
**Information and documentation —
International Standard Book Number
(ISBN)**

*Information et documentation — Numéro international normalisé du
livre (ISBN)*

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ISO copyright office
Ch. de Blandonnet 8 • CP 401
CH-1214 Vernier, Geneva, Switzerland
Tel. +41 22 749 01 11
Fax +41 22 749 09 47
copyright@iso.org
www.iso.org

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see www.iso.org/patents).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation on the voluntary nature of ISO standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see the following URL: www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

The committee responsible for this document is ISO/TC 46, *Information and documentation*, Subcommittee SC 9, *Identification and description*.

This fifth edition cancels and replaces the fourth edition (ISO 2108:2005), which has been technically revised. It specifies the responsibilities of registrants who apply for and assign ISBN to qualifying publications. Since January 2007, ISBN is only valid in the supply chain in its 13-digit form so the specifications relating to the 10-digit ISBN and its respective calculation method have been removed. A new informative annex describes how an ISBN can be resolved on digital networks such as by being registered as an ISBN-A to become "actionable" or by incorporation into URN:ISBN. Additional specifications on associated metadata and the assignment of ISBN, particularly with respect to digital publications, are also included.

Introduction

Since its inception in 1970, the International Standard Book Number (ISBN) has been internationally recognized as the identification system for the publishing industry and its supply chains. An ISBN enables separate identification of similar publications, such as the same publication made available separately in different product forms, or with different product form features. The ISBN accompanies a monographic publication from its initial acquisition or commission by the publisher and onwards throughout the supply and distribution chain.

As an identifier for publications, ISBN fulfils a critical role in supporting the needs of the book supply chain. The ISBN system serves as a key element of ordering and inventory systems for publishers, booksellers, libraries, and other organizations. It is the basis for collecting data on all editions of monographic publications for directories and databases used throughout the book supply chain. A publication identified by ISBN can be made available more widely and through more outlets, maximizing its sales potential. The use of ISBN also facilitates rights management and the monitoring of sales data for the publishing industry.

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Information and documentation — International Standard Book Number (ISBN)

1 Scope

This document establishes the specifications for the International Standard Book Number (ISBN) as a unique international identification system for each product form or edition of a separately available monographic publication published or produced by a specific publisher that is available to the public. It specifies the construction of an ISBN, the rules for its assignment and use, the metadata to be associated with the ISBN allocation, and the administration of the ISBN system.

This document is applicable to monographic publications (books), not to textual works (content). Monographic publications include individual sections or chapters where these are made separately available and certain types of related products that are available to the public irrespective of whether those publications are made available for sale or on a gratis basis. Examples of applicable and non-applicable products are provided in [Annex A](#).

NOTE More detailed, operational guidance is provided in the latest version of the Users' Manual available from the Registration Authority for this document (see [Clause 7](#)).

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 639-2, *Codes for the representation of names of languages — Part 2: Alpha-3 code*

ISO 3166-1, *Codes for the representation of names of countries and their subdivisions — Part 1: Country codes*

ISO 8601, *Data elements and interchange formats — Information interchange — Representation of dates and times*

ISO/IEC 15420, *Information technology — Automatic identification and data capture techniques — EAN/UPC bar code symbology specification*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <http://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <http://www.electropedia.org/>

3.1

check digit

final character in the *ISBN* (3.8) string which is related to all preceding characters in the string by a specified mathematical algorithm and which may be used to verify the accuracy of the *ISBN* (3.8) string

3.2

continuing resource

publication that is issued over time with no predetermined conclusion and made available to the public in any *product form* (3.12), usually issued in successive or integrating issues which generally have numerical and/or chronological designations

Note 1 to entry: Continuing resources include serials such as newspapers, periodicals, journals, magazines, blogs, etc. and ongoing integrating resources such as loose-leaf publications that are continually updated, and websites that are continually updated. Continuing resources do not qualify for assignment of ISBN.

3.3

Digital Object Identifier

DOI®

persistent and actionable identifier of an entity — physical, digital, or abstract — on digital networks that is part of the DOI system

Note 1 to entry: See ISO 26324.

Note 2 to entry: A DOI name when compliant with DOI syntax is a string that specifies a unique object within the DOI system.

3.4

Digital Rights Management

DRM

technology based on encryption software used to control access to the content and which is distinct from the *product form* (3.12) of a specific digital publication

Note 1 to entry: Different settings may be applied within the DRM software to enforce usage constraints or enable particular additional features.

