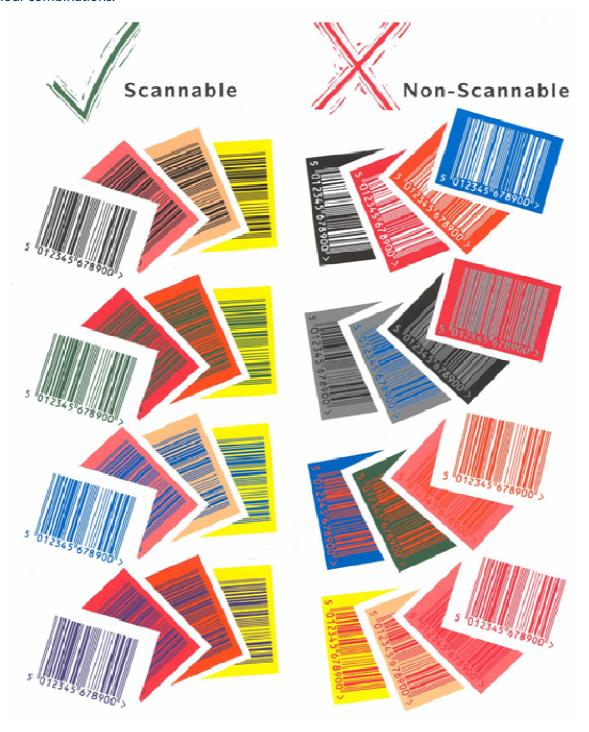# Barcode Colour Guide

The colours and type of ink you choose for your bar code symbols are very important.

As a scanner reads a barcode symbol using an infrared light source, it sees the symbol differently than a human eye. As a result, some colour combinations are unsuitable for scanning because they do not provide sufficient contrast between the dark bars and the light background.

The most suitable and reliable colour is **black bars on a white background.** However, other combinations work as well. The illustrations hereafter show examples of scannable and non-scannable colour combinations:

Always remember:

- Bars must always be darker than the spaces. A reversed barcode will not scan.

- Warm colours such as yellow, red, orange and white are not seen by the scanner and are good for background colours.

- Cold colours such as green, blue, violet, and black make a good choice for bars, as they appear black under red scanning light.

- The light margins around the bar codes are vital. They must never be encroached.

- Metallic surfaces and inks reflect light away from the scanner, so scanning is extremely difficult. They should not be used for bar code printing.