

# ***Criminal Investigation,***

Seventh Edition

## Chapter Three

The Crime Scene and Its Associated  
Procedures

# *Organization of the Crime Scene Investigation*

- Department policies may vary as to who is in charge of the scene, however, in many cases the first officer on the scene is in charge until relieved by an investigator.
- Agencies may assign a crime scene coordinator, who coordinates the needed services.

# *Typical Crime Scene Problems*

- Agency resources are finite.
- Individuals at the crime scene may be emotional.
- Equipment may not be available.
- Too many people may be at the scene, including the top administrators as “tourists.”

# *Rules for the Crime Scene Investigator*

- The crime scene must be controlled and protected.
- The department must make plans for dealing with the media during criminal investigations.
  - The release of appropriate information to the media is critical, otherwise, (and even if) the members of the media may seek out evidence and witnesses on their own.

# *Rules for the Crime Scene Investigator*

- Certain information may be released to the media. The information includes:
  1. If an arrest is made the name, age, gender, residence, employment, marital status, and similar background information, unless (in many states) the suspect is a juvenile.
  2. The nature of the crime for which the arrest was made, and the identity of the complainant, if disclosing this information does not create a danger for the complainant and will not result in serious embarrassment to him or her or does not run counter to other reasons of good judgment or applicable laws concerning information about victims.

# *Rules for the Crime Scene Investigator*

3. The identities of any other agencies participating in the investigation and/or making the arrest, as well as those of the individual officers involved.
4. The circumstances surrounding the arrest, such as the time and place, extent of any pursuit, amount of resistance, possession and use of weapons, injuries (notification should be made to the family should proceed disclosing serious injury). In many cases it may be appropriate to notify the victim of the status of the offender.

# *Rules for the Crime Scene Investigator*

- The media should not be informed of the following, or the department members should not:
  1. Require the suspect to pose for photographs.
  2. Reenact the crime.
  3. Disclose that the suspect told where weapons, proceeds of the crime, or other material were located.
  4. Refer to the suspect in derogatory ways or words.

# *Rules for the Crime Scene Investigator*

5. Revealing that the suspect declined to take certain types of test, or that the suspect did take certain tests.
6. Telling the press the results of any tests.
7. Making statements about the guilt or innocence of the suspect.
8. Releasing the identities of prospective witnesses or commenting on the nature of their anticipated testimony or credibility.
9. Making speculative statements.
10. Disclosing information about the victim(s) that are in violation of any laws, or do not support the victim in their efforts to maintain their privacy.

# *Crime Scene Approaches*

- Inclusiveness – include all possible evidence and evidence that supports or is important in all possible theories of the crime.
- Protection from infectious disease – take care to avoid exposure to disease. Be aware of and make use of protective equipment.

# *Crime Scene Approaches*

- Documentation:
  1. Worksheet – tracking what steps were taken during processing the crime scene.
  2. Narrative description – detailing the appearance of the crime scene.
  3. Video log – showing what taping was done, by whom and in what sequence.
  4. Photographic log – describing each photograph.

# *Crime Scene Approaches*

- Documentation:
  5. Diagram or sketch – illustrating the location of significant crime scene features and the points at which each piece evidence was located.
  6. Evidence recovery – log the collection and other information about the evidence collected.
  7. Latent print log – shows where prints were found.

