

Vocabulary: Fingerprinting



Vocabulary

- **Accidental whorl** – a type of fingerprint that includes two or more different patterns (other than a plain arch).
 - Accidental whorls include prints that do not fall into other print subgroups. They may include one or more characteristics from other patterns.
- **Arch** – a fingerprint pattern in which ridges enter one side of the print, curve upward and then downward, and then exit on the opposite side.
- **Central pocket loop whorl** – a type of pattern in which the ridges form a circular whorl inside a loop.
- **Double loop whorl** – a type of whorl pattern containing two separate loops.
 - Also referred to as twinned loops.
- **Fingerprint** – a distinct pattern of raised ridges found on the tip of a finger, or the impression made on a surface by these ridges.
 - No two people, not even identical twins, have the exact same fingerprints. Fingerprints remain the same throughout a person's life.
 - Each person has ten unique fingerprints—one for each finger and thumb.
 - Other animals—such as chimpanzees, gorillas and koalas—have fingerprints.
- **Fingerprint powder** – a fine powder designed to stick to the skin oils that make up latent fingerprints.
- **Latent print** – an invisible print formed by the transfer of skin oils to another surface.
 - Latent prints tend to form on smooth, hard surfaces such as a glass or countertop.
- **Loop** – a fingerprint pattern containing ridges that enter from one side of the print and then curve around to exit on the same side of the print.
- **Minutiae** – small details in the ridge pattern that can help in matching two prints.
 - Some examples of minutiae include islands, bridges, lakes, and bifurcations.



Accidental whorl



Arch



Central pocket loop whorl



Double loop whorl



Loop

- Patent print – a visible print made when a finger comes into contact with a visible substance such as blood, ink, or paint. The substance on the ridges of the finger is then transferred to another surface, leaving a stamp of the print.
- Plain arch – a type of arch containing ridges that curve gradually and do not form sharp peaks or angles.
- Plain whorl – a pattern in which the ridges form concentric circles.
- Plastic print – a visible, three-dimensional impression formed when a finger touches a soft material such as soap, clay, wet paint, or butter.
- Radial loop – a type of loop fingerprint in which the ridges enter and exit from the direction of the thumb.
 - The ridges in a radial loop come from the direction of the radius, a bone on the thumb side of the forearm.
- Tented arch – a type of arch containing ridges that curve up sharply to form a distinct peak, like a tent.
- Ulnar loop – a type of loop fingerprint in which the ridges enter and exit from the direction of the little finger.
 - The ridges in an ulnar loop come from the direction of the ulna, a bone on the little finger side of the forearm.
- Whorl – a fingerprint pattern that contains either a series of concentric circles or a combination of other patterns.



Plain arch



Plain whorl



Tented arch