



Smith-Corona Standard Portable Ribbon Replacement

Replacing the ribbon on a Smith-Corona Standard "flat-top" typewriter.

Written By: Bryan Kruk



INTRODUCTION

Use this guide to replace the ribbon on your 1931 Smith-Corona Standard “flat-top” portable typewriter. This guide will also apply to any of the 1930s Corona Standard, Sterling, or Silent flat-top models. Even if your typewriter is not any of the mentioned models, it may still be useful for replacing the ribbon on your manual portable typewriter since the process is largely universal.

The ribbon is responsible for getting print on paper. If you’re looking to use a typewriter that has not been used in years, it will most likely be printing dully and will require a fresh ribbon. New ribbons come wound on new plastic spools, however it is also possible to re-thread the new ribbon onto the original metal spools that came with your typewriter.

You may find it easier to replace the ribbon with the typewriter removed from its carrying case, however it is not necessary.

Avoid typing without any paper in the platen, especially when the new ribbon is installed.

For clarification on part names used in this guide, refer to the owner’s manual found here:
<https://site.xavier.edu/polt/typewriters...>

TOOLS:

- [Disposable Gloves \(Optional\) \(1\)](#)

PARTS:

- [Universal Typewriter Ribbon \(1\)](#)

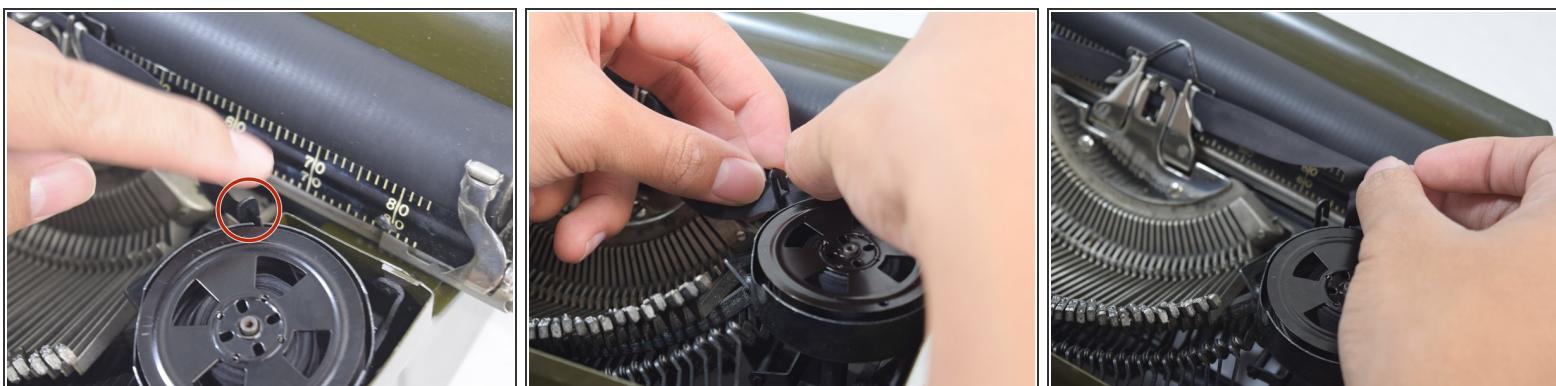
Step 1 — Ribbon



- Remove the cover plate.

(i) The post-1931 "flat-top" model cover plate will lift up like the hood of a car, rather than being removable.

Step 2



- Un-thread the ribbon from the reverse actuator corresponding with each spool.

(i) The reverse actuators can be moved inwards to give easier access to un-thread.

Step 3



- Un-thread and remove the ribbon from the ribbon vibrator.