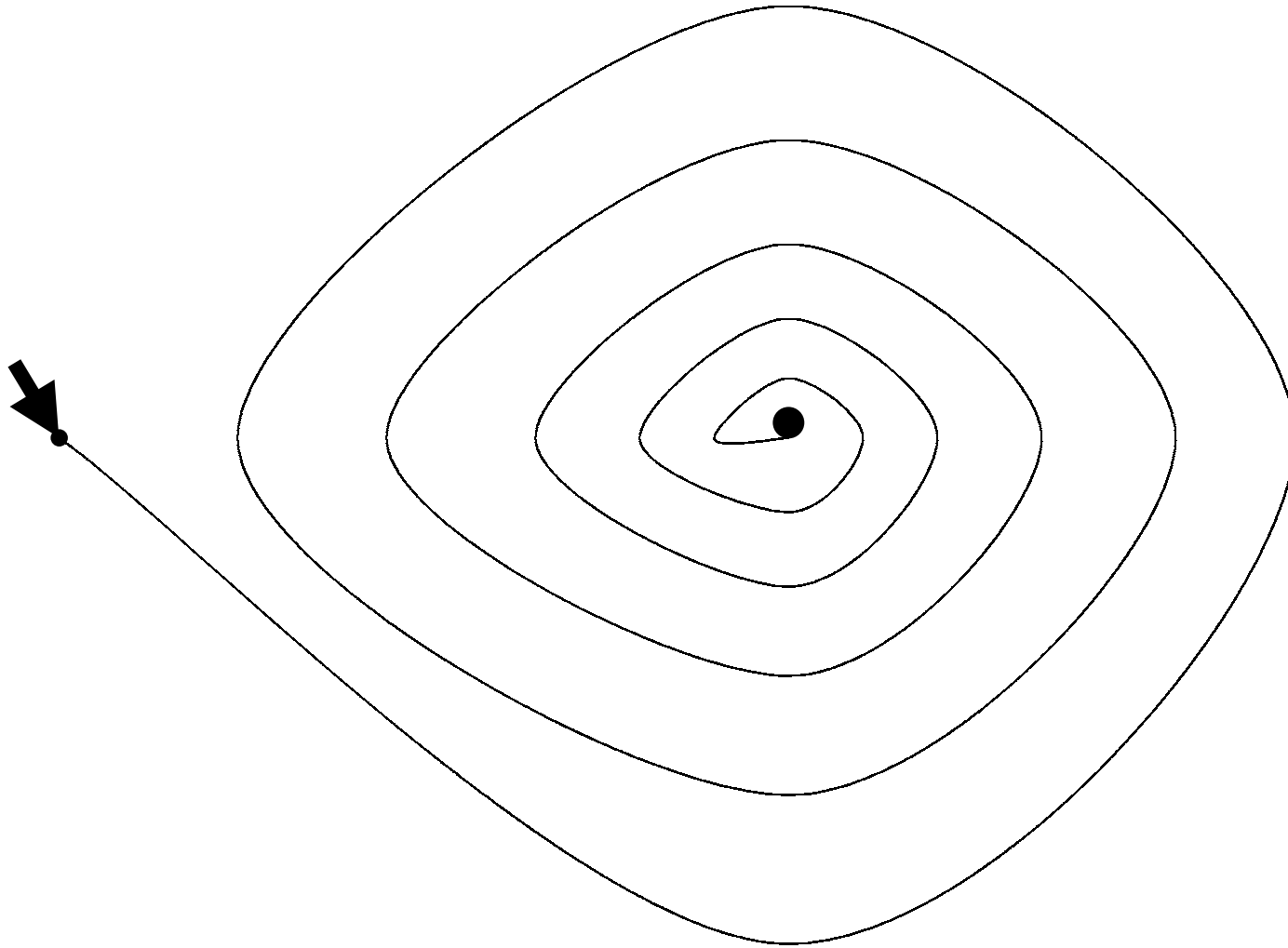
# *Types of Evidence*

- Corpus Delicti – substantiates the elements of the crime.
- Associative Evidence – bidirectional in that it connects the perpetrator to the scene of the victim.
- Tracing Evidence – leads to the identification and location of the suspect.

# *The Crime Scene Search*

- The limits of the crime scene must be established prior to any search.
- There are several search patterns. These include:
  - Spiral Search Pattern
  - Strip Search Pattern
  - Grid Search Pattern
  - Zone Search Pattern
  - Pie Search, or Wheel, Pattern

