

## Old Testament Formats

Era	Approx. Dates	Writing Format(s)	Who Had Access to OT Texts
Early Oral Period	Before 1000 BCE	Oral tradition only	Tribal elders, priests, storytellers; public heard recitations
Monarchic Period (United & Divided Kingdoms)	1000–587 BCE	Papyrus scrolls	Royal scribes, temple priests, prophets, small literate elite; public heard readings
Exilic & Post-Exilic Period	587–400 BCE	Papyrus scrolls	Priestly editors, scribes, Levites; public heard readings
Second Temple Period	400–100 BCE	Papyrus & parchment scrolls	Priests, scribes, synagogue readers, sectarian groups (Qumran); no personal copies
Dead Sea Scrolls Era	200 BCE–70 CE	Parchment scrolls	Sectarian libraries, scribal specialists, synagogue readers; still no private copies
Early Christian Era	1st–4th c. CE	Scrolls → early codices	Jewish communities (scrolls); Christian churches (codices); institutional access only
Medieval Jewish Era (Masoretic Text)	500–1400 CE	Parchment codices	Rabbis, scholars, synagogue officials, wealthy patrons; no mass ownership
Printing Era	1477 CE onward	Printed Hebrew Bibles	Clergy, scholars, wealthy households; general public gradually gains access
Modern Era	1800s–present	Mass-printed & digital texts	Universal access in literate societies; personal ownership becomes normal