



## 7.1 Introduction

GS1 DataMatrix is a standalone, two-dimensional matrix symbology that is made up of square modules arranged within a perimeter finder pattern. Unlike a Composite Component® Symbol (refer to Chapter 6 Composite Symbology on page 37), GS1 DataMatrix does not require a linear symbol.

The GS1 System has adopted GS1 DataMatrix partly because it can encode GS1 System data structures and offers other technical advantages. Its compact design and the existence of various production methods that accommodate placing the symbology onto various substrates offer certain advantages over other symbologies currently in the GS1 System.

GS1 DataMatrix ISO version ECC 200 is the only version that supports GS1 System data structures, including Function 1 Symbol Character (FNC1). The ECC 200 version of GS1 DataMatrix uses Reed-Solomon error correction, and this feature helps correct for partially damaged symbols. This version of GS1 DataMatrix is similar in stability to ISO versions of current GS1 System Symbologies.

Some of the production processes that can be used to produce GS1 DataMatrix Symbols are as follows:

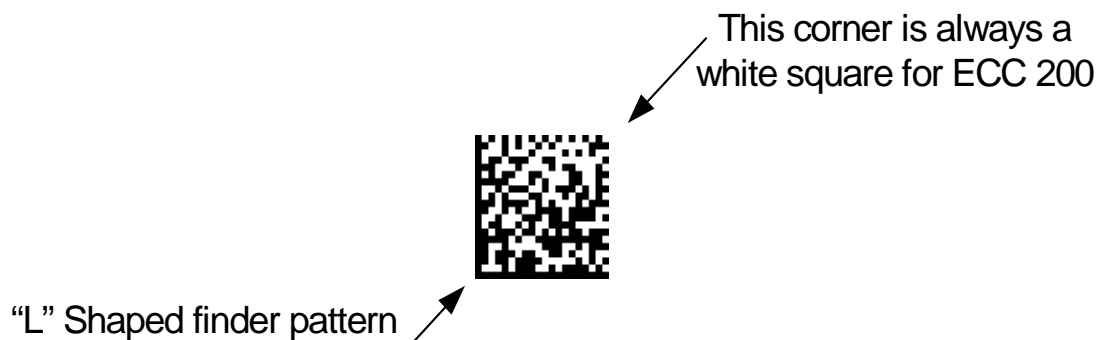
- Direct part marking, such as is done by dot peening on items, such as automotive, aircraft metal parts, medical instruments, and surgical implants
- Laser or chemically etched parts with low contrast or light marked elements on a dark background (e.g., circuit boards and electronic components, medical instruments, and surgical implants)
- High-speed ink jet printed parts and components where the marked dots cannot form a scannable linear symbol
- Very small items that require a symbology with a square aspect ratio and/or cannot be marked within the allocated packaging space by existing GS1 DataBar and Composite Symbols

GS1 DataMatrix Symbols are read by two-dimensional imaging scanners or vision systems. Most other scanners that are not two-dimensional imagers cannot read GS1 DataMatrix. GS1 DataMatrix Symbols are restricted for use with new niche applications that will involve imaging scanners throughout the supply chain.





