

# English Bible Versions

Literal (1-2) > Idiomatic (3-4) > Dynamic (5-6) > Paraphrase (7-8) > Commentative (9-10) scale  
 based on [Bruce Terry's evaluation](#)

Many of these versions are available online at [BibleGateway](#)

Abbr.	Bible	Lit>Dyn	Notes
ASV	American Standard Version, 1901	2	
BBE	Bible in Basic English, 1949/64		
CEB	Common English Bible 2011	4.5	
CEV	Contemporary English Version	7	<a href="#">online</a>
CJB	Complete Jewish Bible, 1998		
CSB	Holman Christian Standard Bible, 2004	3	
DBY	Darby Bible (1884/1890)		
DRA	Douay-Rheims 1899 American Edition	2.5	
ERV	English Revised Version, 1881/1885	2	
ESV	English Standard Version, 2007 update	3	
ETH	New Testament Peshitta Translation, Etheridge, 1849		
GNV	Geneva Bible, 1599		
GWN	GOD'S WORD® Translation, 1995	6	
HON	Hone English NT Apocrypha (1820)		
JB	Jerusalem Bible	5	
JPS	Jewish Publication Society Tanakh, 1917		
KJA	King James Apocrypha, 1611	2.5	
KJG	King James, 1611, with Strong's Codes and Geneva Bible notes	2.5	
KJV	King James, 1611/1769, with Strong's Codes	2.5	
LSB	Legacy Standard Bible	1.5	<a href="#">online</a>
LEB	Lexham English Bible	2	<a href="#">U</a>
LXA	Brenton's Septuagint English Translation, w/ Deutero-canonical		
LXE	Brenton's Septuagint English Translation, w/out Deutero-canonical		
MSG	The Message	9	<a href="#">online</a>
MIT	MacDonald Idiomatic Translation Bible	8	
NET	NET Bible with notes and maps	4	
NETS	New English Translation of the Septuagint	3.5	<a href="#">online</a>
NAB	New American Bible	4.5	
NAS	New American Standard Bible, 1977, with Codes	2.5	
NAU	New American Standard Bible, 1995, with Codes	2.5	
NWT	New World Translation (1961 – JehovahWitness)	2	<a href="#">online</a>
NirV	New International Reader's Version	6	
NIB	New International Version (UK)	4.5	
NIV	New International Version (US), 1984, w/ cross references & fns	4.5	
NJB	New Jerusalem Bible	5	
NKJ	New King James Version (1982) Version, with Strong's Codes	2.5	
NLT	New Living Translation, 2nd edition, 2005	6	
NRS	New Revised Standard Version with Apocrypha, 1989	3	
MRD	New Testament Peshitta Translation, James Murdock, 1851		
LEW	New Testament Peshitta Translation, Lewis, 1896		
NOR	New Testament Peshitta Translation, Norton, 1881		

MGI	New Testament Peshitta Translation, Magiera, 2005		
PNT	Bishop's Bible, 1595		
RSV	Revised Standard Version with Apocrypha, 1952	3	
RWB	Revised Webster Update, 1995, with Codes		
TNIV	Today's NIV	4.5	
TNK	Jewish Publication Society Tanakh, 1985		
TNT	Tyndale New Testament, 1534		
Voice	The Voice 2012	6	
WEB	Webster Bible, 1833		
YLT	Young's Literal Translation, 1862/1898	2	
	<b>Other English Versions</b>		
ASM	Mark in Anglo Saxon (Mark Langley)		<a href="#">U</a>
BSP	Bishop's Bible (1568)		<a href="#">U</a>
CAB	Complete Apostles' Bible (Esposito update of Brenton; w/ NT)		<a href="#">U</a>
COV	Miles Coverdale Version (1535)		<a href="#">U</a>
FCT	14th Century Version (Middle English 1Jn-Jud) (Mark Langley)		<a href="#">U</a>
GGM	Gospel of Mark in Gothic (Mark Langley)		<a href="#">U</a>
LSE	Leeser Bible Translation (Pasquale Amicarelli)		<a href="#">U</a>
WYC	John Wycliffe's Middle English Translation of the Vulgate (1388)		<a href="#">U</a>
	<b>Other English Versions</b>		
NEB	New English Bible* (NEB–1961, 1970)	5	<a href="#">online</a>
REB	Revised English Bible* (REB–1989)	5	
TEV	Today's English Version = Good News Bible (1966-1976)	6	<a href="#">online</a>
NCV	New Century Version	6	<a href="#">online</a>
LB	Living Bible	9	
	Phillips' The New Testament in Modern English	8	<a href="#">online</a>
	Lamsa's Holy Bible from Ancient Eastern Manuscripts	2.5	<a href="#">OT</a> and <a href="#">NT</a>
	Amplified Bible	2.5	<a href="#">online</a>
	Moffat's A New Translation	5	
	Cotton Patch Version	10	<a href="#">online</a>

Check [HERE](#) for other online translations of the Bible

## A Literal > Paraphrase Scale of English Bible Versions

- Literal (1-2) > Idiomatic (3-4) > Dynamic (5-6) > Paraphrase (7-8) > Commentative (9-10) scale based on [Bruce Terry's evaluation](#) with additions by mgvh
- Note: a "1" would be a word-for-word interlinear version

