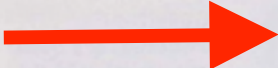


Grades 9-12 NTI Day #10 Forensics

Assignment: Please read the excerpt below as an independent reading assignment. Then read and answer the questions below the excerpt.

Start Reading Here



Searching the Crime Scene

Investigators must establish a center of operations, or **command center**, at the scene. Here, members of the investigative team receive their assignments, store their equipment, and meet to discuss aspects of the case. The command center must be located outside the taped-off boundary of the scene and contain the basic equipment needed to photograph, sketch, process, and collect evidence. An equipped crime-scene vehicle usually serves the purpose well. If multiple scenes are involved, the command center should also be a center for communicating with investigators at the other scenes. At the command center, the lead investigator assigns tasks after the initial walk-through. Basic tasks include locating possible evidence, assessing the evidence, processing evidence (e.g., dusting for fingerprints and casting footprints or tire impressions), and photographing and sketching the scene. The tasks should be carried out in this exact order to properly process the scene. The number of personnel assigned to each task depends on the scene and the discretion of the lead investigator. In some cases, a single crime-scene investigator might be required to handle all these tasks.

Considerations in Searching the Crime Scene How one conducts a crimescene search will depend on the locale and size of the area, as well as on the actions of the suspect(s) and victim(s) at the scene. When possible, one person should supervise and coordinate the collection of evidence. Without proper control, the search may be conducted in an atmosphere of confusion with needless duplication of effort. Evidence collectors may subdivide the scene into segments and search each segment individually, or the search may start at some outer point and gradually move toward the center of the scene in a circular fashion (see Figure 2-7). The areas searched must include all probable points of entry and exit used by the criminals.

What to search for will be determined by the particular circumstances of the crime. Obviously, the skill of crime-scene investigators at recognizing evidence and searching relevant locations is paramount to successful processing of the crime scene. Although training will impart general knowledge for conducting a proper crime-scene investigation, ultimately the investigator must rely on the experience gained from numerous investigations to formulate a successful strategy for recovering relevant physical evidence at crime scenes. For example, in a homicide case, the search will center on the weapon and any type of evidence left as a result of contact between the victim and the assailant. The cross-transfer of evidence, such as hairs, fibers, and blood, between individuals involved in the crime is particularly useful for linking suspects to the crime scene and for corroborating events that transpired during the commission of the crime. During the investigation of a burglary, efforts will be made to locate tool marks at the point of entry. In most crimes, a thorough and systematic search for latent fingerprints is required.

Vehicle searches must be carefully planned and systematically carried out. The nature of the case determines how detailed the search must be. In hit-and-run cases, the outside and undercarriage of the car must be examined with care. Particular attention is paid to looking for any evidence resulting from a cross-transfer of evidence between the car and the victim—including blood, tissue, hair, fibers, and fabric impressions. Traces of paint or broken glass may be located on the victim. In cases of homicide, burglary, kidnapping, and so on, all areas of the vehicle, inside and outside, are searched with equal care for physical evidence.

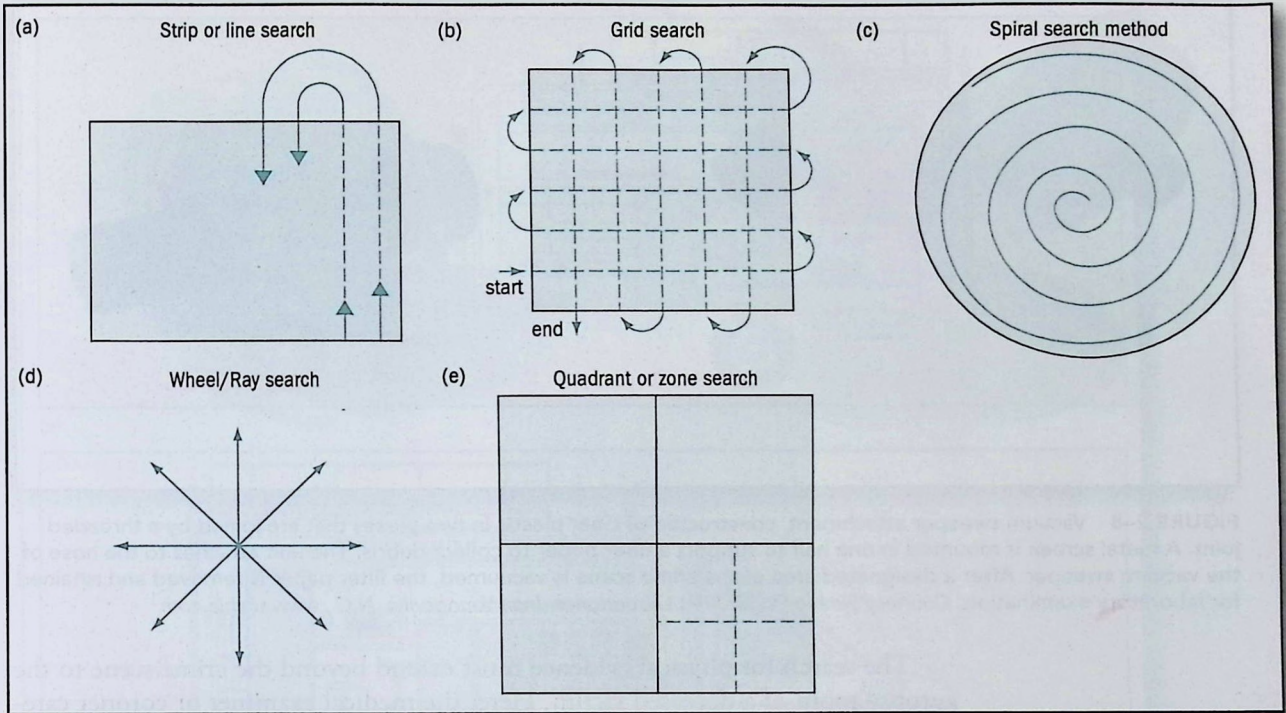


FIGURE 2-7 Several typical examples of crime-scene search patterns. The pattern selected normally depends on the size and locale of the scene and the number of collectors participating in the search.

STOP reading here.
Skip to questions.

Multiple-Choice Questions

1. **What is the primary purpose of establishing a command center at a crime scene?**
 - a) To detain suspects for questioning
 - b) To assign tasks, store equipment, and coordinate the investigation
 - c) To photograph evidence
 - d) To interrogate witnesses
 2. **Which search pattern is typically used when the search starts at an outer point and gradually moves toward the center of the scene?**
 - a) Grid search
 - b) Spiral search
 - c) Line search
 - d) Quadrant search
 3. **In a burglary investigation, what specific type of evidence is most likely to be searched for at the point of entry?**
 - a) Blood samples
 - b) Tool marks
 - c) Hair fibers
 - d) Tire impressions
-

Short-Answer Question

Explain why it is important for investigators to carefully plan and conduct systematic searches at a crime scene. How do the type of crime and the actions of the suspect or victim influence the search strategy?
