

ISBN FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

FAQ's



kenya national
library service

ISBN Manager

ISBN Manager

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1.What is an ISBN ?

An ISBN, or International Standard Book Number, is a unique identifier for books, eBooks, and other published materials. It serves as a standardized way to identify a particular edition of a book and is used by publishers, booksellers, libraries, and distributors to efficiently manage and locate specific titles in the global marketplace. Each ISBN is a 13-digit number, which is typically displayed on the back cover or copyright page of a book.

2.Why do I need an ISBN ?

Having an ISBN is crucial for various reasons:

- Identification: It provides a unique identifier for your book, making it distinguishable in the vast world of published works.
- Distribution: Many retailers, libraries, and online platforms require an ISBN to list and sell your book. It facilitates accurate tracking and inventory management.
- Global Access: An ISBN helps your book reach a wider international audience, as it ensures proper cataloging in libraries and bookstores worldwide.
- Professionalism: It conveys a level of professionalism to potential readers, retailers, and industry professionals, giving your book credibility.
- Marketing and Promotion: Libraries, wholesalers, and retailers often use ISBNs to order and distribute books. It's essential for marketing and promoting your work.
- Copyright Protection: While not a replacement for formal copyright registration, an ISBN is a part of the bibliographic data that establishes your book's identity.

3.Where do I get an ISBN in Kenya ?

In Kenya, you can obtain an ISBN through the Kenya National Library Service (knls), which serves as the official ISBN agency for the country.

4. How do I get an ISBN in Kenya ?

- Visit the ISBN Manager Platform at www.isbn.ac.ke.
- If you are a first-time user, click on "Don't have an account." If you are already registered, proceed to step 7.
- Provide an email address, username and password.
- Complete the CAPTCHA by ticking "I am not a robot" and selecting the images as instructed to complete the Sign-up process.
- After email verification, you will be directed to your User Profile Page. Here, you will need to fill in your personal details and the details of the publisher you represent under the "Edit Publisher Info" button. Please note that if you are self-publishing then you need to fill in your personal details in the Publisher info page as well.
- Ensure that all mandatory fields under "My Info" and "Publisher Info" are filled in to ensure a smooth processing of your application. You also have the option to edit your email addresses and add a photo if desired.
- Click on "ISBN Products."
- Add the required ISBN numbers to your cart (equivalent to the quantity ordered).
- Complete the transaction.
- Select your preferred mode of payment and make the payment.
- You will receive your ISBN via the email address you provided.

4. How long does it take to process an ISBN application?

Once all requirements are correctly filled, you can expect to receive your ISBN within 24 hours.

5. How can I verify if my order has been processed and fulfilled?

Log in to the ISBN Manager, go to 'MY ORDER HISTORY,' and you'll find all your placed orders, indicating if they are "awaiting processing" or "fulfilled."

6.How much does it cost to obtain an ISBN in Kenya?

The cost for obtaining an ISBN in Kenya varies based on the number of ISBNs you wish to acquire. Here are the pricing options:

- Single ISBN: Kshs 1,500.00
- Batch of 10 ISBNs: Kshs 10,000.00
- Batch of 100 ISBNs: Kshs 50,000.00
- Batch of 1000 ISBNs: Kshs 100,000.00

Choose the option that best suits your publishing needs. Keep in mind that purchasing ISBNs in batches can offer cost savings for authors and publishers planning to release multiple titles.

7.What do I do if I forget my password?

If you forget your password, simply follow these steps:

- Click on the "Forgot Password" link.
- Enter the email address associated with your account.
- Click on "Reset Password."

You will receive a reset password link in your email inbox. Follow the instructions in the email to reset your password and regain access to your account.

8.Can I use the same ISBN for different editions of my book?

No, each edition of a book (e.g., hardcover, paperback, e-book) requires a unique ISBN. If you make significant changes to the content, it's advisable to obtain a new ISBN.

9.Do I need an ISBN for each book in a series?

Yes, each distinct edition or format of a book, even within a series, requires its own unique ISBN. This includes hardcover, paperback, e-book, and audiobook versions. Each format is considered a separate product and should have its own ISBN.

10. Do I need an ISBN for each language that I translate my book to?

Yes, if you translate your book into different languages, each translated version should have its own unique ISBN. This ensures accurate cataloging and identification of the specific language edition. Remember, ISBNs are language-specific and tied to a particular edition of a book.

11. What next after I have acquired an ISBN for my publication?

After acquiring an ISBN, the next crucial step is to fulfill the legal deposit requirements. In Kenya, this is mandated by law under the Books and Newspapers Act (Cap 111) which requires publishers to submit two copies of their publications to the national library.

12. Do e-books require legal deposit, and how is it handled?

Yes, e-books are usually subject to legal deposit requirements. knls accepts digital copies of your publications.

13. Is legal deposit mandatory for self-published authors?

Yes, legal deposit is typically mandatory for all publishers, including self-published authors. It ensures that a copy of your publication is preserved in the national library.

14. What does the library do with the legal deposits?

Legal deposits play a vital role in the preservation and accessibility of cultural and intellectual heritage. Each deposit, assigned unique identifiers for easy retrieval, contributes to the development of the Kenya National Bibliography (KNB) which reflects the nation's cultural, educational, and historical landscape. Collectively, legal deposits shape the national library into a custodian of the nation's memory, preserving and providing access to the evolving intellectual and cultural contributions that define its identity across generations.



For More Information Contact:

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