

Wax Ribbons

Ribbons typically contain a high percentage of wax-based materials. These materials contribute to the melting point of the ribbon which affect the amount of energy necessary to print. Since the waxes we use, in general, have lower melting points than the resins used, printing with wax ribbons typically requires less energy than printing with wax/resin or resin ribbons. Since most waxes used tend to be softer than the resins used, image durability for wax ribbons is typically less than that of wax/resin and resin ribbons. Most wax ribbons are made up of only one layer.

Wax/Resin Ribbons

Ribbons typically contain higher percentages of resinous materials. These materials contribute to a higher "melting" point of the ribbons. Printing with these ribbons typically requires more energy than printing with wax ribbons. Since most resins used tend to be harder than the waxes used, image durability (and some chemical resistance) for wax/resin ribbons are made up of two or more layers.

Resin Ribbons

Ribbons typically contain the highest percentages of resinous materials. Printing with these ribbons typically requires more energy than printing with either wax or wax/resin ribbons. Since most resins used tend to be harder than the waxes used, the higher levels of these resins contribute to the excellent abrasion and chemical resistance for resin ribbons. Most resin ribbons are made up of two or more layers.

What are the Basic Classifications for Tag & Label Thermal Transfer Ribbons?

General Purpose

These are typically wax-based. Ribbons that print well on a variety of coated and some uncoated paper receivers, as well as some synthetics. Image durability for these ribbons is acceptable for applications where little physical contact with the printed image is likely to occur or where image life is short term (shipping labels). These ribbons are usually the least expensive.

Premium

These are typically wax/resin ribbons that print well on a variety of coated and synthetic receivers. Image durability for these ribbons is excellent for application where physical contact with the printed image is likely to occur repeatedly. Some resistance to mild chemicals and cleaners is provided. Typical applications include pharmaceutical, "shelf talker" and chemical drum labels. Ribbon pricing is mid- range.

Super Premium

These are typically resin ribbons that print well on a variety of synthetic and specialty receivers. Image durability for these ribbons is excellent for applications where harsh physical contact with the printed image is likely to occur repeatedly. Excellent resistance to a variety of chemicals and cleaners is provided. Typical use includes outdoor and long-life applications like electrical box and integrated circuit board labeling. Ribbon pricing is typically higher based on the materials used and the number of ribbon layers needed.

Specialty

These are typically wax/resin or resin ribbons that are designed to work in particular applications. Image durability for these ribbons is excellent on their intended receiver. These ribbons typically focus on a particular application like fabric printing where wash ability is required or on tags and labels where steam resistance is critical. Ribbon pricing can vary based on the materials used and the number of ribbon layers needed.