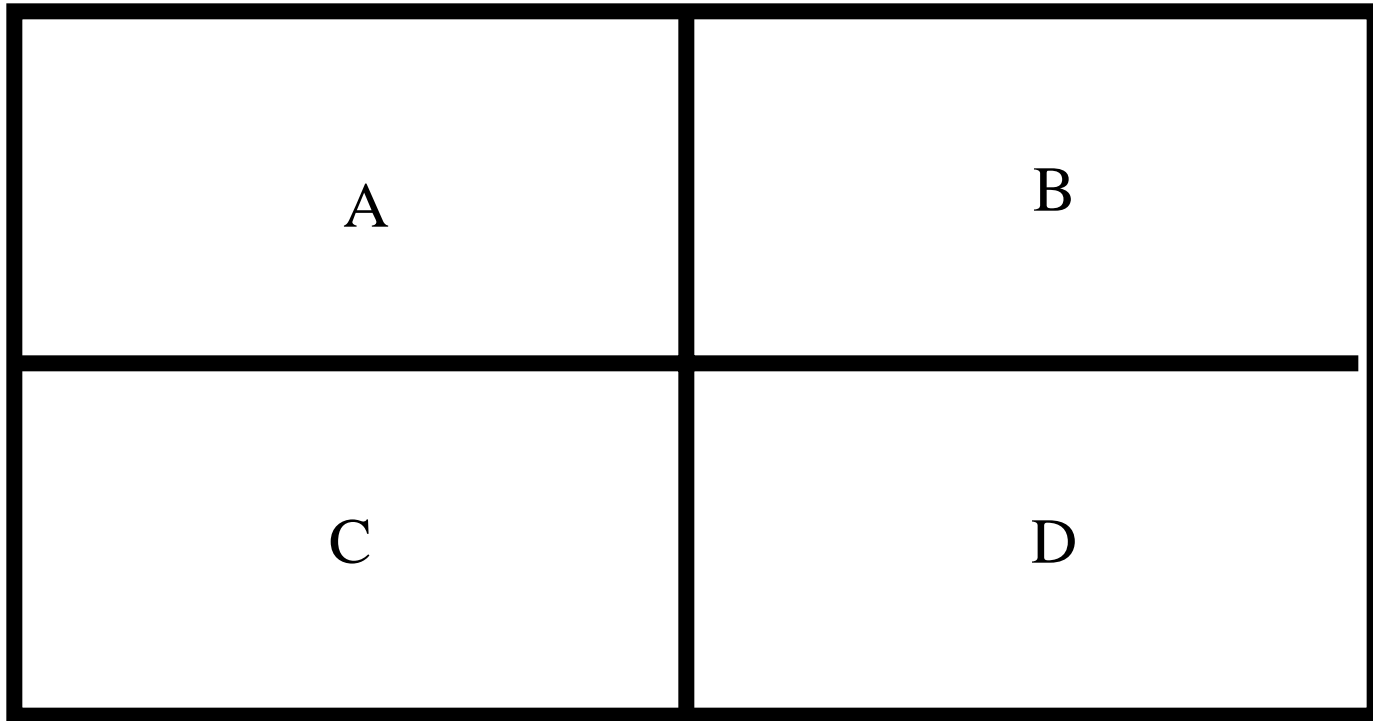
# *Spiral Search Pattern*



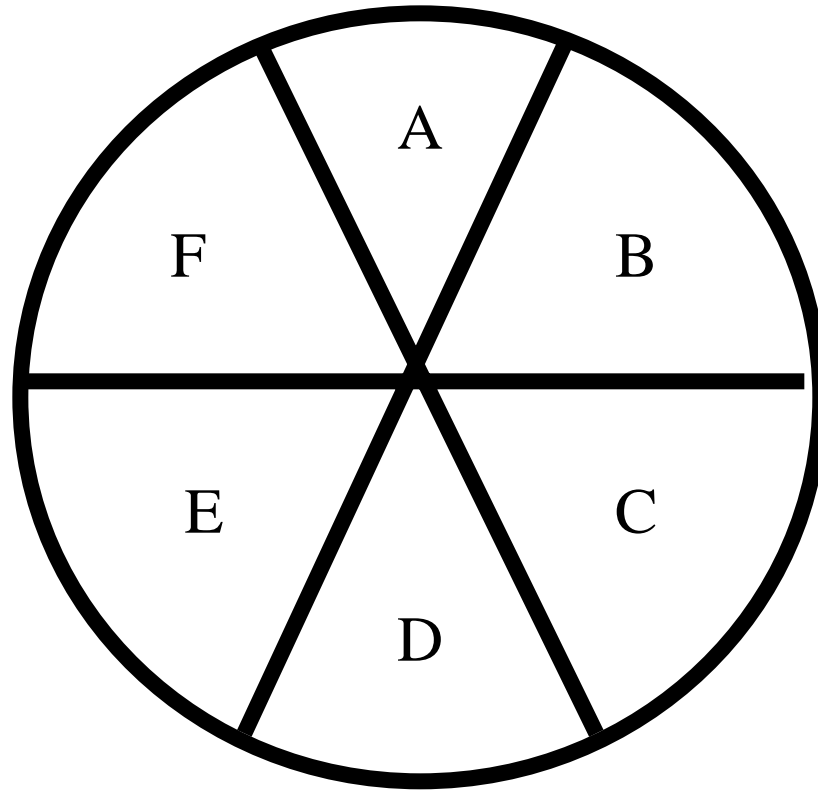
# *Strip Search Pattern*



# *Zone Search Pattern*



# *Pie Search, or Wheel, Pattern*



# *Searching*

**The techniques of searching are important and follow through is critical. In one case the officers carefully searched the scene, using the “Grid Search Pattern” and did not find a shell casing that was left at the scene following a shooting. After the search was completed and the shell not found the officers had given up. As they were leaving one officer looked down at his feet and in front of his foot was the shell. Two things; don’t give up, and second, there is some luck involved in investigations, but the luck usually follows some hard work.**