Note 2 to entry: A single edition of a publication may be made available through different vendors who each apply different DRM software and/or differing usage constraints.

Note 3 to entry: “Social” DRM denotes a particular type of DRM in which credentials about the customer are recorded in the product using watermarking technology but which does not enforce any usage constraints. Unless “social” DRM is explicitly stated, references to DRM in this document signify DRM technology based on encryption software.

3.5

edition

manifestations of a publication embodying essentially the same content

Note 1 to entry: A single edition of a publication may be published in multiple product forms.

3.6

GS1 prefix

unique string of three digits issued by the GS1 Global Office and allocated exclusively to the Registration Authority for ISO 2108

3.7

imprint

trade name or brand under which a work is published

Note 1 to entry: A publishing company may have multiple imprints in order to target their books at specific markets.

Note 2 to entry: In some cases, multiple imprints may be the result of mergers or acquisitions of different companies who wish to differentiate their brands.

Note 3 to entry: An imprint is a name and not only a logo.

3.8**International Standard Book Number****ISBN**

identifier for *monographic publications* (3.10) allocated under the aegis of the Registration Authority to a *registrant* (3.16) in accordance with the specifications of ISO 2108

3.9**ISBN-A**

service that allows an *ISBN* (3.8) to be expressed in the DOI system by including it in the syntax string of a *DOI* (3.3)

Note 1 to entry: ISBN-A enables a specific ISBN to become actionable or clickable on the web.

3.10**monographic publication**

publication conceived as a whole in one part or intended to be completed within a finite number of parts by its *publisher* (3.15) and made available to the public in any *product form* (3.12)

3.11**print on demand publication**

publication that is printed in response to a customer order rather than being supplied from existing stock held by the distributor or *publisher* (3.15)

3.12**product form**

basic physical or digital properties of a publication that differentiate it as a product

EXAMPLE The same edition of a publication may appear in different product forms including the following: hardcover; paperback; CD audio book; Braille; online e-book.

3.13**product form detail**

additional clarification or detail further describing the *product form* (3.12) of a particular publication

EXAMPLE Additional detail may be required in order to describe particular product forms of the same edition of the same publication adequately, e.g. jacketed hardcover, trade paperback, PDF, or EPUB.

3.14**product form feature**

physical or technical characteristics of a particular publication that give more information about its particular usability and accessibility

EXAMPLE Further information may be required about the features of particular product forms of the same edition of the same publication in order to describe them adequately, e.g. colour of cover, text font and size, or DVD region.

3.15**publisher**

individual or corporation responsible for all stages in the creation, production, distribution, and marketing of digital or printed publications

Note 1 to entry: The publisher is normally responsible for the content and for any financial risk involved in the process.

Note 2 to entry: Authors may be their own publishers, taking on the above functions themselves; this is known as self-publishing.

3.16

registrant

person or organization that has requested and received a valid and genuine *ISBN* (3.8) allocated under the aegis of, and according to the rules specified by, the Registration Authority to identify a *monographic publication* (3.10)

Note 1 to entry: The registrant is usually the publisher of the publication, but exceptionally may be an intermediary who is acting on behalf of, or in place of, the publisher.

3.17

registration group

area of operation defined by the Registration Authority for ISO 2108 which may be based on country, language, or region

3.18

supply chain

network of producers, distributors, and retailers bringing goods and services to consumers

3.19

usage constraint

limit(s) of what a user can do with a particular digital *monographic publication* (3.10)

Note 1 to entry: Usage constraints for a digital publication are usually set within the DRM software.

Note 2 to entry: If the same content is available separately with different sets of usage constraints, then each of these sets will constitute a separate monographic publication.

EXAMPLE The usage constraints that are set for a publication control whether it is possible to permit text to speech, print a certain percentage of the pages, and/or whether it is possible to lend the book to another consumer.

4 Construction of an International Standard Book Number

4.1 General structure of an ISBN

An ISBN shall be allocated in accordance with the specifications of [Annex A](#). An ISBN shall consist of 13 digits¹⁾ comprised of the Arabic numerals 0 to 9 only and shall be made up of the following elements:

- a) GS1 element;
- b) registration group element;
- c) registrant element;
- d) publication element;
- e) check digit.

When an ISBN is displayed in human readable form (i.e. a form meant primarily to be read or written by a person, in contrast to a form primarily meant to be used by data processing equipment), it shall be preceded²⁾ by the letters ISBN and each of the elements of the ISBN should be separated from the others by a hyphen as in the following example.

