

TENNESSEE BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Forensic Services Division

Violent Crime Response Team Standard Operating Procedures Diagramming and Sketching



10.17 Crime Scene Sketching & Diagramming

10.17.1 Purpose

Sketches and diagrams are a record of the locations and relationships of items of evidence and objects at a scene. They can help VCRT members refresh their memory and/or prepare documentation for court.

10.17.2 Equipment & Reagents

Pen
Pencil
Paper

10.17.3 Procedure

10.17.3.1 Rough Sketch

A rough sketch is prepared to show the locations and relationships of various items of evidence and other objects within the scene. These sketches are usually done while at the scene and may be done in pencil.

10.17.3.2 Diagram

Final diagram(s) may be prepared if requested by the customer or at the discretion of the VCRT Leader. This is normally done after the scene is complete and usually involves a 2D or 3D diagramming program (e.g., SmartDraw, Crime Zone, 3D Home Architect, 3D Eyewitness, Adobe Photoshop, Edge FX, Google Sketchup, PowerPoint, etc.).

10.17.3.3 Sketches and diagrams and the items of evidence or objects included within should be in proportion to one another, as much as possible.

10.17.3.4 Sketches and diagrams may be prepared in the following ways based on the scene and at VCRT members' discretion.

10.17.3.4.1 Floor Plan View

A floor plan or "bird's eye view" sketch is the most common type. It is a sketch on one horizontal plane that shows the scene as if viewed from above.

10.17.3.4.2 Elevation Plan View

A sketch of one vertical plane that illustrates the scene as viewed from the side. An elevation sketch is used when the vertical rather



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than the horizontal plane is of interest. For example, if bloodstains or bullet defects were observed on a wall, the elevation sketch of the wall may be used to depict this area or portion of the scene.

10.17.3.4.3 Exploded View

An exploded view sketch is a floor plan/overview drawn with the addition of vertical walls folded outward into the horizontal plane.

10.17.3.4.4 Perspective View

The perspective sketch depicts objects of evidence as they would appear to the eye with reference to relative distance and depth.

10.17.3.5 A sketch and diagram will include, at a minimum, the following information:

Required Information	Sketch	Diagram
Compass orientation	√	√
Items of evidence/markers	√	√
Reference points	√	√
"Not to scale"	√	√
Laboratory case number	√	√
Date(s) created NOTE: This may be a single date or date range	√	√
Scene location (e.g., address and/or room/area description)	√	√
Name or initials of author	√	√
Date & time started & finished	√	
Name or initials of individuals making measurements	√	
Objects that clarify locations of evidence (e.g., vehicles, furniture, roads, geographical features, etc.)	√	√

NOTE: Sketches done as part of general notetaking at a scene are not required to have the information above. These shall be labeled with the information required in VCRT 2.2.8.

10.17.3.6 See VCRT 2.0 Documentation for additional information.