

Barcodes and scanners

Stock and inventory

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Give items barcodes, scan them at the till and in the store, and fix common scanner problems.

Beginner · About 25 minutes · Version 1.0 · Updated 17 November 2026

Plan availability

Included in the **Kuza** and **Enterprise** plans. It is not part of **Biashara**. Contact us if you want to upgrade.

Overview

A **barcode** is a code printed on an item that a **scanner** reads in a fraction of a second. Scanning is faster than typing and avoids mistakes. In Hesabu ERP you can scan at the point of sale and in the store, when you receive goods, move stock or count it.

How a scanner works

Most USB and Bluetooth barcode scanners behave like a **keyboard**. When you scan, the scanner "types" the number and presses **Enter**. Nothing needs to be installed. If you can type in a box, you can scan into it.

- **Handheld USB scanner:** plug it into the till computer.
- **Bluetooth scanner:** pair it with your computer, tablet or phone like a keyboard.
- **Phone camera:** some phones can scan with an app that types into the browser. Dedicated scanners are faster and more reliable for busy counters.

Prerequisites

- Items created. See Creating items.
- A scanner. Choose one that reads the codes on your goods (most read **EAN-13**, **UPC** and **Code 128**) and can add **Enter** after each scan.

Steps

Add barcodes to an item

1. Search for **Item** and open the item.
2. Scroll to the **Barcodes** table and click **Add Row**.

3. Enter the **Barcode** (the number printed under the stripes). Choose the **Barcode Type**, such as *EAN*, *UPC-A* or *CODE-128*, if the form asks.
4. Add a row for each different barcode, if the same item comes with more than one.
5. Click **Save**.

A barcode must be **unique**. Two items cannot have the same one.

Goods that already have a barcode

Use the barcode printed by the manufacturer. Enter the number exactly as printed. Scan it into the barcode box to avoid typing mistakes.

Goods without a barcode

You can make your own. Use a code such as the item code or a number you choose, and print it on labels (see below).

Scan at the till

1. Open the **POS** and open your shift. See Opening and closing a shift.
2. Click the item search box so the cursor is in it.
3. Scan the item. It is added to the cart. Scanning the same item again adds one more.
4. Continue scanning, then click **Checkout**. See Selling at the till.

Scan in the store

Many stock documents, such as **Purchase Receipt**, **Delivery Note**, **Stock Entry** and **Stock Reconciliation**, have a **Scan Barcode** box near the top of the form.

1. Open the document and click **Scan Barcode**.
2. Scan an item. A row is added, or the quantity goes up by one.
3. Check the quantities before you save and submit.

Scanning can also pick **batch** and **serial** numbers if those are barcoded. See Batches and serial numbers.

Use scanning for stock counts

During a count, scan each item and enter the counted quantity. See Opening stock and stock counts.

Print barcode labels

1. Decide whether you need labels for your own items, or only for goods with no barcode.
2. Use a label printer, or print labels from a print format. See Print formats and letterheads.
3. Test one label with your scanner before printing many.

If you need labels printed from Hesabu ERP, ask us. We can help set up a label format for your printer.

Practical example

A hardware shop imports 800 items with their manufacturer barcodes. At the till, the cashier scans a tin of paint, and it appears in the cart with its price. In the store, the storekeeper scans each delivery against the **Purchase Receipt**, and a count of the paint shelf takes ten minutes instead of an hour.

Important notes

- Keep one barcode for one item, and one item for one barcode (unless you intentionally add more rows).
- A scanner only reads what is printed. If the label is damaged or smudged, type the number or print a new label.
- Barcodes work with the **unit of measure**: if you sell by carton and by piece, ask us how your barcodes should be set, so a scan picks the right one.
- Fast scanning can add the same item twice by accident. Check the cart before taking payment.

Common mistakes

- Typing a barcode with a missing digit, so scans do nothing.
- Giving two items the same barcode, which stops you saving.
- Using a scanner that does not add **Enter**, so you have to press it yourself.
- Scanning while the cursor is not in the box.

Troubleshooting

Problem	What to check
Nothing happens when I scan	Click in the search or scan box first. Test the scanner in a text box such as Notepad. If it types nothing, check the cable or battery
The number appears, but the item is not added	The barcode is not on any item. Add it to the item. See above
The scanner types but the item does not add until I press Enter	Set the scanner to add Enter (suffix) after each scan. See its manual
The wrong item is added	Two items share a barcode, or the barcode was entered wrongly. Search for the number in the **Item** list
Letters appear as numbers, or the other way round	The scanner's keyboard layout does not match your computer. Set it to the same layout as your keyboard
It scans twice	The scanner repeats on a long press, or the label is read twice. Scan once and wait for the beep

Next steps

Read Selling at the till and the retail guide.

Related documentation

- Creating items
- Selling at the till
- Opening stock and stock counts
- Running a retail shop