EXAMPLE ISBN 978-90-70002-34-3

1) In earlier editions of this document, which were in effect prior to 1 January 2007, a 10-digit ISBN was specified which consisted of the Arabic numerals 0 to 9 although, in the case of the check digit only, the letter X could sometimes occur.

2) During the transition from the 10-digit to the 13-digit ISBN, ISBNs were sometimes written as ISBN-10 or ISBN-13 followed by the respective number of digits of the ISBN. ISBNs are now only valid in 13-digit form so all ISBNs shall start solely with ISBN.

In countries where the Latin alphabet is not used, the appropriate abbreviation for “International Standard Book Number” in the local script may be given in conjunction with the required letters ISBN in the Latin alphabet.

4.2 GS1 element

The first element of an ISBN shall be a three-digit GS1 prefix. Technical information specifying valid GS1 prefixes assigned to ISBN shall be available from the Registration Authority (see [Annex B](#)) for this document.

4.3 Registration group element

The second element of an ISBN shall indicate the registration group. It identifies a specific national, geographic, language, or other such grouping to which the ISBN belongs.

The registration group element is allocated by the Registration Authority.

The registration group element varies in length according to the publishing output within the group concerned. The length of this element for any registration group is determined by the Registration Authority. Technical information which specifies validation rules for registration group length shall be available from the Registration Authority.

4.4 Registrant element

The third element of an ISBN shall indicate the registrant for that ISBN. This element shall be allocated from the ranges assigned to each registration group according to rules specified by the Registration Authority. In the majority of cases, the registrant element shall refer to one publisher. Under certain circumstances, more than one publisher may share a registrant element, usually as a result of mergers or other commercial activities involving particular publications. Also, within each registration group, or within a specific range within a registration group, a common block of registrant elements may be reserved for the purpose of assigning individual ISBNs to publishers.

Exceptionally, a registrant element may be assigned to an intermediary who is acting on behalf of a publisher or has been unable to obtain an ISBN from the publisher. An intermediary who is commissioned by the publisher simply to fulfil the ISBN paperwork shall not be assigned a registrant element in their own right.

The registrant element varies in length according to the projected publication output of each publisher. The length of this element shall be determined in accordance with the agreed specifications of the ISBN system for assigning ranges of the ISBN as defined within this document and in guidelines issued by the Registration Authority. Technical information that specifies validation rules for registrant element length within a particular registration group shall be available from the Registration Authority.

4.5 Publication element

The fourth element of an ISBN shall be the publication element. The publication element shall be allocated in accordance with the specifications of [Annex A](#). It is usually assigned to the publication by the publisher of the monographic publication. However, in some cases, an ISBN from within a common registrant element block reserved for that purpose may be allocated.

The length of the publication element is determined by the length of the registration group and registrant elements that precede it.

4.6 Check digit

The fifth and final element of an ISBN is the check digit. The check digit for an ISBN is calculated using a modulus 10 algorithm. Further details on this method are provided in [Annex C](#).

5 Assignment of an ISBN

5.1 A registrant element shall be allocated, upon application from the registrant of a qualifying monographic publication, from the ranges allocated to that registration group by the Registration Authority. Registrants who only intend to produce one publication may be assigned an ISBN from a common registrant element block reserved for that purpose within the ranges of that registration group.

5.2 As part of the application for an ISBN or ISBN registrant element, the registrant shall supply basic administrative contact details according to the specification and direction of the Registration Authority in order to allow the completion of registration into ISBN assignment records.

5.3 As part of the application for an ISBN or ISBN registrant element and each time an ISBN is assigned, the registrant shall supply metadata specific to the publication to which the ISBN has been, or will be, assigned according to the specification and direction of the Registration Authority (see [Annex D](#)).

5.4 Once an ISBN is assigned to a publication, that ISBN shall not be altered, replaced, or re-used.

5.5 If publishers are using intermediaries to generate products with different product form details or product forms with differing features or usage constraints of their e-books, then they should provide separate ISBNs for the intermediaries to assign to each separate product. If a publisher does not provide ISBNs to an intermediary for each separate product, then the intermediary may assign their own ISBNs in order to identify the products uniquely if they are made available in the supply chain. ISBN registrant elements will be provided to intermediaries for this purpose. ISBNs and related metadata shall be reported back to the publisher and to other bibliographic agencies along with the publisher's original ISBN (if it exists), which shall also be included in order that sales data can be aggregated for the same title.

