


DOCUMENTATION with PHOTOGRAPHS

THE CRIME SCENE

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DOCUMENTING THE CRIME SCENE

- Photography/Video
- Sketches → Diagrams
- Notes → Report

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CRIME SCENE PHOTOS

- PROVIDE A PERMANENT VISUAL RECORD OF THE SCENE
- SHOW EVIDENCE AND OBJECTS IN RELATION TO EACH OTHER
- DOCUMENT EVIDENCE THAT CANNOT BE ADEQUATELY DESCRIBED USING WORDS
- REFRESH THE MEMORIES OF WITNESSES

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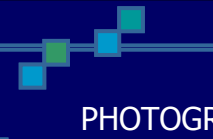


CRIME SCENE PHOTOS

- HELP RECONSTRUCT THE CRIME
- SUPPORT OR DO NOT SUPPORT WITNESS/VICTIM/SUSPECT STATEMENTS
- RECORD ITEMS THAT MAY BE OVERLOOKED BY PERSONNEL AT THE SCENE

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PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE

- ALLOWS THE COURT AND JURY TO VIEW THE SCENE & EVIDENCE EXACTLY AS YOU FOUND IT
- MAY BE STORED INDEFINITELY

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WHEN TO TAKE PHOTOGRAPHS

- AS SOON AS THE INVESTIGATION PERMITS
- BEFORE THE BODY OR ANY OBJECT IS MOVED OR DISTURBED

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COLLECTION AND PRESERVATION
OF EVIDENCE

PHOTOGRAPHING THE SCENE

DECIDE WHAT YOU WANT EACH PHOTOGRAPH TO SHOW (COMPOSITION)

- KEEP IN MIND THE NATURE OF THE OFFENSE, AND SHOW THE ELEMENTS OF THE CRIME

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TYPES OF PHOTOS

- LOCATION ESTABLISHING
- ORIENTATION
- MID RANGE
- CLOSE-UP
- EXTREME CLOSE UP

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LOCATION ESTABLISHING PHOTOS

- Are used to establish the location of a scene and do not show evidence
 - Street *sign*
 - House or apartment *number*
 - Apartment complex *sign*
 - San Jose State University *sign*
 - Room *number*

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ORIENTATION PHOTOS

- Are taken from far enough away from the center of the scene to show context and area
- Aid in orienting a jury
- May or may not show evidence, but it is seen from far away

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MID RANGE PHOTOS

- Taken within approx 6-12 feet of the object you are trying to show
- Shows the specific object desired in the center of the photo
- Includes objects which may be seen in the orientation shots (only closer)
- Draws the viewer into the scene

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CLOSE-UP PHOTOS

- Clearly show the item of interest (gun, knife, tool mark on window, footprints, etc.) in the center of the photo
- **Objects should appear as large as possible in the frame, without cutting off any edge of the object**
- Used to further clarify evidence
- May require special lighting

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CLOSE-UP PHOTOS

- Require ruler or scale for non-standard sized items, or for items not being collected whose size or shape is important
 - Blood spatter, wounds
- A ruler is NOT REQUIRED for most close-ups
- For close-up photos that do require a ruler
 - Film plane parallel to object, 50 mm lens
 - If this is done correctly, a 1:1 (actual size) photograph may be produced which can then be analyzed by a specialist
 - Ex, blood spatter analyst

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EXTREME CLOSE-UPS

- These photos show detail on an object
- Detail should be as large as possible and in the center of the photo
 - Serial number on a gun
 - Hair stuck to the end of a knife
 - Sliver of glass in a wound
 - Blood on a rope
 - Etc.

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PHOTOGRAPHING THE SCENE

- How many photos are needed?
 - No simple answer -- as many as are required by the circumstances of the case
 - Better to overshoot than undershoot
 - Experience will answer the question
 - A number of important photographs should always be made at each scene

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PHOTOGRAPHING THE SCENE

- Location
 - Exterior photographs
 - Location and condition of doors and windows
 - Surrounding area
 - Aerial photographs (in some cases)

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PHOTOGRAPHING THE SCENE

- Important Photographs
 - Witness view
 - Victim as viewed from number of locations
 - Overlapping photographs (visual tags)
 - Negative evidence

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PHOTOGRAPHING THE SCENE

- Evidence photographs
 - Always photograph evidence (orientation, midrange and close-up) prior to examination or removal

Can you think of a situation where you *might not be able to* take a photo of an evidence item before you have to move it?

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PHOTOGRAPHING THE SCENE

- Take a complete set of photos including
 - Immediate crime scene
 - Adjacent areas
 - Location establishing shots (street sign/house address)
 - Overviews of scene
 - Points of exit and entry
 - Escape path
 - The entire room (indoors)

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PHOTOGRAPHING A BODY

- Position of body
- Location within scene (orientation & midrange)
- Injuries (without disturbing/moving)
- Weapons near body
- Victim's hands
- Tattoos
- Clothing
- Area under body once body is moved

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VIDEO

- The continuity of moving images makes it easy for the viewer to understand scope of scene
- Pan slowly, keep camera steady
- Turn microphone off
 - Why?
- **Video does not replace still photography**
- Is it supplementary only

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ADMISSIBILITY OF PHOTOGRAPHS

- Must be authentic
 - Photographer testifies that the photograph accurately depicts the area or object
 - Color, scale, condition, location
- Must be relevant and material to the issue in question
- Must be in focus & properly exposed

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ADMISSIBILITY, cont.

- The photograph must not appeal to the emotion or tend to prejudice the judge or jury
- Admissibility rulings are issued by the judge, and may be objected to by either side
- An objection must occur at the time the evidence is entered at trial
- Whether overruled or sustained, the objection may be used later on at appeal

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