

CHARACTERISTICS OF MAJOR BIBLE VERSIONS

Version	Year Published	Characteristics	Grade Level	GN?	Apoc?
KJV King James Version	1611 1861* 1932* 1962*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is the most popular and widely used English Bible ever published. The translators utilized a "literal" (formal equivalent) approach. It has undergone three revisions and many changes since it was originally published in 1611. The KJV is a revision of the Bishops' Bible (1568), which was a revision of the Great Bible (1539). Sentence structure, expressions, and vocabulary represent Elizabethan-era English, making it difficult for many to understand today. The KJV uses a different manuscript basis from other modern versions. 	12.0		X
NKJV New King James Version	1979 NT 1982*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NKJV is an update and modernization of the KJV. The original translators and updaters utilized a literal (formal equivalent) approach. The translators replaced all the Elizabethan English with modern English. The NKJV uses a different manuscript basis from other modern versions. 	9.00		
RSV Revised Standard Version	1952 1971*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a revision of the American Standard Version (1901), but less literal. It became the most ecumenical version, accepted, and used by Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox believers. 	NA		X
NRSV New Revised Standard Version	1990	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a revision of the RSV. As the most ecumenical version, it is accepted and used by Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox believers. 	10.4	X	X
ESV English Standard Version	2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ESV is an evangelical revision of the RSV. It is an "essentially literal" (formal equivalent) translation. 	NA		
NASB New American Standard Bible	1971 1995*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NASB is one of the most literal (formal equivalent) translations available. It was produced between 1959 and 1971 by 58 evangelical scholars from a variety of Bible denominations. It is based on the American Standard Version (1901). 	11.0		
NIV New International Version	1978	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NIV is the most popular evangelical translation. It attempts to find an optimal balance between exactness (formal equivalence) and readability (dynamic equivalence). It was produced by a team of evangelical scholars, all of whom were committed "to the authority and infallibility of the Bible as God's Word In written form." 	7.8		
TNIV Today's New International Version	2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is an update and revision of the popular NIV. The TNIV was translated by the Committee on Bible Translation, the same body of scholars that produced the NIV. 	7.8	X	
HCSB Holman Christian Standard Bible	2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Like the NIV, this translation endeavors to maintain an optimum balance between exactness (formal equivalence) and readability (dynamic equivalence). Commissioned by the Southern Baptist publishing house of Holman Bible Publishers, this translation was produced by a team of 90 scholars from a variety of denominations. 	NA		
REB Revised English Bible	1989	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The REB is a revision of the New English Bible (1970). It is a thought-for-thought (dynamic equivalent) translation produced in Great Britain. The translation reflects many British idioms. 	NA	X	X
TEV Today's English Version	1966 NT 1976	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This thought-for-thought (dynamic equivalent) translation was produced by the American Bible Society. It makes use of colloquial English. 	7.29		X
LB Living Bible	1967 NT 1971	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LB is not a translation, but a paraphrase of the American Standard Version (1901) in understandable and colloquial English. This Bible was produced by Kenneth N. Taylor, who decided to paraphrase the ASV to help his 10 children understand the Scriptures. More than 40 million copies have been printed. 	8.3		
NCV New Century Version	1991	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This dynamic translation was based on the International Childrens' Bible (1986). It uses vocabulary at a third-grade level and avoids long sentences. 	NA	X	
CEV Contemporary English Version	1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This dynamic modern-language translation was produced by the American Bible Society. 	5.4	X	X
NLT New Living Translation	1996	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is an actual translation—not a paraphrase—using a dynamic-equivalence approach. The translation was completed by a team of 90 evangelical scholars from various denominations. 	6.3	X	
The Message	1993 NT 2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Message is an actual translation—not a paraphrase—into idiomatic English (the way we actually speak and think). It often uses additional details to convey a thought. 	4.8		

* = a second (or later) edition NT = the New Testament portion GN = X indicates that the translation is gender neutral.
 Apoc = X indicates that the Apocrypha is available in this translation. Grade Level = This is an index for assessing the readability of the translation according to grade level. These figures are based on a study conducted by Swinburne Readability Laboratory (Charlottesville, Virginia). While the TNIV was not included in the study, the grade level remains the same as the NIV.