6 Location and display of the ISBN on publications

6.1 General

The ISBN shall always appear on the item itself.

6.2 Printed publications

6.2.1 The ISBN shall be printed on the verso of the title page of the publication or, if this is not possible, at the foot of the title page itself or in conjunction with the copyright notice.

6.2.2 The ISBN shall be represented in machine-readable form as a bar code on the publication. When an ISBN is represented as a bar code, it shall use the EAN/UPC bar code symbology in accordance with ISO/IEC 15420. In a bar code, the ISBN should be displayed in human readable form immediately above the bar code symbol. The ISBN shall be printed at the foot of the outside back cover, if practicable, and/or at the foot of the back of the jacket (if the publication has one). If neither of these positions is possible, then the ISBN shall be printed in some other prominent position on the outside of the publication.

6.3 Digital publications and other non-print product forms

6.3.1 If the publication involves visual display of content, stored in digital form (e.g. an online publication or a CD-ROM), the ISBN shall appear on the page or screen that displays the title or its equivalent (e.g. the initial screen displayed when the content is first accessed and/or on the screen that carries the copyright notice).

6.3.2 If the publication is issued as a physical object (e.g. a compact disc, USB drive, or DVD or Blu-ray disc), the ISBN shall be displayed on any labels permanently affixed to that object.

If it is not possible to display the ISBN on the object or its label, then the ISBN shall be displayed at the bottom of the back of any permanent packaging for that object (e.g. the box, sleeve, or frame).

6.3.3 The ISBN should be included in any metadata embedded in the publication as well as being visibly placed in the text.

6.4 Display of multiple ISBNs

In cases where ISBNs for different product forms of a publication appear together within that publication, the individual ISBNs should be listed one above the other on the copyright page. Each ISBN in a list of multiple ISBNs shall be qualified by information on the specific product form to which it refers.

7 Administration of the ISBN system

Details of the Registration Authority for this document are stated at: https://www.iso.org/maintenance_agencies.html.

The ISBN system shall be supervised, coordinated, and administered by a Registration Authority whose tasks and services are outlined in [Annex B](#).

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Annex A (normative)

Principles for the assignment and use of the ISBN

A.1 General

A.1.1 The assignment of an ISBN to a monographic publication shall not imply any meaning or value as legal evidence with regard to the ownership of rights to that publication.

A.1.2 Once assigned to a publication, an ISBN shall never be re-used for another publication, even if the ISBN is found to have been issued in error or the publication is never actually published, even though it was announced. A registrant who determines that an ISBN has been erroneously assigned shall report the erroneous ISBN in accordance with guidance issued by the Registration Authority.

A.1.3 A separate ISBN shall be assigned to each separately available monographic publication so that participants in the supply chain can identify each of them uniquely. When monographic publications with the same title and contributor(s) are made separately available in the supply chain with unique characteristics that need to be differentiated in the supply chain, then each is a separate monographic publication in its own right.

A.1.4 A separate ISBN shall be assigned whenever there is a change in the characteristics of the same publication or if different alternatives of the same publication are offered (e.g. a publication in hardcover that is also made available in paperback). Such characteristics shall include:

- language;
- edition;
- product form;
- product form detail;
- product form feature;
- imprint;
- publisher;
- usage constraints.

Further explanation about each of these is provided in [A.1](#) and also in [A.5](#) and [A.6](#).

A.1.5 Different language versions of a particular publication shall be assigned separate ISBNs.

A.1.6 Each revised edition of a publication shall be assigned a separate ISBN. A separate ISBN shall be assigned if there have been significant changes to any part or parts of a publication. A separate ISBN shall be assigned if there has been a change to the title after publication.

A.1.7 When different product forms of a publication (e.g. hardcover, paperback, Braille, audio-visual publication) are made separately available, they shall be assigned separate ISBNs.

A.1.8 When a publication is available in the same product form but with differing product form details (e.g. it is available both as a jacketed hardback and an unjacketed hardback, an online PDF and an online EPUB), then these are unique products that shall be identified by unique ISBNs.

A.1.9 A change in the product form or in the product form details in which a particular publication is published shall require a separate ISBN.

A.1.10 If a publication is made available separately where all other characteristics are the same, but there are different product form features that influence the accessibility or usability of the publication (e.g. printed editions available in both standard and large print), then each of these is a unique product that shall be identified by a unique ISBN.

A.1.11 A separate ISBN may be assigned to the individual sections or chapters of a publication where these are made separately available in the supply chain.

