



Bible FAQ

Selecting a Bible can be challenging—and yet it's one of the most important purchases we make. Whether you're selecting your first Bible, an addition to your personal library, or a gift, some guidelines will help you find the best Bible for your needs.

First, determine who will be using the Bible.

Second, determine the type of translation you want.

Third, determine the physical aspects that are most important for you.

Listed below are some questions to consider as you make your selection.

- 1. What are the different types of translations?** Translations can be divided into three broad types: word-for-word, thought-for-thought and paraphrase.

Word-for-word translation seeks to represent the original Greek and Hebrew in a more word-for-word manner and preserve—as far as possible—original word order, grammar, and syntax. Some examples are the King James Version (KJV), the New King James Version (NKJV), the English Standard Version (ESV), and the New American Standard Bible (NASB).

Thought-for-thought translation seeks to express the meaning of each sentence or paragraph from the original language in simple up-to-date English without being tied to translating every word. Some examples are the New International Version (NIV), Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB), New American Bible (NAB), New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), and the Common English Bible (CEB).

Paraphrase has the primary goal of conveying the Bible in a simple, easy-to-understand language without regard to word-for-word or even thought-for-thought expressions of the original languages. Some examples are The Living Bible, and The Message.

- 2. What are the different types of Bibles?** Most translations are available in several different types of Bibles. Here are just a few of the many different types that are available:

Text Only: without any references or notes.

Study Bible: A Bible with study articles and helps especially for use in the classroom or groups in church.

Reference Bible: The text contains cross-references to related Scripture passages, either in columns (center-column or side-column references), footnotes, or within the verse.

Chronological Bible: A Bible with the text arranged in the supposed order in which events occurred.

Parallel Bible: A Bible with the text of two or more versions printed side-by-side.

Interlinear Bible: A Greek New Testament or Hebrew Old Testament with a literal English translation for each word or phrase printed between the lines.

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3. What is the difference between a Study Bible and a Reference Bible?

A *study Bible* will normally have study notes to help you understand and interpret the Scripture. These usually include resources like a dictionary, concordance, references, maps, and detailed study notes.

A *reference Bible* contains cross-references to related Scripture passages either in the column with the text, in footnotes, or within the verses.

4. What is a Red Letter edition of the Bible? This is a Bible that has words traditionally attributed to Christ printed in red rather than black lettering.

5. What are the different types of binding materials? Bibles come in many different bindings, from Goatskin to paper. Some of the most common are:

Genuine Leather: made from first quality animal hides (usually pig or cowhide).

Goat Skin/Morocco Leather: made from the skins of Indian goats. This is one of the most luxurious and durable of all book leathers.

Bonded Leather: made from leather pieces that are bonded together with latex.

Imitation Leather: a cloth or paper-based material that has been chemically impregnated and grained to look like genuine leather.

Faux-leather: a simulated leather binding used for Bibles that has the look and feel of leather, but which is not made of the same substances nor has it undergone the same chemical processing. Faux-leather comes in many different colors and designs.

Paperback: also referred to as soft cover.

Hardcover: also referred to as hardback.

6. What type of paper is used?

Bible paper: A strong, opaque paper used in many low-to medium-priced Bibles.

India paper: Thinner, lighter weight and made of higher quality than Bible paper, strong and durable.

7. What is point type? Typeface sizes in Bibles and other books are measured in "points." The point size is used to measure the height of a typeface. Please see the point size chart.