



FORENSIC SCIENCE

The place where crimes like theft, murder, and terrorist attacks take place is called the Once a serious crime has been reported, detectives head straight for the scene and seal it off to prevent anyone from removing or destroying any that may be there.

A detective's first job is to try to make sense of the crime scene and understand exactly what has happened. This isn't always as easy as it seems. Imagine being called to a house by a neighbour who has heard loud piercing screams. You discover smashed windows, scattered clothes and papers, and a body shot dead in a bedroom. There's a shaken man outside who's trying to tell you about a car he saw screeching away from the house minutes after shots were fired. Are you investigating a robbery? A murder? Maybe the dead person suicide and the person who sped from the scene was racing off to get help? Perhaps the was mistaken and the speeding car had nothing to do with the crime? Has the person in the car gone on to commit other crimes elsewhere? Maybe the man you're talking to is actually the murderer? There are often many possible explanations for what has happened. Establishing the exact sequence of events immediately before and after the crime was committed is a vital part of any criminal

Depending on the type of crime and how it was committed, there can be many different types of evidence at the scene. There might be on doors or windows, on drinking glasses left on tables, or on many other objects around the scene. If someone has been shot, there could be discarded or powder residues. One of the hardest things for a forensic scientist is separating out the really important evidence from all the other things they may find. If they discover hairs on a carpet in a bank where a robbery has taken place, they could well be hairs from the robber's head. Equally, though, they could be hairs from the hundreds or thousands of people who passed innocently through the bank in the weeks or months before. Somehow the forensic scientists have to sort out the one or two pieces of really important evidence from