

What are Bookland EAN barcodes?

To ensure there is a worldwide standardisation in the handling and sale of books and because the book industry produces so many products annually, a special “country” with its own EAN prefixes has been designated in the EAN system – 978 for “bookland” which is used in the universal barcode system. Any EAN which begins with the 978 prefix is called a Bookland EAN barcode and is used on books and book related products internationally. The 978 prefix precedes the first 9 digits of the ISBN and then a new check digit is calculated in order to form a 13-digit number which is then encoded to create the barcode symbol used on books.

Where should the barcode appear on the book?

The preferred position for the ISBN (EAN13) symbol is the bottom right-hand corner of the back of the book cover or jacket. The same positioning also applies to slip cases, boxed sets, paperbacks, books with printed covers and directly printed labels. This preferred position assists speedy operational use in bookshops or warehouses since staff can rely on finding symbols in one standard position.

As the symbol must be situated on a smooth surface, it is recommended that no part of the symbol and light margins should be closer than 6mm to the edge of the cover or wrapper, or the crease where the cover is shaped over the spine. The light margins to the left and right of the symbol (a space of approximately 2.5mm at nominal size) are vital to ensure that the barcode is scannable.

Additionally, the printed symbol must not be obscured by, for example, the use of promotional bands wrapped round the jacket. If the bar code symbol has been manufactured to the approved standards, a shrink-wrapped book does not normally present problems when being scanned.

Is the ISBN always printed above the barcode symbol?

Yes. It is usual to print, above the code, an eye readable version of the ISBN retaining the hyphenation structure of the number.

What colours can I use for the barcode symbol?

We only supply barcodes that are black bars on a white background.

What format of barcode will I need?

If in doubt we suggest that you consult your printer before selecting the most suitable format of the barcode.