

Preserving evidence

Victims – of crime

- **Avoid touching any evidence where possible**
- **If there is a necessity to touch the item, use a sterile/clean glove/bin bag (inside out) or similar**
- **If you need to move the item to protect/preserve it, take a close-up photo that has a time and date stamp and show where the item was, and its general location**
- **If you need to cover over the object with something, the cover must not come into contact with any part of the item and should be as clean as practicable.**

Visible footprint

Are there any signs of a visible footprint left behind? Particularly a footprint with a pattern from the sole in it?

If so, cover the footprint with something like an upturned washing up bowl. Ensure it is big enough to cover the whole print. If the bowl is likely to blow away, place something heavy on top like a stone or similar to keep it in position. Be sure not to touch any part of the footprint. If the footprint is inside, follow the above procedure to protect it. If the footprint is in snow, leave it uncovered to avoid it melting.

Tools, cans, bottles and cigarette butts

Have any items been left behind by the suspect(s)? Any tools or implements, any cigarette ends, bottles or cans?

If so, do the same as above; cover them, making sure you do not touch them. If the found item(s) cannot be left outside, for example if the weather is bad, then find a **clean and unused** bin liner, carrier bag, food bag or similar. Place your hand inside the bag or put your hand on the outside of the bag and pick up the item with the untouched inner surface (like a hand puppet). Pick the item up, touching as little of it as possible, then pull the rest of the bag over the item. Store the item somewhere dry, out of the reach of other people in a place that will not be disturbed. A cupboard, away from children and pets would be a good choice.

Preserving blood or visible fingerprints

Has the suspect cut themselves? Is there any blood present at the scene of the crime? Is there a visible fingerprint at the crime scene, perhaps on some glass or a highly polished surface?

If possible, avoid disturbing the area where the evidence is, keeping children and pets away from it.

Do not cover these over with anything as it could contaminate or disrupt the evidence.

Broken glass

If you need to clean up, for pets, dogs or moving about, sweep the glass into a pile, to one side or into a box so it can be assessed, if required.