

Bookmark Fact Sheet

Using Barcodes

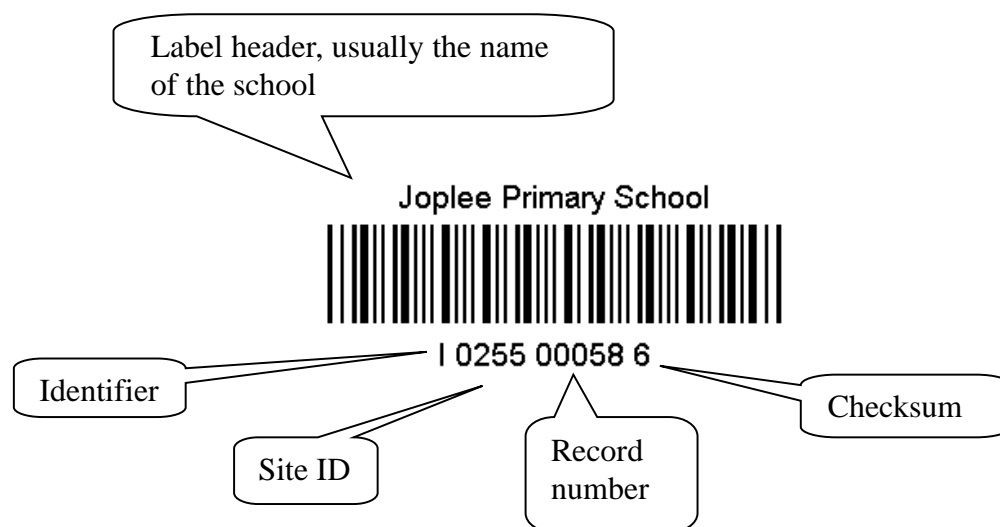
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Barcode labels are used to make the process of issuing and returning loans quick and easy.

Barcode labels in Bookmark are used in a special manner. They are not used like other library management systems.

Most barcode labels have a particular "structure". Bookmark takes advantage of this.

A typical Bookmark structure is 11 characters in length.



The stripes only contain the text shown beneath. They do not include the school or borrower's name and they do not include cataloguing data.

Each item and every person has a unique barcode.

In Bookmark the "record number" is a short-hand value for the entire barcode. This saves having to manually enter a full barcode every time.

Every library system has its own unique barcode structure. Bookmark can use most structures. It assumes the above 11 character, 4-part structure unless otherwise specified. Other label structures can be used. 12 and 14-character labels usually have the same structure but extra 0's for the record number. Some 10 and 11-character labels have the record number after the identifier and before the site ID. Some labels do not include a site ID. Your Bookmark system has been programmed to identify the structure of labels you use.

Data Entry and Barcodes

When cataloguing and entering borrowers, avoid record numbers that are not contained in the full barcode!!! This makes using Bookmark more difficult. When entering new items, scan the full barcode to avoid mis-matches between the barcode and record number.

Label Header

Above the "stripes" is the label header. This is usually the name of the school or institution or, for user labels, it may be the name of a person. This text is not included in the stripes and a barcode reader does not return it.

Identifier

The first character indicates whether the label contains a borrower's or an item's number. The letter B is normally used for *borrower labels* and I for *item labels*. This character can be either a letter or numeral such as a 3 for items and 2 for borrowers. All borrower labels must begin with the same character, whether it is B or a 2 or anything else. Labels beginning with any other character are considered items. For consistency and ease of use, item labels should begin with the same character and not different letters denoting different types of media. All borrowers must begin with the same identifier.

Site ID

The next four characters – 0255 in the example – identifies where the barcode originates. It can be either 4 digits or 4 letters. The site id is normally the school number.

Record number

Every borrower and every item in the database is stored with a unique *record number*. The next five numerals in the example comprise the record number. These values begin at 00001 and can go up to a maximum of over 999,999 (5 digits on this type of label limits the range to 99999, other types can have more digits).

Checksum

The final digit of a standard barcode is known as a *checksum digit*. It is used to ensure the label has been read properly by the reader. *It is not part of the record number and must be ignored!*

Other Types of Barcodes

Bookmark can work with other configurations of barcodes, often inherited from a previous library management system. Each has its own configuration.

Mixtures of different barcode types is not recommended although the system will work with a mix if necessary. Some functions may be restricted if mixed types of labels are used.

When ordering new stick-on labels, keep with the structure ('type') of label you are using. There is no need to change to a different structure.

Placement

Place barcodes on the *outside* of books in a convenient spot. Avoid covering barcodes with plastic unless it is a special fully-transparent variety (check with the supplier). Some seemingly transparent plastics reflect in the infra-red spectrum, used by readers, thus resulting in numerous bad reads.

Items which cannot have barcodes – i.e. phys. ed. equipment, etc. – can have them on sheets in a folder.

Consider printing "class sheets" for borrower labels instead of keeping individual barcodes.
