

Tries to adhere as closely as possible to the wording and structure of the original languages without sacrificing clarity

▶ THOUGHT-FOR-THOUGHT

Tries to be as clear and understandable as possible in translating the original languages without sacrificing accuracy



TRANSLATION	TRANSLATION PHILOSOPHY	1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-5	DISTINCTIVE
NASB New American Standard Bible	An uncompromising effort to maximize transparency to the original documents	"Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered,"	An update of the American Standard Version, which was published in 1901. The NASB seeks the highest possible level of transparency to the original documents that can be achieved while still retaining comprehensibility in English.
AMP Amplified Bible	A broadly formal equivalent translation with explanatory alternate readings and amplifications	"Love endures with patience and serenity, love is kind and thoughtful, and is not jealous or envious; love does not brag and is not proud or arrogant. It is not rude; it is not self-seeking, it is not provoked [nor overly sensitive and easily angered]; it does not take into account a wrong endured."	A popular resource that was created to add color to the Bible reading experience through explanatory alternate readings and amplifications.
NKJV New King James Version	Prioritizing transparency to the same source documents as the original KJV but with updated English	"Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil;"	A modern update of the King James Version. The purpose was to refresh and modernize the original KJV without losing its distinctive flavor.
KJV King James Version	Blending transparency to the form and structure of the Bible documents that were available at the time with elegant 17th-century English	"Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;"	A landmark in the history of English Literature. Published in 1611, the translation's purpose was "to deliver God's book unto God's people in a tongue which they can understand."
ESV English Standard Version	Building on the foundation of the RSV, prioritizing transparency to the original documents	"Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful"	An Evangelical update of the Revised Standard Version (1951). The ESV prioritizes transparency to the form and structure of the original documents.
CSB Christian Standard Bible	Blending transparency to the original documents with accessibility for the contemporary audience	"Love is patient, love is kind. Love does not envy, is not boastful, is not arrogant, is not rude, is not self-seeking, is not irritable, and does not keep a record of wrongs."	Produced under the sponsorship of the Southern Baptist Convention, the CSB seeks to combine transparency to the original documents with comprehensibility in modern English.
NRSV New Revised Standard Version	Maintaining the formal equivalence philosophy of the RSV while seeking to reflect contemporary English usage	"Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful;"	An ecumenical revision of the Revised Standard Version (1951) with a new focus on ease of understanding.
NAB New American Bible	Seeking to combine transparency to the source documents with a good level of comprehensibility in modern English	"Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, (love) is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury,"	Published under the direction of Pope Pius XII, this Catholic version of the Bible represents more than 25 years of effort by the Catholic Biblical Association of America. All editions include the Deuterocanonical/Apocryphal books.
NIV New International Version	Recreating—as closely as possible—the reading experience of the original audience	"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs."	Created directly from the best-attested manuscripts, the NIV is the world's bestselling modern-English Bible translation. It seeks to provide the optimum combination of transparency to the form and structure of the original documents and comprehensibility of the original meaning in every verse.
NCV New Century Version	Prioritizing accessibility for a broad audience	"Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous, it does not brag, and it is not proud. Love is not rude, is not selfish, and does not get upset with others. Love does not count up wrongs that have been done."	Based on the ICB (International Children's Bible), the NCV is a simple, readable translation that places the priority on communicating the original meaning of the text.
ICB International Children's Bible	The first direct thought-for-thought translation developed especially for children as its primary reading audience. With its third grade reading level, the text is easy to read and understand for children, English as a second language readers, and anyone who desires a clear comprehension of the text.	"Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous, it does not brag, and it is not proud. Love is not rude, is not selfish, and does not become angry easily. Love does not remember wrongs done against it."	The International Children's Bible® was faithfully created as a true translation of the original Greek and Hebrew texts (not a paraphrase or an adaptation). The language style is simple enough for children to read and understand on their own. This makes it a perfect choice for readers of all ages and levels, especially those who use English as a second language.
NLT New Living Translation	Balancing accuracy and clarity to convey the original meaning of the text	"Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged."	Translated by a team of evangelical Bible scholars and stylists to convey the modern English equivalent of the meaning of each phrase of Scripture. The result is a faithful, understandable rendering of the original Biblical texts.
NIrV New International Reader's Version	Written at a third grade reading level—among the youngest reading level of any translation—the NIrV is based on the NIV created for young readers and anyone else who would benefit from easier-to-read language.	"Love is patient. Love is kind. It does not want what belongs to others. It does not brag. It is not proud. It does not dishonor other people. It does not look out for its own interests. It does not easily become angry. It does not keep track of other people's wrongs."	The NIrV is based on the NIV, written for a third-grade reading level. Like the NIV, the NIrV achieves great accuracy through equal rigor to the original languages and today's English. The NIrV makes the Bible understandable to young readers and anyone else who would benefit from easier-to-read language.
The Message A Paraphrase	A contemporary rendering of the message of the Bible in everyday idioms	"Love never gives up. Love cares more for others than for self. Love doesn't want what it doesn't have. Love doesn't strut, doesn't have a swelled head, doesn't force itself on others, isn't always 'me first,' doesn't fly off the handle, doesn't keep score of the sins of others,"	The Message uses informal modern English to help contemporary Bible readers feel the vitality and directness with which God's word originally communicated.

BIBLE FACTS

The Bible contains nearly

1,200
chapters, over
30,000
verses, and nearly
750,000
words.

It would fill


8 volumes

if printed on normal
book paper with a
typical typesetting.