A.1.12 There are further special rules applicable to the assignment of ISBN to digital publications and these are detailed in [A.6](#).

A.1.13 An ISBN may be registered as an ISBN-A in order that it can be expressed in the DOI system and become a persistent actionable identifier on digital networks. The ISBN-A always identifies the same product as the corresponding ISBN. ISBN-As do not exist automatically for each ISBN, but only if they have been requested and registered in the DOI system (see [Annex E](#)).

A.1.14 An ISBN shall not be assigned to abstract entities such as textual works and other abstract creations of intellectual or artistic content, e.g. each specific product form of the novel *Moby Dick* is eligible for an ISBN but the novel itself, as an abstract textual work, shall not be assigned an ISBN. ISTC^[8] is the ISO identifier to be used for abstract textual works.

A.1.15 An ISBN shall not be assigned to a publication if it is only available in a limited and restricted circulation (e.g. only to the members of a particular club) or is not otherwise available to the public.

A.1.16 Where a publication is only available from one specific source and is therefore not available through the supply chain, an ISBN may not be necessary.

A.1.17 The same ISBN shall not be assigned to more than one edition or product form of a publication.

A.1.18 A separate ISBN shall not be assigned if the only change to a publication is its price.

A.1.19 A separate ISBN shall not be assigned to a publication that is unchanged in language or edition or product form or product form detail or product form feature. A separate ISBN shall not be assigned for small changes such as corrections of misprints.

A.1.20 A separate ISBN should not be assigned to an unchanged impression or unchanged reprint of the same publication, issued in the same product form by the same publisher.

A.1.21 Some examples of types of monographic publications eligible for ISBN assignment are the following:

- a) printed books and pamphlets (and their various product forms);
- b) Braille publications;
- c) publications which are not intended by the publisher to be regularly updated or continued indefinitely;

- d) audio books (talking books) that are available on cassette or CD or DVD or that are available to download;
- e) digital publications either on physical carriers (such as CD-ROMs) or on the Internet;
- f) digitized copies of print monographic publications that are separately available in the supply chain;
- g) microform publications;
- h) educational or instructional software, films, videos, DVDs, or transparencies either on a physical carrier or accessible on the Internet for download or streaming;
- i) mixed media publications where the principal constituent is text-based;
- j) individual sections (e.g. chapters or extracts) of monographic publications or issues, or articles of continuing resources where these are made available separately;
- k) art books and illustrated books with a title page and/or text or captions;
- l) maps.

NOTE Further information is provided in the latest version of the Users' Manual available from the Registration Authority.

A.1.22 Some examples of the types of material to which an ISBN shall not be assigned are the following:

- a) continuing resources (e.g. serials and series without predetermined conclusion);
- b) printed or digital materials that are purely intended for marketing or promotional purposes such as advertising matter, widgets, and the like;
- c) notated music;
- d) art prints and art folders without title page and text;
- e) personal documents (such as electronic curriculum vitae and personal profiles);
- f) greetings cards;
- g) music sound recordings;
- h) software, films, videos, DVDs, or transparencies that are for any other purpose than educational or instructional;
- i) electronic bulletin boards;
- j) e-mails and other electronic correspondence;
- k) games;
- l) customized publications produced according to the requirements of the customer.

NOTE Further information is provided in the latest version of the Users' Manual available from the Registration Authority.

A.2 Multi-volume publications

An ISBN shall be assigned to the complete set of volumes where a publication comprises more than one volume. If individual volumes of the set are also available separately, then each volume shall be assigned its own unique ISBN. The title page verso of the individual volume shall state the ISBN for the respective volume and should also state the ISBN for the set.

In cases where individual volumes of a physical publication are not intended to be available separately (such as the individual volumes of an encyclopaedia), an ISBN may still be assigned to each separate volume.

A.3 Co-publication

When a publication is published jointly or as a co-edition by two or more publishers, each of the co-publishers may assign its own ISBN and display each of them on the copyright page. However, in the case of a physical publication, only one ISBN shall be displayed as a bar code on the publication.

A.4 Change of imprint or publisher

A.4.1 A separate ISBN should be assigned if the same publication is published under a different imprint name by the same publisher.

A.4.2 A separate ISBN shall be assigned when a publication is republished by a different publisher.

A.5 Print on demand publications

Print on demand publications are subject to the basic rules specified in [Clause 5](#) and elsewhere in [Annex A](#) for the assignment of an ISBN.

