

# FOOTWEAR EVIDENCE COLLECTION

**Footwear Evidence Collection:** The ability to make comparisons between shoes and an impression depends entirely on the quality of the photographs and casts and/or “lifts” of the impression. Please follow directions carefully.

## A. Photographs of impressions

1. If using film, use TMAX 100 black and white film. If using digital, use TIFF or RAW formats, not JPEG, whenever possible.
2. Fill the camera frame with the whole impression.
3. Include an accurate scale or ruler **at the same level as the impression** in the picture. Place the scale as close **to the impression** as possible without touching the impression.
4. The camera **lens must be completely parallel to the impression** for all pictures (angled photos distort the image).
5. Position a flashlight or flash with sync. cord so that the light source is at least five feet away from the impression. Do not use flash, only side lighting if necessary.
6. Keeping a log of the photos, photograph the impression from **north, south, east and west** with three different lighting angles for a total of 12 photos.

**NOTE: For dust impressions:** dust impressions can often be lifted. Place the flash or flashlight at the same level as the impression and photograph using a bracket of exposures. Photograph in total darkness if possible.

7. Submit photos and negatives to the lab, packaged in an evidence envelope with evidence tape and initials to seal.
8. Submit comparison shoes, if available, packaged in paper bags with evidence tape and initials to seal.
9. Phone forensic laboratory for assistance.

**B. Casting of impressions:** In case of tire tracks and other difficult or unusual situations, please contact the forensic laboratory for assistance.

**REMEMBER:** Casts back up photographs. Photograph properly first, then cast.

1. Place 1 ½ pounds of dental stone and 9oz of water in a large, heavy-duty ziplock bag and mix well.
2. Carefully pour the mixture onto the impression using a stick to deflect the direct stream and prevent damage to the impression.
2. Wait at least 20 minutes before attempting to lift the cast.

**DO NOT CLEAN THE CAST!**

4. Label casting with black permanent marker.
5. After the **cast has dried for 24 hours**, wrap in **PAPER** (never use plastic!) sealed with tape.
6. Place the wrapped casting in a box. **PAD WELL** with newspapers or other packing material. Seal the box with evidence tape and initials.