# ***The Collection and Care of Evidence***

## **Legal requirements include:**

- 1. Identify each piece of evidence, even years after it was collected.**
- 2. Describe the location and condition of the item at the time it was collected.**
- 3. Assist in establishing that, from the time of its collection until presentation in court, the evidence was continuously in proper custody.**
- 4. Assist in describing any changes that may have occurred in the evidence between the time of collection and the subsequent introduction as evidence in court.**

# *Record Keeping Systems for Evidence*

1. Prevent loss or unauthorized release of evidence.
2. Establish custodial responsibility for evidence.
3. List, identify, and indicate the location of items held in custody.
4. Require a supervisor's approval before evidence is released.

# *Photographic Requirements*

1. Show the line of approach to, and flight from the scene.
2. Significant adjacent areas, such as the area around the crime scene.
3. Close up photographs of the entrance and exit to the area or building.
4. A general photograph showing the location of evidence.

# *Photographic Requirements*

5. Photographs of the importance evidence from different views.
6. Close ups of critical evidence.
7. Area once the critical evidence has been removed.
8. View of stains.
9. Location of fingerprints (latent) lifted. If possible photographs of the actual prints prior to lifting the prints.

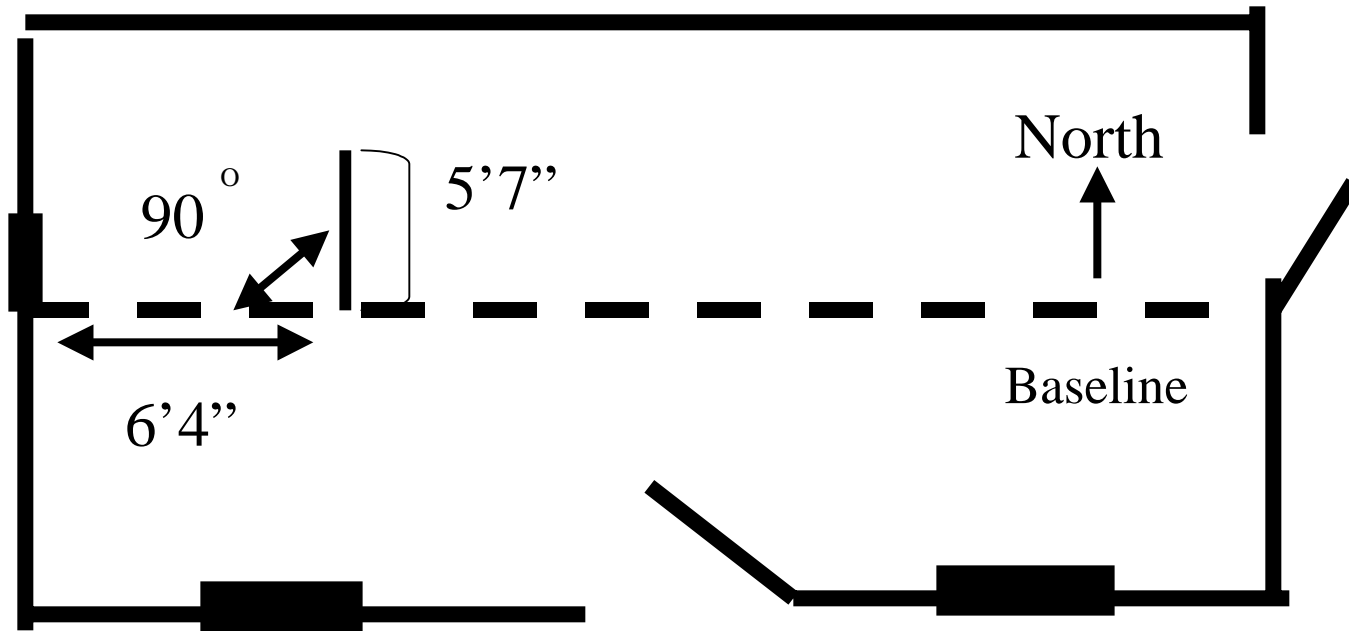
# ***What to be Included in a Sketch***

1. The investigator's full name.
2. The date, time, crime classification, and case number.
3. The full name of any person assisting in taking measurements.
4. The address of the crime scene, its location within a building, landmarks, and compass directions.

