Bar Coding Keys in LeashTime

Keeping track of your client keys a big job if you have more than a few clients, and key management can become major problem if you don't have a system for finding keys when you need them.

LeashTime helps you keep track of all your client keys, all of the time. When you use it to check in and check out keys from your office to your sitters, finding a client key takes just a moment. Check-in and check-out are quick and easy when you label your keys with bar codes and use a scanner to read them. Managers and sitters alike can make use of these barcodes.

Printing Key Labels

To print barcode labels for one clients' keys, go to the Key Editor. From the Home Info tab of the client profile, click the **Edit / Print Labels** button:

You can print out individual key labels from the Key Editor by clicking on the little barcode icons:

You can save paper and time by printing out lots of key labels at once from the Key Location Report (KEYS > Key Location Report).

Key Tags

If you're going to print key labels, you will need key tags to slip the labels into. Search eBay for "key label tags" and you will find plenty of them. A tag that encases the label or protects the label from the elements with a window of plastic is a good idea.

The largest size label tag that LeashTime currently prints labels for is sold under the Clik-It brand. Clear key tags are preferred, but barcode scanners seem to be able to read through translucent light colored tags as well. LeashTime also prints labels in smaller sizes:

A smaller tag shown next to a Clik-It Label Tag

- 36mm x 19mm (for a minimum visible window of 29mm x 14mm).

- Avery 8195 return address labels (45mm x 17mm for a minimum window size of 38mm x 13mm)

Whatever size you use, we recommend using a tag with a lock ring rather than a chain, since chains are less durable. You can choose your label size in ADMIN > Preferences > Key Management Preferences.

Scanning Keys

A Desktop Scanner for Managers

Any barcode scanner capable of reading Code 128 barcodes can be used to read LeashTime key labels. We recommend a scanner with a stand like this so you can wave a key in front of it it without picking up the scanner. That way, if you have a bunch of keys to check out, you don't have to pick up the scanner for every one. Scanner prices start a lot lower than $100 these days, so a scanner is a pretty easy investment.

A barcode scanner will usually plug right into a USB port just like modern keyboards and mice. It acts like a keyboard, too. When you scan a barcode, the information it encodes is "typed in" wherever you have the text cursor.

When you are logged in as a manager, all you have to do is make sure the Search box has the keyboard's text cursor in it (as if you were going to type a client name) and scan the key label. If the key is currently checked out, the Check In page will open up. If the key is checked in, then the Check Out page will open.

A Smart Phone Scanner for Sitters (and Managers too!)

It is good policy **not** to put any information on a key label that could help a thief find the house it belongs to. That is why LeashTime prints only the key's ID and the key hook identifier (e.g., "A3" or "Cats 2") to help you remember where to put the key away.

So for sitters on the road, we offer a quick, secure way to match a key to the client it belongs to. Here's how to use it:

1. Obtain a Barcode Reader App for Your Camera-Equipped Smartphone.

The scanner app should have a feature that allows you to perform a custom search using the code scanned in. Typically, this feature will allow you to specify a URL (web address) that will be opened up when you choose that feature.

On the Android, "Barcode Scanner v3.53" (free) is known to work well.

On the iPhone, "pic2Shop PRO" (around $10) is known to work well. "pic2Shop PRO" is available for Android also , but has not been extensively tested there.

It should be noted that the quality of your smartphone's camera may limit any app's ability to read barcodes. Your camera must be able to adequately focus on a barcode at close range.

2. Set Up Your Barcode Read App
Configure your scanner app's custom search feature to call LeashTime.

Here is how to configure the barcode reader apps listed above. In each of the cases below, you would need to substitute your LeashTime business number for YOUR_BIZ_NUM. If you don't know your LeashTime business number, just contact LeashTime Support.

Configuring Barcode Scanner Apps

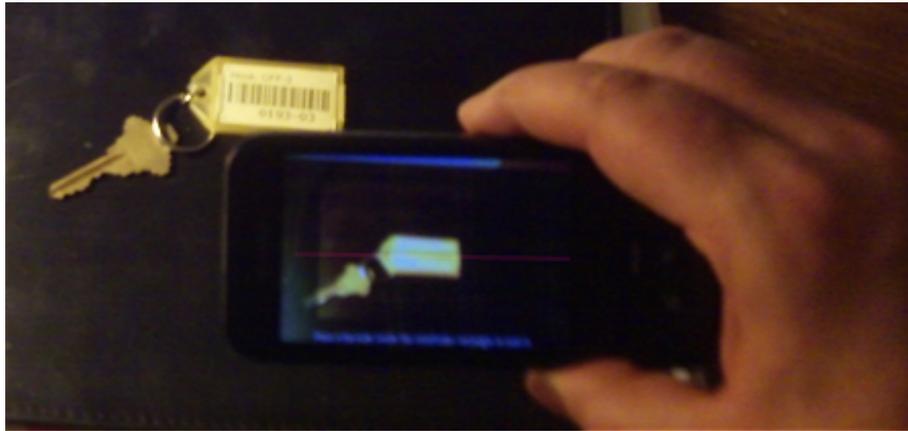|	
Barcode Scanner v3.53	Select "1D barcodes". Set Custom Search URL to: https://leashtime.com/clientkey.php?biz=YOUR_BIZ_NUM&key=%s
pic2shop PRO	Select "Code 128" as one of the barcode types. Set Barcode lookup URL to: https://leashtime.com/clientkey.php?biz=YOUR_BIZ_NUM&&key=CODE

3. Scan a Key!

Just activate your smartphone barcode scanner app and aim it at a key's barcode.

Scanning a Barcode With a Smart Phone

When the code has been scanned in, you may need to choose the custom search option that you configured in the last step (Barcode Scanner v3.53).

LeashTime will show you
- the visit sheet for today for that key's owner if you are using the Mobile Sitter App
- the client viewer if you are logged in as a sitter but *not* using the Mobile Sitter App
- the client profile if you are logged in as a Manager

If you are not already logged in to LeashTime, you will be asked to login first.