## 7.2 GS1 DataMatrix Features and Basics



**Figure 26 - GS1 DataMatrix Symbol**

- The figure above represents a GS1 DataMatrix Symbol with 20 rows and 20 columns (including the perimeter finder pattern but not including Quiet Zones).
- GS1 DataMatrix solid "L" shaped finder or alignment pattern is one module wide.
- GS1 DataMatrix Quiet Zone is one module wide on all four sides. As with other bar code Quiet Zones, do not print in this area.
- ECC 200 symbols can always be recognized from older versions of GS1 DataMatrix because the corner opposite the middle of the finder pattern is a zero module or white in normal print.
- For Square GS1 DataMatrix symbols, only an even number of rows and columns exist. Depending on data requirements, symbols can range from 10 row by 10 columns (10 x10) to 144x144 (including finder pattern but not the Quiet Zone)
- For normal printing, a module is one X by one X in dimension. Representation of data: A dark module is a binary one and a light module is a binary zero (or a light module is a binary one and a dark module is a binary zero for a symbol with reflectance reversal).
- ECC 200 (ECC = Error Checking and Correction) that uses Reed-Solomon error correction. Figure 5.6.3.2 - 1: ECC 200 Square Symbol Attributes in the GS1 General Specifications, shows the fixed amounts of error correction associated for each allowable GS1 DataMatrix Symbol size.
- Function 1 Symbol Character (FNC1) for GS1 System compatibility can be encoded at the beginning of the data string and as a group separator. When a FNC1 is used as a group separator, it shall be represented in the transmitted message by the ASCII character <GS> (ASCII value 29).
- Encodable character set:
  - Values 0 - 127 in accordance with ISO/IEC 646 International Reference Version (e.g., all 128 ASCII characters)
  - Values 128 - 255 in accordance with ISO/IEC 8859-1; Latin alphabet No. 1. These are referred to as extended ASCII.
  - The GS1 System requires that only the subset of ISO/IEC 646 International Reference Version defined in the GS1 General Specifications be used for Application Identifier (AI) Element Strings.





- Data characters per symbol (for the maximum symbol size):
  - Alphanumeric data: up to 2335 characters
  - Eight-bit byte data: 1556 characters
  - Numeric data: 3116 digits
- Large, square ECC Symbols (at least 32 X32) will include alignment patterns to separate the data regions.
- Code type: matrix (Composite Component® is a stacked type)
- Orientation independence: Yes (requires a two-dimensional imaging scanner)
- Summary of additional features inherent or optional in GS1 DataMatrix:
  - Reflectance reversal: (Inherent) Symbols can be read when marked so that the image is either dark on light or light on dark.
  - Rectangular symbols: Six symbol formats are specified in a rectangular form.
  - Extended Channel Interpretation (ECI) capability allows GS1 DataMatrix to encode data from other alphabets.

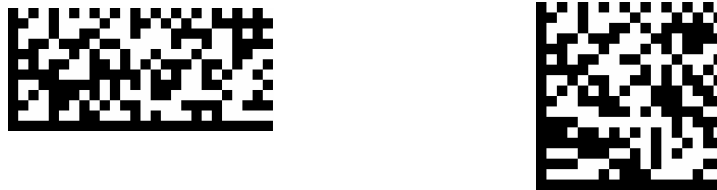


## 7.3 GS1 DataMatrix Structure

The technical description of GS1 DataMatrix contained within this section provides additional information based on ISO technical specification 16022, and it is provided as a further aid in the development of specific applications. GS1 DataMatrix Symbols shown in the following subsections have been magnified to show detail; otherwise, they might not be seen clearly.

### Square and Rectangular Formats

GS1 DataMatrix may be printed in a square or rectangular format. The square format is usually used as it has a larger range of sizes and is the only format available for symbols encoding a large amount of data. The largest rectangular symbol can encode 98 digits, while the largest square symbol can encode 3,116 digits. An enlarged rectangular symbol and an equivalent square symbol are shown in the figure below, both containing the same data.



**Figure 27 - Rectangular and Square GS1 DataMatrix Symbols**

### GS1 DataMatrix Symbol Sizes

GS1 DataMatrix Symbolology has multiple sizes to match various data content (refer to Table 26 and Table 27). GS1 DataMatrix Symbols have 24 sizes of the square format ranging from 10 by 10 modules up to 144 by 144 modules, not including the 1X surrounding Quiet Zone. The rectangular format has 6 sizes from 8 by 18 modules up to 16 by 48 modules not including the 1 X surrounding Quiet Zone. GS1 DataMatrix sizes of 52 by 52 or larger have 2 to 10 interleaved blocks of Reed-Solomon error correction codewords.