Abbr.	Bible	Lit>Dyn	Notes
ASV	American Standard Version, 1901	2	
ERV	English Revised Version, 1881/1885	2	
YLT	Young's Literal Translation, 1862/1898	2	
LEB	Lexham English Bible	2	
	New World Translation (1961 – JW)	2	
DRA	Douay-Rheims 1899 American Edition	2.5	
KJA	King James Apocrypha, 1611	2.5	
KJG	King James, 1611, with Strong's Codes and Geneva Bible notes	2.5	
KJV	King James, 1611/1769, with Strong's Codes	2.5	
NAS	New American Standard Bible, 1977, with Codes	2.5	
NAU	New American Standard Bible, 1995, with Codes	2.5	
NKJ	New King James Version (1982) Version, with Strong's Codes	2.5	
	Lamsa's Holy Bible from Ancient Eastern Manuscripts	2.5	
	Amplified Bible	2.5	
ESV	English Standard Version, 2007 update	3	
CSB	Holman Christian Standard Bible, 2004	3	
TNK	Jewish Publication Society Tanakh, 1985	3	
NRS	New Revised Standard Version with Apocrypha, 1989	3	
RSV	Revised Standard Version with Apocrypha, 1952	3	
NET	NET Bible with notes and maps	4	
NAB	New American Bible	4.5	
NIB	New International Version (UK)	4.5	
NIV	New International Version (US), 1984, w/ cross references & fns	4.5	
TNIV	Today's NIV	4.5	
CEB	Common English Bible 2011	4.5	
NJB	New Jerusalem Bible	5	
	Moffat's A New Translation	5	
	Jerusalem Bible	5	
NEB	New English Bible* (NEB–1961, 1970)	5	
REB	Revised English Bible* (REB–1989)	5	
GWN	GOD'S WORD® Translation, 1995	6	
NirV	New International Reader's Version	6	
NLT	New Living Translation, 2nd edition, 2005	6	
TEV	Today's English Version = Good News Bible (1966-1976)	6	
NCV	New Century Version	6	
CEV	Contemporary English Version	7	
MIT	MacDonald Idiomatic Translation Bible	8	
	Phillips' The New Testament in Modern English	8	
MSG	The Message	9	
	Living Bible	9	
	Cotton Patch Version	10	



## Recommended Versions to Consult and Compare

Abbr.	Bible	Lit>Dyn	Notes
	<b>LITERAL</b>		
LEB	Lexham English Bible	2	Based on an interlinear
DRA	Douay-Rheims 1899	2.5	Translation of the Vulgate
KJV	King James, 1611/1769	2.5	Classic work of English literature
NAU	New American Standard Bible, 1995	2.5	Literal
	<b>IDIOMATIC</b>		
ESV	English Standard Version, 2007 update	3	Based on KJV; conservative; becoming widely used
TNK	Jewish Publication Society Tanakh, 1985	3	Jewish translation of MT; good to check in OT
NRS	New Revised Standard Version 1989	3	Part of KJV family; good balance; widely used
NET	NET Bible with notes and maps	4	Excellent notes (quality of translation varies)
	<b>IDIOMATIC-DYNAMIC</b>		
NIV	New International Version (US), 1984	4.5	Widely used in 'evangelical' churches; being updated
TNIV	Today's NIV	4.5	Better than NIV, but criticized for inclusive lang. use
NJB	New Jerusalem Bible	5	Roman Catholic
CEB	Common English Bible 2011	4.5	Ecumenical; more 'listenable' than NRSV
	<b>DYNAMIC</b>		
NLT	New Living Translation, 2005	6	(Not related to LivingBible) Reflects theological biases
TEV	Today's English Version=GNB	6	Long-time, widely used dynamic version
CEV	Contemporary English Version	7	Updates and replaces the TEV/GNB
	<b>PARAPHRASE</b>		
MSG	The Message	9	Paraphrase but close consultation with Greek/Hebrew

From the **LITERAL** group:

- LEB or NAU: Use one of these to have most literal translation
- KJV: Besides being a classic, this will also highlight use of the *Textus Receptus* (~Majority Text)
- DRA: Useful to see if anything is unique in Latin Vulgate tradition

From **IDIOMATIC** group:

- ESV: ? Non-inclusive language; not a particularly great translation, but it is becoming the new standard for 'evangelical' churches
- TNK: for Old Testament; Important to get this Jewish perspective based on Masoretic Text
- NRS: Standard study text; widely used
- NET: Main importance is to check tc (=text critical) and tn (=translation note) notations

From **IDIOMATIC-DYNAMIC** group:

- NIV or TNIV: TNIV is better, but NIV has been more widely used in 'evangelical' churches
- NJB: Provides insight into Roman Catholic perspective

From **DYNAMIC** group:

- NLT: Useful dynamic translation, but can reflect (conservative) theological biases
- TEV or CEV: Helpful to see how to translate at a simpler reading level

From **PARAPHRASE** group:

- MSG: Peterson did work closely with the Greek/Hebrew; some unfortunate phrasings, but mostly gets things right and highlights where there is an interpretive issue