

Documentation of the Crime Scene

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 - The investigator(s) in charge shall ensure that reports and other documentation pertaining to the crime scene investigation are compiled.
 - The investigator(s) in charge should obtain the following for the crime scene case file:
 - Initial responding officer(s') documentation.
 - Emergency medical personnel documents.
 - Entry/exit documentation.
 - Photographs/videos.
 - Crime scene sketches/diagrams.
 - Evidence documentation.
 - Other responders' documentation.
 - Record of consent form or search warrant.
 - Reports such as forensic/technical reports, when they become available.

Crime Scene Photography

- General Considerations
 - Always use the designated safe route when moving through the scene.
 - When it is necessary to alter the scene, such as by placing placards or disassembling equipment, always take photographs of the scene before and after alteration, and with scale when appropriate.
 - When using a digital camera, never delete a photograph from camera or digital media memory.
 - Use a sturdy tripod when appropriate.
 - Take a complete set of pictures, including overall (long-range), midrange and close-ups.
 - Remove the film or download the digital images and store in a secure location according to departmental regulations when photography is completed.

Sketching

- Categories of Sketches
 - Projection
 - A projection sketch usually contains only one viewpoint and depicts objects on one plane.
 - The overview sketch (of the horizontal plane) is the most common type of sketch and is usually done from a bird's eye view; it shows the floor plan.
 - Less common is the elevation sketch (of the vertical plane), which shows a side view typically of landscapes or buildings.
 - Perspective sketch
 - A perspective sketch contains a vanishing point and depicts objects of evidence as they would appear to the eye with reference to relative distance and depth.
 - Schematic
 - The schematic sketch is used when it is desirable to represent a sequence of events such as following the trajectory of a bullet through a crime scene location.
 - Detailed

- The detailed sketch is used when describing a small area that is not easily incorporated into the overall drawing due to the scale chosen for the rough or finished scale drawing. This is especially useful for large crime scenes.
- Equipment needed
 - Graph paper
 - 25- to 100-foot retractable measuring tapes
 - 1000-foot walking wheel
 - Ruler
 - Clipboard
 - Eraser
 - Magnetic compass
 - Flashlight
 - Pencil
- General Considerations
 - The rough sketch is the first sketch drawn at the scene; multiple rough sketches may be required depending on the crime. The sketch includes a scene outline with the location of objects and evidence clearly marked. A finished sketch is derived from the rough sketch.
 - Draw the rough sketch before anything is moved or destroyed, and after photographs are taken. Do not alter the scene.
 - Measurements should be accurate to within $\frac{1}{4}$ "
 - Include, outside of the drawn crime scene, measurements for dimensions of rooms, furniture, doors and windows, and distances between objects, entrances and exits, bodies and persons. Draw details, such as object size, proportionally in a rough sketch.
 - Take measurements from fixed location reference point, such as walls or curbs, or from stationary appliances.
 - Include as much information as possible in the sketch: streets, plants, entry and exit points, location of bullets and cartridges, etc.
 - Do not alter a rough sketch after leaving the crime scene. If changes are required of the rough sketch, photocopy the original rough sketch to preserve its integrity.
 - Specify in your notes any changes made to a scene prior to sketching, such as when objects were moved.
- Determining Scale
 - $\frac{1}{4}$ inch = 1 foot for single rooms.
 - $\frac{1}{8}$ inch = 1 foot for multiple rooms on one page.
 - Scale as needed for large outdoor scenes.
- Components of a final sketch
 - Title Block
 - Case number
 - Crime type
 - Victim name
 - Name and ID# of sketcher
 - Name and ID# of person verifying measurements
 - Location of sketch
 - Date completed
 - Legend
 - North-facing direction (usually points to top of page)

- Identification symbols used for information in the sketch
 - Use compass points to identify walls
 - Use evidence numbers assigned to objects to identify them in the sketch
- Scale used
- “Not Drawn to Scale”
- Creating a Projection Sketch
 - Determine the view to be shown in the sketch: overhead or exploded.
 - The overhead view shows a floor plan. This is the most frequently used view in sketches.
 - The exploded view shows a floor plan with walls laid out flat. Objects on the floor and on walls, such as bullet holes or bloodstains, are shown in their relative positions in the exploded view sketch.
 - Draw an outline that is to scale of the area of interest, including locations of approaches and accurate measurements of the perimeter. The size of the outline should fill as much of the paper as possible.
 - Draw the rough sketch before anything is moved or destroyed, and after photographs are taken. Do not alter the scene. Show locations of windows and doors. Use a curved line to indicate the direction that each door opens.
 - Use only the selected units of measurement. The sketch or accompanying notes should indicate where a measurement of an object was taken (e.g., middle of the object, near-corner, far-corner, etc.). Measurements of bloodstains are often done on a metric scale (e.g., millimeters).
 - Whenever possible, have another officer or crime scene investigator observe measurements for confirmation purposes.
 - Take measurements from fixed locations, such as a wall or curb, or from a stationary appliance. Identify these locations in your report.
 - Measurements should be accurate to within $\frac{1}{4}$ inch.
 - Include height measurements to show how far off of the ground an object was found.
 - Ensure that all identification symbols used on the sketch are included and defined on the legend.
 - Finished sketches can be completed either by the originator of the rough sketches or by another staff member, such as a draftsman or artist.
- Measurements
 - Body location measurements
 - Crown of head
 - Wrists
 - Ankles
 - Belly button
 - Height measurements to each point if body is not flat on the ground
- Rectangular Coordinate Method
 - The rectangular coordinate method is used when measuring the distance to an object from two mutually perpendicular objects, such as walls that meet at a 90-degree angle.
- Triangulation Method
 - The triangulation method utilizes two fixed permanent objects within the crime scene. Measurements are taken from each fixed point to each piece of evidence.
- Polar Coordinate Method
 - The polar coordinate method is more appropriate for an outdoor scene in which only a single fixed or reference point is present. Measure both the distance and direction (angle) an object is from a known reference point. The angle can be measured with

either a large protractor or an optical device such as a transit or a compass. The protractor technique with a 360-degree protractor is useful for underwater scenes.

- Transecting Baseline Coordinate Method
 - Used to measure items of evidence when there are numerous objects in the crime scene and other measuring techniques will not work. This is accomplished by laying a tape measure down so that it crosses the entire room or area to be measured. This first tape measure becomes the baseline for all other measurements in the crime scene. Measurements are then made perpendicularly from this tape by laying another tape measure at a 90-degree angle to the first tape and measuring to the evidence.
- Recording measurements