The term "codeword" is used often to describe attributes concerning the encodation of data into GS1 DataMatrix Symbols. ISO 16022 defines codeword as "A symbol character value. An intermediate level of coding between source data and the graphical encodation in the symbol." Codewords are typically eight bits of data. Function 1 Symbol Character (FNC1), two numerics, and one alpha all take up one codeword each.



Symbol Size		Data Region		Mapping	Total		Reed-Solomon		Inter	Data Capacity			Error	Max. Correctable
Row	Col	Size	No.	Matrix Size	Data	Error	Data	Error	leaved Blocks	Nu m. Cap.	Alpha num. Cap.	Byte Cap.	Corre ction Over head %	Codeword Error/ Erasure
10	10	8x8	1	8x8	3	5	3	5	1	6	3	1	62.5	2/0
12	12	10x10	1	10x10	5	7	5	7	1	10	6	3	58.3	3/0
14	14	12x12	1	12x12	8	10	8	10	1	16	10	6	55.6	5/7
16	16	14x14	1	14x14	12	12	12	12	1	24	16	10	50	6/9
18	18	16x16	1	16x16	18	14	18	14	1	36	25	16	43.8	7/11
20	20	18x18	1	18x18	22	18	22	18	1	44	31	20	45	9/15
22	22	20x20	1	20x20	30	20	30	20	1	60	43	28	40	10/17
24	24	22x22	1	22x22	36	24	36	24	1	72	52	34	40	12/21
26	26	24x24	1	24x24	44	28	44	28	1	88	64	42	38.9	14/25
32	32	14x14	4	28x28	62	36	62	36	1	124	91	60	36.7	18/33
36	36	16x16	4	32x32	86	42	86	42	1	172	127	84	32.8	21/39
40	40	18x18	4	36x36	114	48	114	48	1	228	169	112	29.6	24/45
44	44	20x20	4	40x40	144	56	144	56	1	288	214	142	28	28/53
48	48	22x22	4	44x44	174	68	174	68	1	348	259	172	28.1	34/65
52	52	24x24	4	48x48	204	84	102	42	2	408	304	202	29.2	42/78
64	64	14x14	16	56x56	280	112	140	56	2	560	418	277	28.6	56/106
72	72	16x16	16	64x64	368	144	92	36	4	736	550	365	28.1	72/132
80	80	18x18	16	72x72	456	192	114	48	4	912	682	453	29.6	96/180
88	88	20x20	16	80x80	576	224	144	56	4	1152	862	573	28	112/212
96	96	22x22	16	88x88	696	272	174	68	4	1392	1042	693	28.1	136/260
104	104	24x24	16	96x96	816	336	136	56	6	1632	1222	813	29.2	168/318
120	120	18x18	36	108x108	1050	408	175	68	6	2100	1573	1047	28	204/390
132	132	20x20	36	120x120	1304	496	163	62	8	2608	1954	1301	27.6	248/472
144	144	22x22	36	132x132	1558	620	156	62	8 **	3116	2335	1556	28.5	310/590
							155	62	2**					

\* Note: Symbol size does not include Quiet Zones

\*\* Note: In the largest symbol (144x144), the first eight Reed-Solomon blocks shall be 218 codewords long encoding 156 data codewords. The last two blocks shall encode 217 codewords (155 data codewords). All the blocks have 62 error correction codewords.

\*\*\* Equivalent to Table 11 in the international standard ISO-16022, first edition, 2000-05-01.

**TABLE 26. ECC 200 Square Symbol Attributes\*\*\***





Symbol Size		Data Region		Mapping	Total		Reed-Solomon		Inter-	Data Capacity			Error	Max. Correctable
Row	Col	Size	No.	Matrix Size	Data	Error	Data	Error	leaved	Num.	Alpha num.	Byte	Correc tion	Codeword
									Blocks	Cap.	Cap.	Cap.	Over head %	Error/ Erasure
8	18	6x16	1	6x16	5	7	5	7	1	10	6	3	58.3	3/+
8	32	6x14	2	6x28	10	11	10	11	1	20	13	8	52.4	5/+
12	26	10x24	1	10x24	16	14	16	14	1	32	22	14	46.7	7/11
12	36	10x16	2	10x32	22	18	22	18	1	44	31	20	45.0	9/15
16	36	14x16	2	14x32	32	24	32	24	1	64	46	30	42.9	12/21
16	48	14x22	2	14x44	49	28	49	28	1	98	72	47	36.4	14/25

