

Dusting for Fingerprints

SCIENCE - DACTYLOSCOPY

MATERIALS:

- Hand lotion
- Powder (I used flour because I didn't have baby powder)
- Scotch tape
- Small brush (soft like a paint brush)
- Magnifying glasses (if you have one)

EXPERIMENT: DUSTING FOR FINGERPRINTS

Dactyloscopy [dak-tuh-los-kuh-pee] is the study of fingerprints.

Fingerprints are made of series of ridges and grooves on the surface of a finger; the loops, twists, and arches formed by those ridges and grooves generally follow a number of distinct patterns. The police, detectives and FBI use fingerprints to investigate crime scenes.

Rub a small amount of lotion on hands/fingertips to help make prints easier to find.

Find a small surface area (a table works) to press your fingers and leave your prints. Next, sprinkle a small amount of powder onto the surface that you touched. (You can see I didn't use much in the photos below... but it was still a little bit too much!)

Use a brush to GENTLY brush away the excess powder.

Be sure to leave the prints intact.

Place a piece of scotch tape on top of the powdery print, then lift the tape. If you have black paper, stick the tape onto the black paper to see if your print will transfer! (Mine didn't work great on the tape... I think just because I used flour. If yours doesn't work just stick a piece of scotch tape onto one of your fingertips.

Peel off carefully and inspect your fingerprint on the tape!

Use a magnifying glass for closer observation.

