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fret¹  (frĕt)

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v. **fret·ted, fret·ting, frets**

v.intr.

1. To be vexed or troubled; worry. See Synonyms at [brood](#).
2. To be worn or eaten away; become corroded.
3. To move agitatedly.
4. To gnaw with the teeth in the manner of a rodent.

v.tr.

1. To cause to be uneasy; vex: "*fret thy soul with crosses and with cares*" (Edmund Spenser).
2.
 - a. To gnaw or wear away; erode.
 - b. To produce a hole or worn spot in; corrode.
3. To form (a passage or channel) by erosion.
4. To disturb the surface of (water or a stream); agitate.

n.

1. The act or an instance of fretting.
2. A hole or worn spot made by abrasion or erosion.
3. Irritation of mind; agitation.

[Middle English *freten*, from Old English *fretan*, to devour; see **ed-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

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fret²  (frĕt)

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n.
One of several ridges set across the fingerboard of certain stringed instruments, such as guitars.

tr.v. **fret·ted, fret·ting, frets**

1. To provide with frets.
2. To press (the strings of an instrument) against the frets.

[Origin unknown.]



(click for a larger image)

fret2

on the neck of an
electric guitar

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fret³  (frĕt)

n.

1. An ornamental design consisting of repeated and symmetrical geometric figures, often in relief, contained within a band or border. Also called *key pattern*.
2. A headdress, worn by women of the Middle Ages, consisting of interlaced wire.

tr.v. **fret-ted, fret-ting, frets**

To provide with such a design or headdress.

[Middle English, interlaced work, from Old French *frete*.]

(click for a larger image)

fret3

fret designs

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