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| |  | | --- | | **What current English Bible translation is a true translation from the original manuscripts?**  A. Before we arrive at which modern Bible translations are the most accurate we need to know a little bit about the manuscripts (writings) translators have used to produce Bibles such as the King James Version and others.  The most common manuscripts used to translate the Old Testament into English are the Masoretic Text (MT) and the Septuagint.  The Masoretic text is the textual tradition and marginal notes of the Levitical scholars known as Masoretes. Active from about 500 to 950 A.D., they continued the work of earlier Aaronic priests and Levitical scribes who were appointed by Ezra the prophet to be the official guardians of the Hebrew text he helped canonize. The MT is considered by many to be the authoritative Hebrew text of what we today call the Old Testament.  The Septuagint, which means "seventy," is a GREEK translation of the Hebrew-based Old Testament. Also called the LXX (the Roman numeral for 70), the text is believed to be the work of seventy Jewish scholars that assembled in Alexandria, Egypt around 285 to 247 B.C. The most common manuscript families used to translate the New Testament into English are called Byzantine and Alexandrian (Egyptian).  The Byzantine family, also known as the Traditional or Majority Text, was the text used and preserved by the Greek church from the time of the apostles until the era of movable type printing. It is from this family that the manuscripts known as the Textus Receptus (also known as the Received or Stephens Text) were produced. The Textus Receptus was the translation base for the original German Luther Bible, the translation of the New Testament into English by William Tyndale, the King James Version Bible and others. | |
| |  | | --- | | The Alexandrian Text manuscript family is composed of text that were generally circulated in the region of Alexandria. This family essentially disappeared for centuries after 500 AD, only to be rediscovered again in the mid-1800s. Although these manuscripts are quite old, they often disagree with one another and show significant signs of grammatical revision. It is from this family that what are known as the Sinaiticus and Vaticanus manuscripts were produced.  Now as to what is the best English Bible translation to use as your primary study Bible. I would suggest one that uses the Masoretic text for its Old Testament translation base and the tried and true Textus Receptus (Received Text) manuscripts as the basis for its New Testament. Bibles based on these manuscripts include the [*King James Version Bible*](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1565638085?ie=UTF8&tag=thebiblestudyweb&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1565638085), [*New King James Version Bible Translation*](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0718020812/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=thebiblestudyweb&linkCode=as2&camp=217145&creative=399373&creativeASIN=0718020812) and [*Holy Bible in Its Original Order - A Faithful Version*.](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0981978703?ie=UTF8&tag=thebiblestudyweb&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0981978703)  Please see the site's article called [*What are the Major Bible Translations?*](http://www.biblestudy.org/basicart/what-are-the-major-bible-translations.html#novum-testamentum) for an in-depth review of the text behind at least twenty popular modern Bible translations.  My qualifications to answer: I have taught Greek for ten years and Hebrew for eight, while speaking English, Ukrainian, or Russian. I'm working on a Greek textbook and am full-time proofreading the newest Bible translation from the original languages into Ukrainian for the Ukrainian Bible Society. (I'm an American.)  The best single English translation to use to get as close as possible to the exact sense of the original is "The Comparative Study Bible" by Zondervan publishing house in Grand Rapids, Michigan.   The reason is that it has four of the best translations in parallel columns. These are the New International Version, New American Standard Bible, Amplified Bible and the King James Version. Other four-columns are good, but this is the best single volume--and it has both Testaments at an affordable price.   When I look into this, I find out almost as much as when I consult the original languages. No single translation can give you all the nuances, but four good ones come as close as possible.  Read more: [Which Bible is the most accurate translation of the original text? | Answerbag](http://www.answerbag.com/q_view/25814#ixzz1eLezLFgW) <http://www.answerbag.com/q_view/25814#ixzz1eLezLFgW> | | |