A print on demand publication that is in a different product form from the previously published non-on-demand version (e.g. if a hardcover becomes a paperback when it shifts to being on-demand) or is in a different product size (e.g. if a large sized paperback becomes a significantly smaller size when it shifts to being on-demand) shall be assigned a separate ISBN. Negligible changes in trim sizes shall not require a separate ISBN.

A print on demand version of a publication where the content has been specifically customized or personalized for a user shall not receive an ISBN.

A.6 Digital publications

Digital publications are subject to the basic rules specified in [Clause 5](#) and elsewhere in [Annex A](#) for assignment of an ISBN. In addition, the following special rules shall apply.

A.6.1 Where a publication is available in the supply chain with more than one specific type of DRM, the same ISBN may be assigned, whether offered by the original publisher or by a vendor later in the chain:

- if the DRM technology does not intrude on the user's experience;
- if the DRM technology does not enforce any different usage constraints;
- if the registrant does not want to distinguish between the versions.

This applies particularly in the case where one of the DRM technologies applied is a "social" DRM version.

A.6.2 If a vendor is applying DRM only at the point of transaction, then there is no need to assign different ISBNs, since there is no ambiguity in the dialogue between the vendor and the customer.

A.6.3 In many cases, usage constraints are controlled using settings within the DRM software. If a publication is made available separately in the supply chain with different usage constraints (e.g. adjusting the usage constraint settings so that printing is allowed in one, but not in another), each shall be assigned a separate ISBN. When the usage constraints are defined during the transaction between the

vendor and the customer (for example, a customer is offered a service that allows the choice of usage constraints on demand), then no ISBN should be assigned to the customized publication that is produced.

A.6.4 If a publication is made available separately in the supply chain where all other characteristics are the same but with different commercial conditions (e.g. either as a perpetual licence or for a specific rental period, each of these being available at different prices), then separate ISBNs may be assigned to each different commercial model. In cases where the customer selects the commercial conditions during the transaction with the vendor, assigning separate ISBNs may not be necessary.

A.6.5 An intermediary or reseller who is producing one or more digital publications on behalf of a specific publisher may assign separate ISBNs to those publications, only if the publisher does not do so, in order that the intermediary may identify these publications uniquely in the supply chain.

A.6.6 When a book is digitized by a library or other organization and the digital edition is made available in the supply chain, then as a new publication it should be identified by a separate ISBN, regardless of whether or not there is a charge for access to the digital edition.

A.6.7 A separate ISBN shall not be assigned to a publication that is unchanged in usage constraints, product form features, or commercial conditions.

A.7 Referencing registration group and registrant elements

In order to differentiate between registration group elements assigned from within different GS1 elements, all reference to registration groups shall include both the GS1 element and the registration group elements — in computer systems and in print.

EXAMPLE

978-99912

979-11

In order to differentiate between registrant elements assigned within different GS1 elements and/or different registration group elements, all references to registrant elements shall include the GS1 element and the registration group elements as well as the registrant element — in computer systems and in print.

EXAMPLE

978-99912-531

979-11-531

Annex B (normative)

Administration of the ISBN system

B.1 General

The ISBN system is an identification system for monographic publications. It is administered by the designated Registration Authority.

Registrants apply for ISBN according to the national, language, regional, or other such grouping to which they belong, in accordance with the specification and direction of the Registration Authority.

For full details of the administration of the ISBN system, see the latest version of the ISBN Users' Manual, which is downloadable from the website of the Registration Authority.

B.2 Responsibilities of the Registration Authority

The Registration Authority shall provide the following services.

- a) Promote, coordinate, and supervise the ISBN system in compliance with the specifications of this document and represent the interests of the ISBN community to other relevant organizations.
- b) Define registration groups and the areas to which they relate.
- c) Oversee the definition of registration group rules that govern the length of registrant elements within contiguous ranges of registrant elements and ensure that an accurate and comprehensive register of these rules is available for all registration groups at all times.
- d) Allocate ranges of unique registrant elements to specific registration groups and maintain an accurate register of the registrant elements that have been assigned.
- e) Secure the maintenance of ISBNs and their associated ISBN administrative data through ISBN registers.
- f) Develop, implement, monitor, and enforce policies and procedures governing the operations of the ISBN system and the process of ISBN registration. Further information about the process, management, and maintenance of the assignment of ISBN and registration of metadata shall be available in the latest version of the Users' Manual available from the Registration Authority.
- g) Facilitate the review and resolution of duplicate assignments of ISBNs.
- h) Review and decide on appeals of decisions in such matters as:
 - 1) rejection of ISBN applications;
 - 2) disputes concerning the appropriateness of assignments of ISBNs to publications.
- i) Develop, maintain, and make available documentation for users of the ISBN system.
- j) Implement and maintain such funding arrangements as are necessary to support the operations of the Registration Authority.
- k) Issue notification of the assignment of an ISBN to the registrant of that monographic publication.

