KNOWLEDGE BASE ARTICLE

Why Doesn't My QR Code Scan?



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Introduction

"The camera just does not see it", "it worked on the screen but not on the poster", "the phone opens a search instead of the site" — most problems with a QR code come from a handful of causes, and almost all of them are settled in the settings of QR Code Generator in a minute. This article is a checklist. The first part covers codes that are not recognized at all, the second covers codes that are recognized but do the wrong thing, and the third covers the web part itself.

Note

Start with a control test: on the **URL** tab enter a short address, leave the design sections untouched and scan the preview from the screen. If this code is read, the scanner is fine and the cause is in the data or the design of your code.

The code is not recognized

1. The code blends with the background

A scanner needs dark dots on a light background. By default the code is blue and its background is transparent, so the code takes the background of the place where it is shown. On a white page it is readable; in a dark section of a page, in the dark theme of Teams or on a colored slide it is not.

How to fix. Expand **Colors** and set an opaque light **Background Color** — move the transparency to 0 and choose white or a pale tone. Make sure that **Color** is dark and not transparent, and with a gradient check **Second Color** as well.

2. The colors are inverted

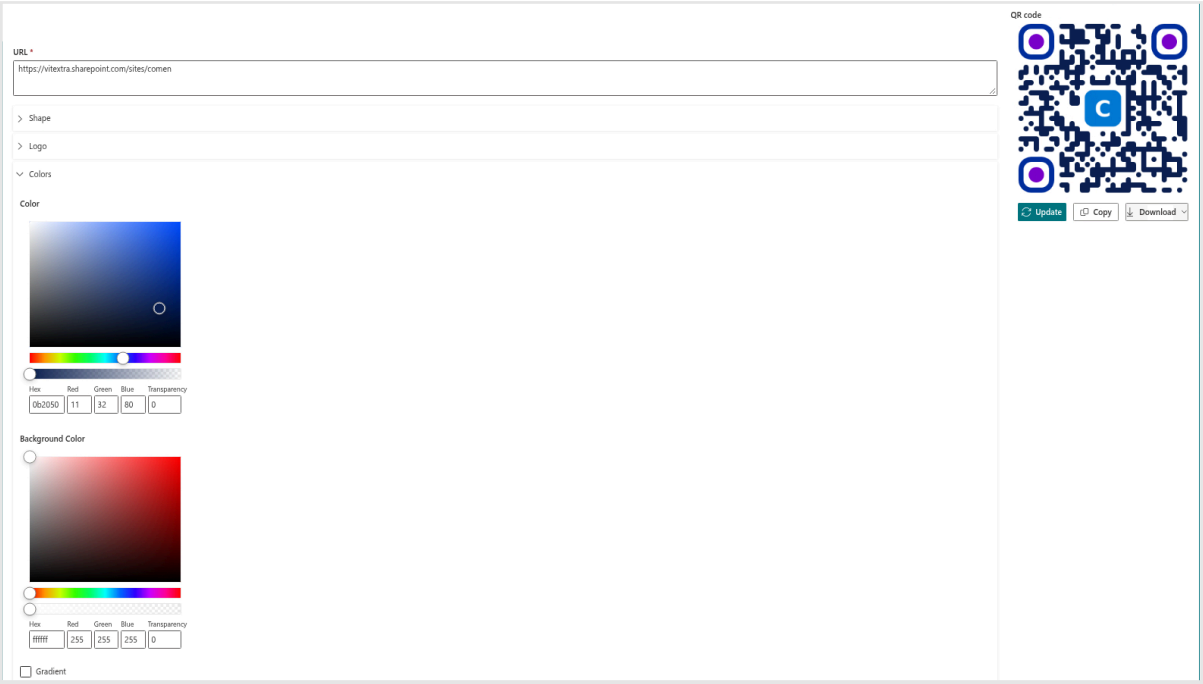
A light code on a dark background looks good and is not read by many scanners.

How to fix. Swap the colors: dark for **Color**, **Corner Square** and **Corner Dots**, light for **Background Color**.

3. The JPEG file has a black background

JPEG cannot store transparency, so the transparent background of the code turns black in the file, and a dark code on black cannot be read.

How to fix. Download the code as **PNG**, or set an opaque **Background Color** before downloading a JPEG.