\* Note: Symbol size does not include Quiet Zones  
 \*\* Note: In the largest symbol (144x144), the first eight Reed-Solomon blocks shall be 218 codewords long encoding 156 data codewords. The last two blocks shall encode 217 codewords (155 data codewords). All the blocks have 62 error correction codewords.  
 \*\*\* Equivalent to Table 11 in the international standard ISO-16022, first edition, 2000-05-01.

**TABLE 27. ECC 200 Rectangular Symbol Attributes\*\*\***

The square format is divided into 4 to 36 data regions for symbols sized 32 by 32 modules and larger. The rectangular format symbols may also be divided into two data regions. Each data region is separated from the other regions by alignment patterns that consist of an alternating pattern of ones and zeroes and a solid line of ones (a dark line when there is no reflectance reversal). Figure 28 shows a four-segment square symbol on the left and a two-segment rectangular symbol on the right, each with hypothetical data shown to create the effect.



**Figure 28 - Segmented GS1 DataMatrix Symbols: Square and Rectangular Formats**

(Sizes of these GS1 DataMatrix Symbols are larger than what would be used in a typical application so that typical alignment patterns can be easily seen.)



## Human Readable Interpretation of GS1 DataMatrix Symbols

The Human Readable Interpretation of the primary Application Identifier (AI) Element String encoded in the GS1 DataMatrix Symbol should be shown with the symbol. How the human readable data will be shown shall be determined by the specific application guidelines. Typical conventions, as used for GS1 DataBar® and Composite Component® Symbols, place the key information, such as the Global Trade Item Number™ (GTIN™), in the human readable data underneath the bar code, while secondary information is placed above. The characters should be clearly legible (such as OCR-B) and must be obviously associated with the symbol.

AIs should be clearly recognisable to facilitate key entry. This is achieved by putting the AI between parentheses (brackets) in the Human Readable Interpretation. Note: The parentheses are not part of the data and are not encoded in the bar code, following the same principles that apply to GS1-128 Symbols and GS1 DataBar Expanded® Symbols.

For GS1 DataMatrix Symbols encoding large amounts of data, it may not be practical to display all the data in Human Readable Interpretation form. Even if there is space to show it in this form, it may not be practical to key enter that much data. In these instances, some of the data may be omitted from the Human Readable Interpretation. However, primary identification data (GS1 Identification Keys), such as the GTIN, must always be shown.

## Data Transmission and Symbology Identifier Prefixes

The GS1 System requires the use of Symbology Identifiers. GS1 DataMatrix uses the Symbology Identifier of "Jd2" (see Figure 29) for GS1 System compliant symbols that have a leading Function 1 Symbol Character (FNC1). This indicates that Application Identifier (AI) data is encoded equivalent to the Symbology Identifier "JC1" for GS1-128 Bar Codes and "Je0" for GS1 DataBar Symbology and Composite Symbols. For more information on Symbology Identifiers, see the International standard ISO/IEC 15424 Information technology - Automatic identification and data capture techniques - Data Carrier Identifiers.

For example, a GS1 DataMatrix Symbol encoding AI (01) with the GTIN 10012345678902 produces the transmitted data string "Jd20110012345678902." Data transmission follows the same principles that apply to the concatenation of AI Element Strings from GS1-128 Bar Codes or GS1 DataBar Expanded®.

	Message Content	Separator
Jd2	Standard AI Element Strings	None

**Figure 29 - Symbology Identifier for GS1 DataMatrix ECC 200**



## Width and Height of a Module (X)

The range of the X-dimensions will be defined by the application specification, having due regard to the availability of equipment for the production and reading of symbols and complying with the general requirements of the application.