- l) Enter into registers the details of ISBNs allocated and their associated ISBN metadata and administration data.
- m) Manage and maintain the registers of ISBN, ISBN metadata, and administrative metadata in a secure fashion.
- n) Correct inaccurate ISBNs and ISBN metadata if proof of such inaccuracy is provided.
- o) Make ISBN and associated metadata available to users of the ISBN system.
- p) Compile and maintain statistical data on ISBN-related operations.
- q) Promote, educate, and train others in the use of the ISBN system in compliance with the specifications of this document.
- r) Compile information related to ISBN operations (e.g. records of ISBNs and ISBN registrant elements assigned).
- s) Ensure that continuous service is provided.

B.3 ISBN Registration Agencies

The Registration Authority may delegate certain tasks and services listed in [B.2](#) to ISBN Registration Agencies. ISBN Registration Agencies often hold an important role in the allocation of ISBNs. Therefore, potential registrants are advised to consult the website of the Registration Authority³⁾ to find information concerning the most appropriate ISBN Registration Agency to contact and the tasks and services it has been delegated.

B.4 Conditions of registration

All registrations for ISBN shall be compliant with the following conditions.

- a) ISBNs shall be allocated to publications according to the principles defined in [Clause 5](#) and [Annex A](#) and only assigned to qualifying products.
- b) Details of ISBNs and their associated metadata as described in [Annex D](#) shall be compiled and made available as directed by the Registration Authority for the purpose of maintaining registers of ISBNs and product metadata. The names, addresses, contact details, e-mail addresses, telephone numbers, etc. of registrants shall be current and any changes to them notified.
- c) ISBNs shall not be re-sold or reassigned to other registrants except under special circumstances such as in the case of the complete transfer of publication lists, stock, and rights, or the acquisition of one publisher by another. Registrants should seek the advice and guidance of the Registration Authority in these cases.
- d) Adhere to the specifications of this document and the ISBN policies and procedures established by the Registration Authority.

3) ISO maintains an online list of Maintenance Agencies and Registration Authorities relevant to their standards at https://www.iso.org/maintenance_agencies.html. Users are encouraged to consult this database for the most up-to-date information concerning Maintenance Agencies and Registration Authorities.

Annex C (normative)

Check digit for the ISBN

C.1 The purpose of the check digit is to guard against errors.

C.2 The check digit for an ISBN shall be a single character using Arabic numerals 0 to 9. The check digit shall be displayed as the final character at the end of the ISBN character string.

C.3 The check digit for an ISBN is calculated using a weighted algorithm that uses modulus 10.

C.4 When an ISBN is displayed in human readable form, it shall be preceded by the letters ISBN. Hyphens should be used to enhance readability and to provide improved understanding of the internal structure of the number but are not an integral part of the number itself.

EXAMPLE

This example shows how to calculate the check digit for an ISBN (check digit unknown).

Each of the first 12 digits of the ISBN is alternately multiplied by 1 and 3. The check digit is equal to 10 minus the remainder resulting from dividing the sum of the weighted products of the first 12 digits by 10, with one exception: if this calculation results in an apparent check digit of 10, the check digit is 0.

Use the following steps to calculate the check digit for the ISBN 978-92-95055-12-?

Step 1: Determine the sum of the weighted products for the first 12 digits of the ISBN (see [Table C.1](#)).

