

## Understanding EAN Code: Definition and Usage

### Introduction

In today's globalized world, the efficient tracking and identification of products are essential for the smooth operation of supply chains. One of the most widely used systems is the EAN code (at least in Europe).

### What is an EAN Code?

The European Article Number, or EAN code, is a standardized barcode that encodes product identification information. Developed in the 1970s, EAN codes are part of the International Article Number (now also known as EAN) system, governed by GS1, a global nonprofit organization responsible for overseeing global standards for business communication.

EAN codes are most visibly represented as a barcode, a series of black and white lines and spaces of varying widths, printed on product packaging. Scanners read these barcodes, instantly translating the information into digital data.

### Usage of EAN Codes by Distributors

EAN codes are indispensable tools for distributors and retailers, enabling efficient product identification, tracking, and management throughout the supply chain.

This universal identification ensures that products are easily distinguishable from similar items, reducing confusion and errors in ordering and stocking.

When SMC register a product with GS1, we receive a unique EAN code, which can then be printed on packaging or labels.

### Order Fulfilment and Logistics

During order processing, distributors scan EAN codes to confirm the correct items are picked and packed. This verification step minimizes shipping errors and ensures customers receive the correct products.

### Data Synchronization and Communication

EAN codes play a key role in data exchange between SMC and its distributors. The code serves as a universal identifier within electronic data interchange (EDI) systems, simplifying communication, order placement, invoicing, and returns processing.

### Facilitating E-Commerce

With EAN codes, SMC together with its distributors can introduce products into new markets (marketplaces), ensuring compatibility with international retail and logistics systems.

### Update

The list of products with EAN codes will be updated once a quarter.

If you need items to be codified, please contact:

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## Access to data

Document Management > EAN/GTIN codes

<https://g-desknets.smcjpinfo.com/scripts/dneo/zdoc.exe?cmd=docindex&log=on#cmd=docrefer&id=897&folder=152>

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