The X-dimension shall be constant throughout a given symbol. The X-dimension should apply to both the width and height of the modules.

## Symbol Quality Grade

The International Standard ISO/IEC 15415 Information technology - Automatic identification and data capture techniques - Bar code print quality test specification - Two-dimensional symbols methodology shall be used for measuring and grading GS1 DataMatrix. The print quality grade is measured by verifiers that comply with the standard. The grade includes a grade level, measuring aperture, the wavelength of light used for the measurement, and the illumination angle relative to the symbol.

A symbol grade is only meaningful if it is reported in conjunction with the illumination and aperture used. It should be shown in the format grade/aperture/light/angle, where:

- "grade" is the overall symbol grade as defined in ISO/IEC 15415 Information technology - Automatic identification and data capture techniques - Bar code print quality test specification - Two-dimensional symbols (e.g., the arithmetic mean to one decimal place of the Scan Reflectance Profile or scan grades). For GS1 DataMatrix, the grade number may be followed by an asterisk, \*, which indicates that the surroundings of the symbol contain extremes of reflectance that may interfere with reading. For most applications, this should be specified as causing the symbol to fail.
- "aperture" is the diameter in thousandths of an inch (to the nearest thousandth) of the synthetic aperture defined in ISO/IEC 15415 Information technology - Automatic identification and data capture techniques - Bar code print quality test specification - Two-dimensional symbols.
- "light" defines the illumination: A numeric value indicates the peak light wavelength in nanometres (for narrow band illumination); the alphabetic character W indicates that the symbol has been measured with broadband illumination (white light) the spectral response characteristics of which must imperatively be defined or have their source specification clearly referenced.
- "angle" is an additional parameter defining the angle of incidence (relative to the plane of the symbol) of the illumination. It shall be included in the reporting of the overall symbol grade when the angle of incidence is other than 45 degrees. Its absence indicates that the angle of incidence is 45 degrees.

**Note:** This international standard provides for 30 degrees and 90 degrees illumination in addition to the default 45 degrees.

The aperture is normally specified as being 80% of the minimum X-dimension allowed for the application. The printing method must produce the GS1 DataMatrix "L" pattern with gaps between the dots less than 25% of the specified aperture. If symbols with greater than the minimum X-dimension are allowed by the application, the same absolute maximum gap dimension must be maintained.





Examples:

- 2.8/05/660 would indicate that the average of the grades of the Scan Reflectance Profiles, or of the scan grades, was 2.8 when these were obtained with the use of a 0.125mm aperture (ref. no. 05) and a 660nm light source, incident at 45 degrees.
- 2.8/10/W/30 would indicate the grade of a symbol intended to be read in broadband light, measured with light incident at 30 degrees and using a 0.250mm aperture (ref. no. 10), but would need to be accompanied either by a reference to the application specification defining the reference spectral characteristics used for measurement or a definition of the spectral characteristics themselves.
- 2.8/10/670\* would indicate the grade of a symbol measured using a 0.250mm aperture (ref. no. 10), and a 670nm light source, and indicates the presence of a potentially interfering extreme reflectance value in the surroundings of the symbol.

Recommended symbol grades for GS1 DataMatrix are dependant on the intended application. For further information please contact GS1 Australia.

## Advice for Selecting the Symbology

Any use of GS1 DataMatrix should comply with GS1 System global application guidelines and be restricted to those applications defined by the GS1 System for GS1 DataMatrix. GS1 DataMatrix will not replace other GS1 System Symbologies. Existing applications that are satisfactorily utilising EAN/UPC Symbols, ITF-14 Symbols, GS1-128 Symbols, GS1 DataBar Symbology® Symbols, or Composite Symbols should continue to use them.

**Note:** Scanning systems that need to read GS1 DataMatrix Symbols must be 2D imaging scanners and be appropriately programmed to read the GS1 System version of DataMatrix or ECC 200.