An opaque light background in the Colors section

4. The logo covers too much

The dots under the logo are removed, and the scanner restores them from the reserve of the code. When the logo is larger than the reserve, the code is lost.

How to fix. In the **Logo** section reduce **Logo size**; in **Error Correction** select **High**. If this does not help, click **Remove image** to confirm that the logo is the cause. See KB10266. How to Add a Company Logo to a QR Code.

5. The code is too dense or printed too small

A long text, a business card with all fields or a long link make the dots small. On the screen the code may still be read, but in a small print the dots merge.

How to fix. Shorten the data; lower **Error Correction** to **Medium** if there is no logo; print the code larger — never smaller than 2 x 2 cm, and about one tenth of the scanning distance. See KB10273. Error Correction and Size: Making QR Codes Reliable to Scan and Print.

6. The image is blurred

A small image stretched in a layout becomes blurred, and so does a JPEG saved with strong compression.

How to fix. Raise the value in the **Size** section before downloading, or download **SVG**, which stays sharp at any size.

7. There is no margin around the code

The image ends at the edge of the code. If text, a frame or a picture touches the code in the layout, the scanner cannot find its borders.

How to fix. Leave an empty area around the code of about four dots in width.

8. The style is too decorative for the scanner

Older phones and simple scanner apps sometimes fail on unusual shapes of the dots and corner markers.

How to fix. In **Shape** select the square style, and in **Corner Square** and **Corner Dots** set **Type** to **Square**. If the code is read after that, bring the decoration back one setting at a time.

The code is recognized, but the result is wrong

Symptom	Cause	Solution
The phone shows the address as text or opens a web search	The address on the **URL** tab is entered without `https://`	Enter the address in full
The page asks to sign in or shows an access error	The link leads to an internal page that the person has no access to	Check the permissions of the page, or use a public link
The phone does not connect to Wi-Fi	The name of the network differs in a letter or its case; the password or the **Encryption** option is wrong; the network is hidden and **Hidden** is not selected	Correct the fields on the **Wi-Fi** tab; for WPA2 and WPA3 networks select **WPA**
The map opens in the wrong place or does not open	A comma is used as the decimal separator, or the latitude and longitude are swapped	Use a period: `51.178889`; the latitude goes first
The event appears at the wrong hour	The time is stored without a time zone and is treated as the local time of the	State the time zone in **Title**; see KB10272. How to Create a Calendar Event

Symptom	Cause	Solution
	phone	QR Code
The phone shows the event or the contact as plain text	The camera app does not support this type of code	Try another scanner app; for a wide audience use a link on the **URL** tab
A printed code leads to old data	The code contains the data itself and does not change after printing	Create a new code and replace the printed copies

Problems in the web part

The preview shows a message instead of the code

The message *One or more required fields is empty. Check that all required fields are filled in and try again* means that a required field of the selected tab is empty. Until it is filled in, **Update**, **Copy** and **Download** are disabled. On the **Location** tab both fields must contain numbers; on the **Wi-Fi** tab the password is required unless **Encryption** is **None**. The required fields are listed in KB10264. QR Code Data Types: URL, Text, vCard, Wi-Fi, Email, SMS, Phone, Location and Event.

The Copy button does nothing

If the message *Copied to clipboard* does not appear, the browser or the Teams client has not allowed access to the clipboard. Allow the clipboard for the site in the settings of the browser, or use **Download**.

The logo is not uploaded

Only JPG, JPEG, PNG and SVG files are accepted. For other files the **Logo** section shows the message *Supported formats: JPG, JPEG, PNG, SVG*. Convert the image to one of these formats.

The settings are lost after the page is reloaded

The configuration is saved only when the page is edited and then saved or published. Changes made on a published page in read mode live until the reload — this is by design. If you edited the page, make sure that you clicked **Republish**. Saving the configuration requires version 26.9.1 or later; see KB10269. Publishing a Preconfigured QR Code on a SharePoint Page.

A notice is shown instead of the generator

The notice *We hope you enjoyed your free trial. Buy it now to keep it working.* means that the trial period has ended. The generator returns when a subscription is activated for the tenant.

Summary

Nine out of ten unreadable codes are cured by three actions: an opaque light background, less data and a larger print. Test every code with a real phone, from the real distance, before it is printed or published.

Tip

The rules that keep a styled code readable are collected in KB10265. Customizing the QR Code Design: Shape, Colors, Gradient and Corners.