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A correct barcode number DOES NOT guarantee a scannable barcode



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Checking the digits is only the first step before approving packaging artwork

?!

Scan: not guaranteed

1 234567 891026

Data: correct

The Digits are not the Barcode

A scanner does not read the number printed below the bars.

It reads the bars, spaces, contrast and geometry.



Human-readable number

→ checked by people



Bars and spaces

→ read by scanners

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Why checking the digits is not enough?

Data check

- correct encoded value
- valid check digit
- barcode type
- matching human-readable number

Readability check

- contrast
- polarity
- quiet zone
- size and geometry
- print quality



Correct data ≠ guaranteed readability

A Barcode does not have to be Black

A dark spot colour on a light background may work. Colour names alone do not guarantee readability.

Black on white



High visual contrast

Dark blue on light beige



Potentially suitable

Light blue on white



Weak contrast

White on dark blue



Requires special attention

Protect the Quiet Zone

The quiet zone helps the scanner identify where the barcode begins and ends.



Clear quiet zone — OK



Frame entering the quiet zone — Warning



Text or image entering the quiet zone — Risk

For QR codes, the quiet zone is required on all four sides.

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Do not check only the PDF

The final result also depends on the substrate, ink, dot gain, registration and finishing.

Data → Artwork → Visual proof

Printed sample → Scanner or verifier

Check the data.
Check the artwork.
Verify the printed result.

Barcode preflight Checklist

Data check

- Encoded value
- Check digit
- Human-readable text

Construction

- Correct symbology
- Suitable size
- No distortion

Print

- Contrast
- Polarity
- Quiet zone

Production

- Substrate
- Dot gain
- Printed sample
- Scanner or verifier

PDF review identifies risks and printed verification confirms performance.