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# When and where to use biometric security

**Combating security risks with biometrics**

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Not so long ago, colleges and universities relied on people to recognize individuals by their looks. As campuses grew, security administrators turned to personal identification numbers (PINs) and identification cards. But identification badges, keys and other credentials can be lost, stolen or given to friends. Campus security teams recognize that the complexities of college environments have rendered those old ways of verifying people's identities insecure and unreliable.

A growing trend on campuses today relies on advanced biometric technologies to provide failsafe ways to grant access to thousands of authorized users while maintaining the highest level of security and control. Biometric technology offers a secure alternative to easily lost or compromised ID cards and PINs. In less than one second, biometric technology uses biological characteristics, such as hand geometry and fingerprints, to verify and recognize a person's identity.

Typically, biometric technologies use physiological characteristics, which are unique to each individual. Examples include fingerprints, face or voice recognition, DNA, hand and palm geometry, iris recognition, and odor or scent. A system assigns each person a unique ID number, based on biological data. No two persons carry the same biological data. Therefore, biometrics offers the highest level of security available today.

Hand geometry systems simultaneously analyze thousands of points and instantaneously record measurements of an individual's hand, including length, width, thickness and surface area. From the calculations, the system creates a student's ID number. The hand geometry readers at the door correlate the person's biometric data and PIN information to verify the identity and allow access to facilities.

Because a person's hand becomes an ID card, products like hand readers allow access to only authorized people without the hassles of a card or key. Eliminating ID cards also reduces administrative costs, yet increases security levels.

Biometric security systems are appropriate solutions for applications with a large number of openings and users or for areas that require varying levels of access permission. Since data can be changed easily, these systems are ideal for environments with frequent user changes/turnover. For access points that require real-time updates to openings and access rights, or require advanced credential options, these systems provide streamlined solutions.

Hand geometry units are suitable for high-security applications, such as computer rooms, science labs, document control facilities, critical infrastructure areas, and perimeter access control for residence halls and recreational facilities. They also can provide simple, yet accurate, student verification in cafeteria or food service areas.

Biometric readers can be integrated into your security system, or can be used to track time and attendance and other relevant user information for employees.

## Learn more about biometrics

For more information about combating security risks with biometrics, please visit [us.allegion.com/products/biometrics](http://us.allegion.com/products/biometrics). To reach a professional security consultant in your area, please contact us at **888.758.9823** or fill out the **Contact Us** form on our website at [allegion.com](http://allegion.com).

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