

# Best Lucretius translation?

Post by “Eikadistes” of July 1, 2025 at 8:59 AM

In my opinion ... I have a soft-spot for **Humphries'** style, though I don't think it's the most educational. It speaks to me personally, and provides me with a poetry that I find entrancing.

**M. F. Smith** is definitely going to be your best, contemporary resource. He writes in prose, or adapted free verse, and does not impose a rhyme schema on the literature. He is usually my go-to if I want to understand, conceptually, what Lucretius meant by a stanza. He's great with annotations, too.

The one weak spot I note with Smith is that he has a tendency to employ contemporary, technical jargon to refer to Epicurean physics, and, more and more, I think it's a bit anachronistic.

To remedy that, I recommend Munro. He has a great way of translating the "fundamental seeds of reality" using words besides "atoms" and "particles" that is refreshing, and, in my opinion, more authentic to how a Roman would have experienced the poem 2,075 years ago. Granted, Munro's vocabulary is a tad older, and reads as a bit more dated than Smith's more recent work.

If you like a good, familiar rhyme schema, try **A. E. Stallings**. I like his flavor.