

EAN Code

The EAN is the number under the barcode. The abbreviation EAN stands for European Article Number. With the help of the EAN, a specific product type in a specific packaging from a specific manufacturer can be clearly identified. In 2009, the term EAN was replaced by GTIN. GTIN stands for "Global Trade Item Number". However, the term EAN is still used as a synonym for the barcode.

The variants of EAN:

- The most commonly used EAN standard is the 13-digit EAN-13.
- The less frequently used 8-digit EAN-8 barcode is used for small packaging for which EAN-13 would be too large.
- However, there is also the 2-digit EAN-2 and the 5-digit EAN-5. These codes can be placed to the right of an EAN-13. They are used, for example, on weighed products such as food to indicate the manufacturer's recommended retail price - or on magazines and books to indicate the number of the current issue.

The worldwide first barcode was scanned in 1974. Two years later, the EAN code was introduced in Europe. Today, the barcode has a global presence and has become indispensable in many areas of the economy. The best-known applications include scanning at checkouts in the retail trade or inventory booking in warehouses.

The components of the EAN

The 13-digit EAN 13 number consists of four components:

- Prefix: The first three digits indicate the country of registration or the particular type of product.
- Manufacturer code (variable length): The manufacturer code is a unique code assigned to each manufacturer by the responsible numbering authority.
- Product code (variable length): The product code is assigned by the manufacturer and follows the manufacturer code.
- Check digit: The last digit is the check digit.

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