Step 4



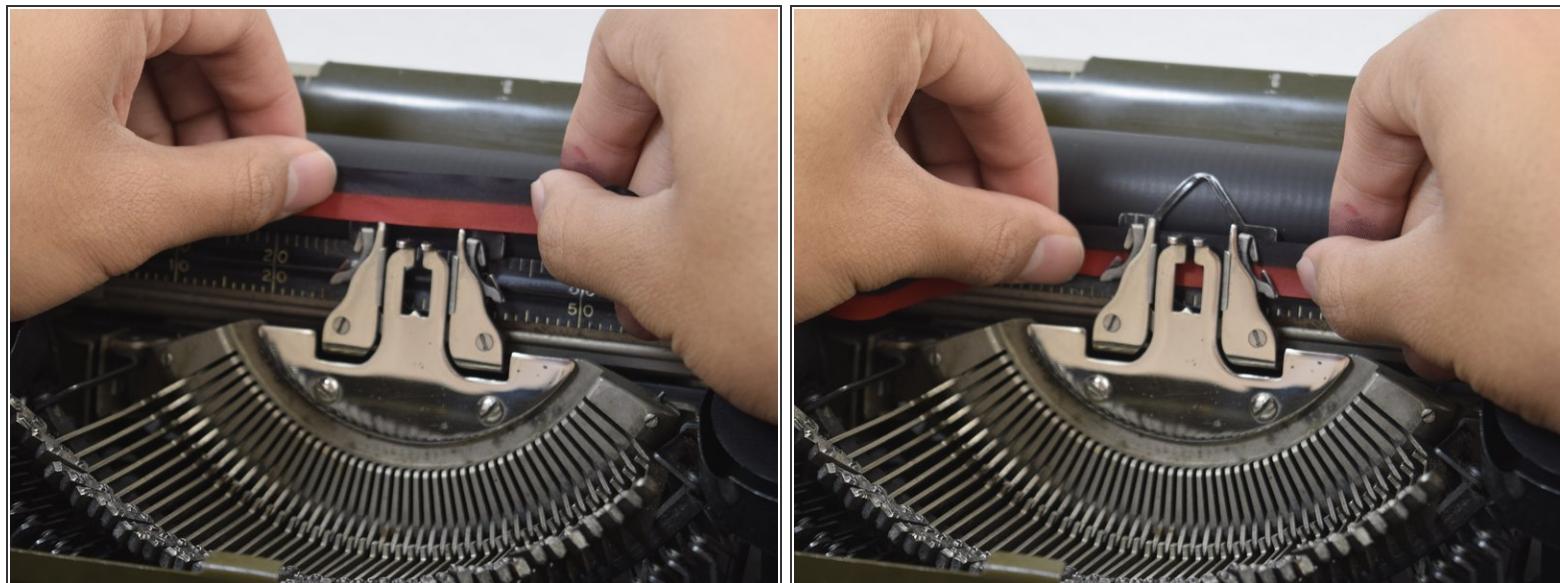
- Remove both spools by lifting straight up.

Step 5



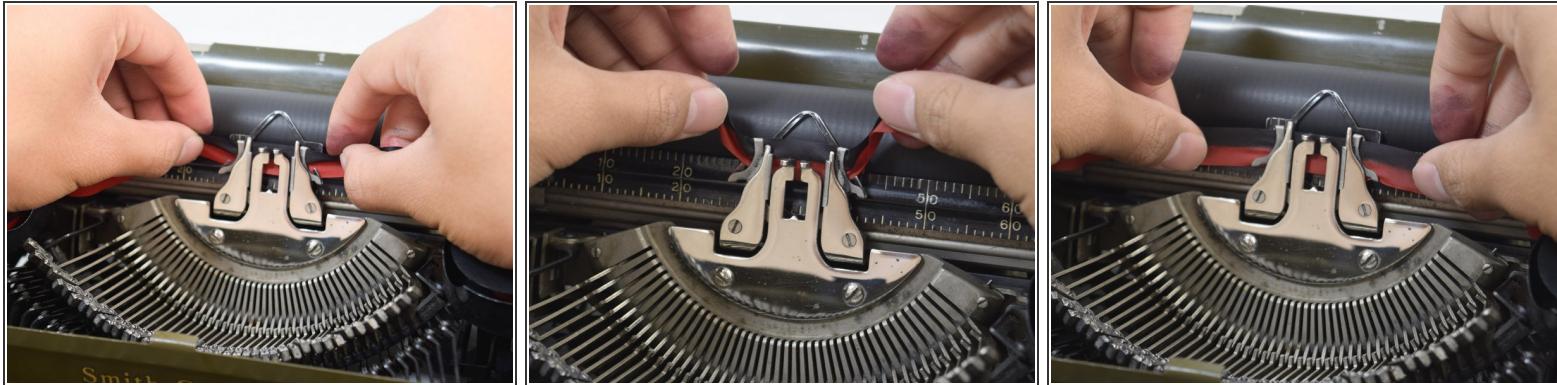
- Insert the new spools into the spool holders.
- ⓘ For a two-color ribbon, make sure the black half of the ribbon is on top and red on the bottom.

