

Powders

Table of Contents

1	INTRODUCTION/SCOPE	2
2	LIMITATIONS	2
3	EQUIPMENT	2
4	PROCEDURE	2
4.1	Application	2
4.1.1	Nonmagnetic Powders	2
4.1.2	Magnetic Powders.....	2
5	SAFETY	3
6	REVISION HISTORY	3

Powders

1 INTRODUCTION/SCOPE

Powdering is the application of finely ground, colored powder, which adheres to moisture, oils, and other residues, used by FBI Laboratory Friction Ridge Discipline personnel to develop latent prints.

2 LIMITATIONS

None

3 EQUIPMENT

- Nonmagnetic powders
- Magnetic powders
- Applicators

4 PROCEDURE

4.1 Application

4.1.1 Nonmagnetic Powders

- A. Personnel will complete the following steps in order:
 1. Pour needed amount of powder into a small pile or dish.
 2. Dip brush bristle tips into powder.
 3. Gently brush surface.
 4. Brush in direction of any ridges that begin to appear.
 5. Build powder onto ridges and stop when latent print reaches a point of sufficient development.
- B. For additional clarity, cotton may be swabbed across the item to increase contrast between the print(s) and the surface of the item.
- C. Personnel should be cognizant of potential contamination issues when conducting examinations (e.g., contamination across different cases or different items or contamination brushes or containers of powder.)
- D. Capture appropriate friction ridge detail as applicable (digitally or photographically).

4.1.2 Magnetic Powders

- A. Personnel will complete the following steps in order:
 1. Place magnetic wand with magnet engaged into a suitable amount of magnetic powder to produce a bristle-like effect at the end of the wand when withdrawn.
 2. Brush lightly along item surface, ensuring that only the powder touches the surface.
 3. Brush in direction of any ridges that begin to appear.
 4. Build powder onto ridges and stop when latent print reaches a point of sufficient development.

- 5. When finished, release excess powder into container by disengaging the magnet.
- B. For additional clarity, excess powder can be removed from the print(s) and surrounding area using an empty magnetic wand.
- C. Personnel should be cognizant of potential contamination issues when conducting examinations (e.g., contamination across different cases or different items or contamination brushes or containers of powder.)
- D. Capture appropriate friction ridge detail as applicable (digitally or photographically).

5 SAFETY

See [FBI Laboratory Safety Manual](#) for appropriate information.

6 REVISION HISTORY

Revision	Issued	Changes
02	07/15/2021	Replace Latent Print Units with Friction Ridge Discipline. Minor wording changes. Streamline equipment list. Re-organization and re-numbering of sections. Section 3.1 - broken into Section 3.1.1 and Section 3.1.2 and added capture information.
03	07/15/2022	Reformatted