Table C.1 — Example of the calculation of the check digit for an ISBN

	GS1 element			Registration group element		Registrant element					Publication element		Check digit	Sum
ISBN	9	7	8	9	2	9	5	0	5	5	1	2	?	
Weight	1	3	1	3	1	3	1	3	1	3	1	3	—	
Product	9	21	8	27	2	27	5	0	5	15	1	6	—	126

Step 2: Divide the sum of the weighted products of the first 12 digits of the ISBN calculated in step 1 by 10 and determine the remainder, thus:

$$126/10 = 12 \quad \text{remainder} = 6$$

Step 3: Subtract the remainder calculated in step 2 from 10. The resulting difference is the value of the check digit, with one exception: if the remainder from step 2 is 0, the check digit is 0.

$$10 - 6 = 4$$

$$\text{Check digit} = 4$$

$$\text{ISBN} = 978-92-95055-12-4$$

The following mathematical formula is an alternative way of expressing the calculation of the check digit.

$$\text{Check digit} = \text{mod } 10 \{10 - [\text{mod } 10 (\text{sum of weighted products of the first 12 ISBN digits})]\}$$

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Check digit = $\text{mod } 10 \{10 - [\text{mod } 10 (126)]\}$

Check digit = 4

In order for the ISBN to be valid, the sum of the weighted products of the first 12 digits plus the check digit shall be divisible by 10 without a remainder.

NOTE The length of the registration group, registrant, and publication elements are variable and may not always be the same as in [Table C.1](#). Not all registration group and registrant combinations are valid; information on valid ranges is available from the Registration Authority.

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Annex D (normative)

Metadata for the registration of an assigned ISBN

D.1 General

D.1.1 A specified amount of metadata (descriptive information) about the publication to which the ISBN is assigned shall be required. This is in order to provide enough information to differentiate one publication bearing an ISBN from another and also to ensure proper registration of each ISBN. The metadata associated with each ISBN assignment shall be maintained according to rules specified by the Registration Authority.

D.1.2 The specifications concerning the type and format of these metadata elements shall be established by the Registration Authority and published in the latest version of the ISBN Users' Manual.

D.2 Elements of ISBN metadata

D.2.1 The metadata requirements for the ISBN system should be compatible with the ONIX ISBN Registration Format^[16] which is based on the ONIX for Books product information standards^[17] maintained by EDItEUR and its associated organizations.

D.2.2 [Table D.1](#) shows the ISBN metadata elements. Mandatory elements shall always be included and optional elements shall be included where they are applicable and available.

Table D.1 — ISBN metadata elements

Data element	Comments	ONIX 3 element(s)	Mandatory (Y/N)
ISBN	In the 13-digit ISBN format, without spaces or hyphens	<ProductIdentifier>	Y
Product form	Coding which indicates the medium and/or format of the product	<ProductComposition>	Y
		<ProductForm>	Y
		<ProductFormDetail>	N
		<ProductFormFeature>	N
	<i>Physical measurements may also differentiate between two physical products otherwise in the same binding and format.</i>	<Measure>	N
		<ProductPart>	N
Series	Series title and enumeration when applicable	<Collection> composite	N
Title	The title of the publication, together with sub-title or other title elements where applicable	<TitleDetail> composite	Y
Contributor	Contributor role code(s) and contributor name(s)	<Contributor> composite [Identifier (ISNI) optional]	N

Table D.1 (continued)

Data element	Comments	ONIX 3 element(s)	Mandatory (Y/N)
Edition	Edition number (for editions after the first), type, and statement	<EditionTypeCode> <EditionNumber> <EditionStatement>	N Y (after first edition) N
Language(s) of text	In accordance with ISO 639-2/B language codes	<Language> composite	Y
Imprint	The brand name under which the publication is published	<Imprint> composite [Identifier (ISNI) optional]	Y
Publisher	The person or organization that owns the imprint at the date of publication	<Publisher> composite [Identifier (ISNI) optional]	Y
Country of publication	In accordance with ISO 3166-1 country codes	<CountryOfPublication>	Y
Publication date	The date of first publication under this ISBN. In accordance with the ISO 8601 format (YYYYMMDD)	<PublishingDate> composite	Y
ISBN of parent publication	ISBN of the parent publication of which this publication is a part, when applicable <i>Used when an ISBN is registered for a chapter or part or as part of a set or series</i>	<RelatedProduct> composite <RelatedWork> composite	N N
	<i>For digital products, provision is also made for the possibility that the ISBN may be assigned by a downstream intermediary if the publisher has not done so.</i>	<RecordSource...> elements	N
	<i>Similarly, for digital products, different licence terms (usage constraints) or operating system requirements may differentiate between two otherwise identical products.</i> <i>NOTE "Epub" does not imply any link to the IDPF's EPUB file format; it is simply an abbreviation for "e-publication".</i>	<ProductFormFeature> <EpubTechnicalProtection> <EpubUsageConstraint>	N N N

D.3 Association of an ISBN with ISBN metadata

Databases linking ISBNs with their core metadata (i.e. books in print, national bibliography) should be available for each registration group.