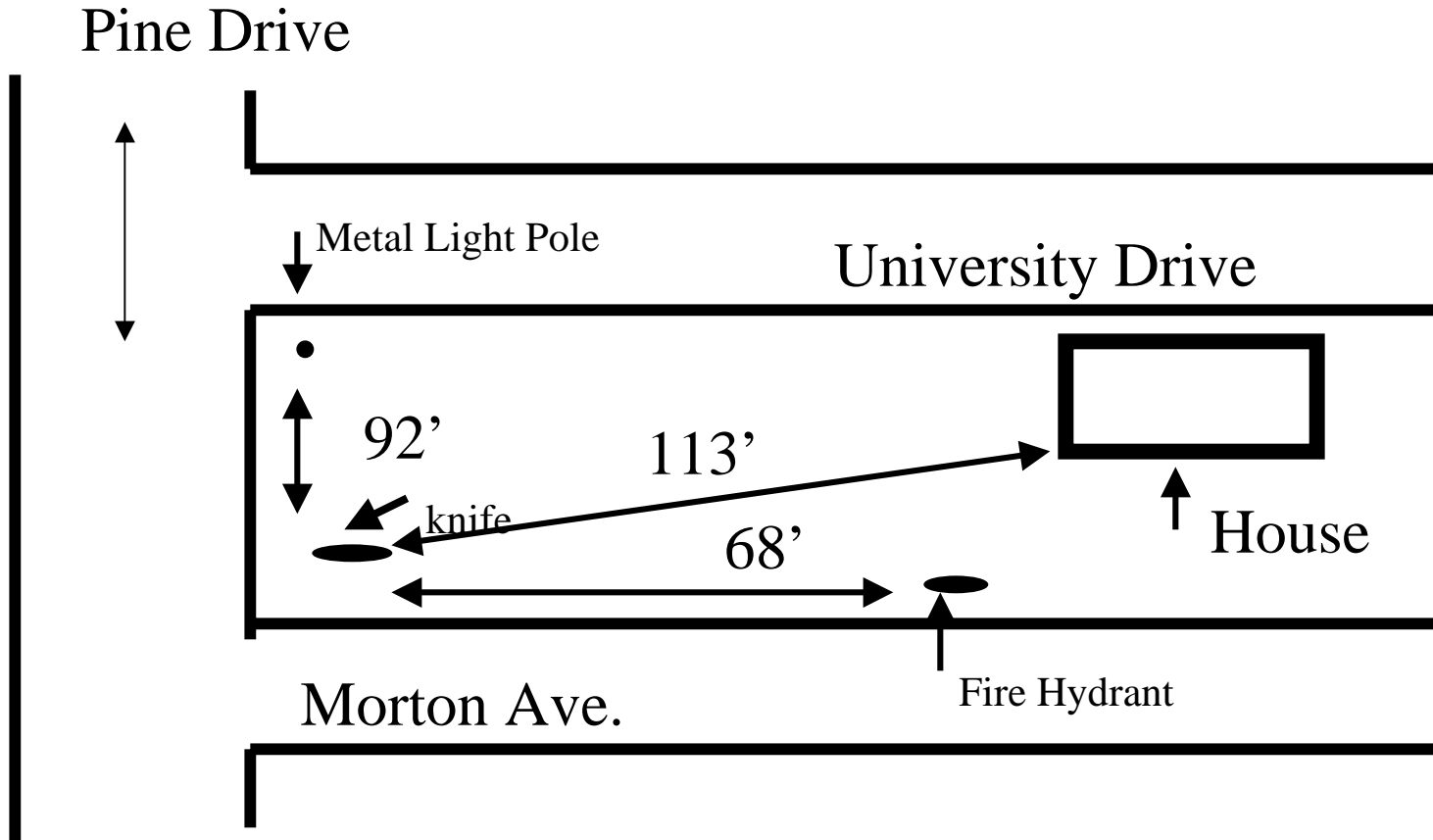
# ***What to be Included in a Sketch***

5. The scale of the drawing. Or a note that the drawing is not to scale.
6. Include the major items of evidence and critical features at the scene.
7. A legend that identifies points of interest.

# *Baseline, or Coordinate, Method of Sketching*



# *Triangulation Method*



***The End***