- ▶ First book is Genesis and last book is Revelation.



- ▶ The longest book is Psalms with 150 chapters.

- ▶ It was written over about a 1500-year period (from 1500 BC to AD 100).
- ▶ About 40 different authors contributed to the Bible.

- ▶ There are 66 “books” within the Bible, separated into two main sections:

39 books

The Old Testament

27 books

The New Testament

- ▶ Some books of the Bible are...

EPISTLES

Letters to individuals and churches



GOSPELS

Records of Jesus' life



Others contain prophecy (predictions about the future), poetry/songs, sage advice (called Proverbs), and some are historical records of events.

THE 4 MAIN BIBLE TYPES

1 TEXT BIBLES

Text Bibles contain primarily Scripture without much additional content from the publisher. A variety of sizes are tailored to the reader's need for portability or readability (Compact, Thinline, Large Print, Giant Print, Super Giant Print).

▶ REFERENCE BIBLES

guide the reader to the location of similar verses by including references in small print on every page.



▶ JOURNAL BIBLES

have wide margins for note-taking, journaling, and even artwork.



▶ COLORING BIBLES

include ready-to-color line art to help readers reflect and interact with the Bible.



2 STUDY BIBLES

To help readers dig deeper, additional content is added including introductions to each book, explanations of the meaning of Scripture, articles about major Bible themes, and illustrations (photos, charts, tables, maps).

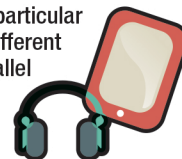


3 DEVOTIONAL BIBLES

Extra features are added to help readers reflect on the Bible more consistently including a built-in schedule of daily readings, hundreds of thought-provoking questions, and inspirational notes about spiritual growth. Some are tailored specifically to men, women, teens, or various topics.

4 SPECIALTY BIBLES

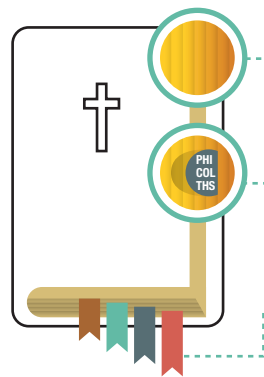
A broad category that includes Bibles with notes centered on particular themes or Bibles that have a different format (e.g., audio, digital, parallel Bibles, etc.).



BIBLE TERMS

- ▶ **ANNOTATED:** A Bible containing study notes.
- ▶ **BOOK INTRODUCTIONS:** A brief overview of the contents of each Bible book or section.
- ▶ **CHRONOLOGICAL BIBLE:** A Bible that arranges passages in the order in which the events most likely occurred.
- ▶ **CONCORDANCE:** An alphabetized index of common words found in the Bible with references for where they can be found.
- ▶ **DEAD SEA SCROLLS:** Archeologists and biblical scholars have studied the Dead Sea Scrolls and have found them to contain portions of nearly all of the Old Testament books. The NIV and other modern translations like NASB, CSB and NLT incorporate the scholarship of these archeological findings.
- ▶ **DICTIONARY/CONCORDANCE:** A combination Bible dictionary and concordance that is usually brief and often used in children's Bibles.
- ▶ **NEW TESTAMENT:** The last 27 books of the Bible starting with the story of Jesus and ending with Revelation (a book about future events).
- ▶ **OLD TESTAMENT:** The first 39 books of the Bible starting with the Creation story in Genesis and ending before the story of Jesus begins (about 400 B.C.).

- ▶ **PARALLEL BIBLES:** Different Bible translations positioned side-by-side in one volume. Contains anywhere from two to eight different translations in one volume.
- ▶ **PRESENTATION PAGES:** One or more pages at the front of a Bible for recording the user's name as well as other information like marriages, births, family trees, etc.
- ▶ **STUDY NOTES:** Notes that are not part of the actual text of the Bible but are included as helpful tools, sometimes giving additional information about the meaning of specific passages or citing additional facts about biblical people, places and times.
- ▶ **SUBJECT INDEX:** A listing of major Bible topics, each followed by a passage or passages of Scripture about that topic. Some subject indexes also reference topics covered in study notes, devotions and book introductions.
- ▶ **TABLES OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES:** Biblical terms for weight, capacity and length are shown in their equivalent American measure.
- ▶ **TRANSLATION OR VERSION:** Means to take the original Greek and Hebrew Bible text and put them into today's language to make it understandable for the modern English reader.



▶ **GILDING:** Glossy gold or silver page edges that enhance the beauty of some Bibles.

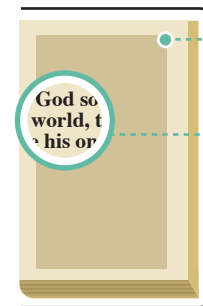
▶ **INDEXED:** Thumb tabs help readers easily navigate to a specific book of the Bible.

▶ **RIBBON MARKERS:** Some Bibles have between 1 and 4 ribbons bound into the top of the spine as a placeholder for readers to save their spot or mark their favorite parts.



▶ **CENTER-COLUMN REFERENCE BIBLE:** A Bible with references listed in a vertical column located in the middle of the page between two columns of Bible text.

▶ **RED LETTER:** A feature of many Bibles where the words Jesus spoke are **printed in RED**.



▶ **SINGLE COLUMN:** A Bible with just one column of Bible text on a page.

▶ **TYPEFACE AND SIZE:** Refers to the shape and size of the letters on a page, which can affect readability.

▶ **WIDE MARGIN:** A Bible with extra white space around the text in which to write notes.

