

## Can you determine the origin (country) of a product from the barcode ?

Bar codes are something most of us never think about. If you look in your fridge or pantry right now, you will find that just about every package you see has a bar code printed on it. In fact, nearly every item that you buy in a grocery shop, supermarket or superstore has a bar code on it somewhere.

Bar codes were first used commercially in 1966, but it was soon realised that there would have to be a common standard. By 1970, the Universal Grocery Products Identification Code (UGPIC) was written by a company called Logicon Inc. The standard was further improved and led to the Universal Product Code (UPC) symbol set. To this very day, this standard is used in the United States and Canada . In June of 1974, the first UPC scanner was installed at a Marsh's supermarket in Troy, Ohio, and the first product to have a bar code was Wrigley's Gum.

The Universal Product Code was the first bar code symbology widely adopted. Its birth is usually set at 3 April 1973, when the grocery industry formally established UPC as the standard bar code symbology for product marking. Foreign interest in UPC led to the adoption of the EAN (European Article Numbering) code format, similar to UPC, in December 1976.

Currently, the United States and Canada use UPC bar codes as their standard for retail labelling, whereas the rest of the world uses EAN. Since January 1, 2005 all retail scanning systems in the USA must be able to accept the EAN-13 symbol as well as the standard UPC-A. This change will eliminate the need for manufacturers who export goods to the US and Canada to double-label their products.

The first 2 (sometimes 3) digits, which are called the "flag", indicate in what country the bar code was issued. This "flag" does not tell you, however, in what country the product was produced.

### CODE COUNTRY

00-13 .. USA & Canada  
 20-29 .. Local Use (shops/supermarkets)  
 30-37 .. France  
 380 .. Bulgaria  
 383 .. Slovenia  
 385 .. Croatia  
 387 .. Bosnia-Herzegovina  
 400-440 .. Germany  
 45 .. Japan  
 46 .. Russian Federation  
 471 .. Taiwan  
 474 .. Estonia  
 475 .. Latvia  
 476 .. Azerbaijan  
 477 .. Lithuania  
 478 .. Uzbekistan  
 479 .. Sri Lanka  
 480 .. Philippines  
 481 .. Belarus  
 482 .. Ukraine  
 484 .. Moldova  
 485 .. Armenia  
 486 .. Georgia  
 487 .. Kazakhstan  
 489 .. Hong Kong  
 49 .. Japan  
 50 .. UK  
 520 .. Greece  
 528 .. Lebanon  
 529 .. Cyprus  
 531 .. Macedonia  
 535 .. Malta  
 539 .. Ireland

### CODE COUNTRY

54 .. Belgium & Luxembourg  
 560 .. Portugal  
 569 .. Iceland  
 57 .. Denmark  
 590 .. Poland  
 594 .. Romania  
 599 .. Hungary  
 600-601 .. South Africa  
 609 .. Mauritius  
 611 .. Morocco  
 613 .. Algeria  
 619 .. Tunisia  
 621 .. Syria  
 622 .. Egypt  
 624 .. Libya  
 625 .. Jordan  
 626 .. Iran  
 627 .. Kuwait  
 628 .. Saudi Arabia  
 629 .. United Arab Emirates  
 64 .. Finland  
 690-692 .. China  
 70 .. Norway  
 729 .. Israel  
 73 .. Sweden  
 740 .. Guatemala  
 741 .. El Salvador  
 742 .. Honduras  
 743 .. Nicaragua  
 744 .. Costa Rica  
 745 .. Panama  
 746 .. Dominican Republic  
 750 .. Mexico

### CODE COUNTRY

759 .. Venezuela  
 76 .. Switzerland  
 770 .. Colombia  
 773 .. Uruguay  
 775 .. Peru  
 777 .. Bolivia  
 779 .. Argentina  
 780 .. Chile  
 784 .. Paraguay  
 785 .. Peru  
 786 .. Ecuador  
 789 .. Brazil  
 80-83 .. Italy  
 84 .. Spain  
 850 .. Cuba  
 858 .. Slovakia  
 859 .. Czech Republic  
 860 .. Serbia & Montenegro  
 869 .. Turkey  
 87 .. Netherlands  
 880 .. South Korea  
 885 .. Thailand  
 888 .. Singapore  
 890 .. India  
 893 .. Vietnam  
 899 .. Indonesia  
 90 -91 .. Austria  
 93 .. Australia  
 94 .. New Zealand  
 955 .. Malaysia  
 958 .. Macau  
 977 .. ISSN (International Standard Serial Number for periodicals)  
 978 .. ISBN (International Standard Book Number)  
 979 .. ISMN (International Standard Music Number)

