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rib·bon  (rĭb ˈən)

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n.

1. A narrow strip or band of fabric, especially a fine fabric such as satin or velvet, finished at the edges and used for trimming, tying, or finishing.

2.

a. Something, such as a tape measure, that resembles a ribbon.

b. A long thin strip: *a ribbon of sand along the shore.*

3. **ribbons** Tattered or ragged strips: *a dress torn to ribbons.*

4. An inked strip of cloth used for making an impression, as in a typewriter.

5.

a. A band of colored cloth signifying membership in an order or the award of a prize.

b. A strip of colored cloth worn on the left breast of a uniform to indicate the award of a medal or decoration.

6. **ribbons** *Informal* Reins for driving horses.

7. See [ledger board](#).

tr.v. **rib·boned**, **rib·bon·ing**, **rib·bons**

1. To decorate or tie with ribbons.

2. To tear into ribbons or shreds.

[Middle English *ribban*, *riban*, from Old French *ruban*, probably of Germanic origin; see **bhendh-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

rib bon·y *adj.*

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