Step 6



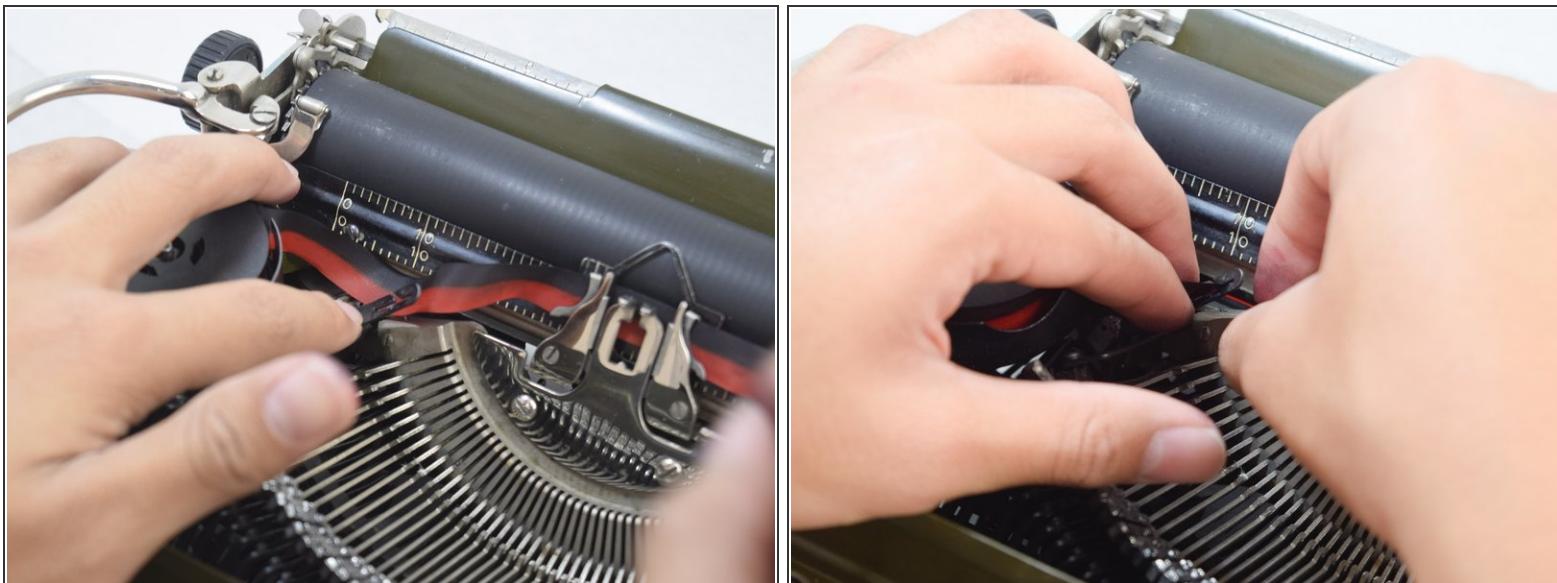
- Position the ribbon behind the ribbon vibrator.

Step 7



- Thread the ribbon into the ribbon vibrator.

Step 8



- Thread the ribbon through each of the reverse actuators.

(i) The reverse actuators can be moved inwards to give easier access to thread.

Step 9



- Ensure the ribbon is moving from the fullest spool to the emptiest as you type.
- For example, if the spool on the right is the emptiest, make sure the right-hand spool is rotating clockwise, and vice versa for the left-hand spool.
- If the ribbon is moving in the wrong direction, flip the ribbon reverse switch.

Install the cover plate by placing the rear of the cover against the body first, and in reverse to step number 1.