U.S. Department of Justice
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Criminal Justice Information Services Division

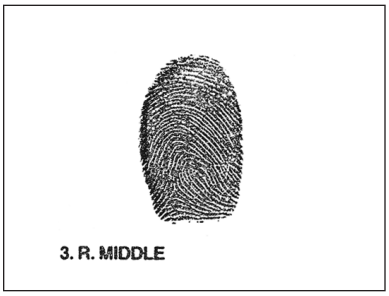
Capturing Legible Fingerprints

Proper Capture of Image within Fingerprint Block

INCORRECT

Image printed too low in block.

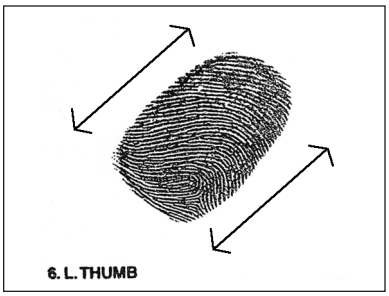
Image protrudes into neighboring fingerprint block.



CORRECT

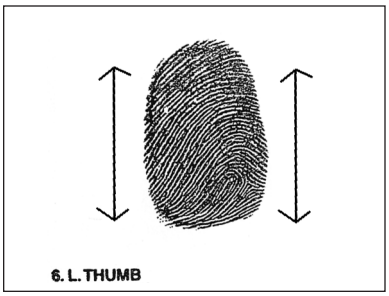
Entire image printed in the center of the block.

Proper Orientation of Rolled Fingerprint Impressions



INCORRECT

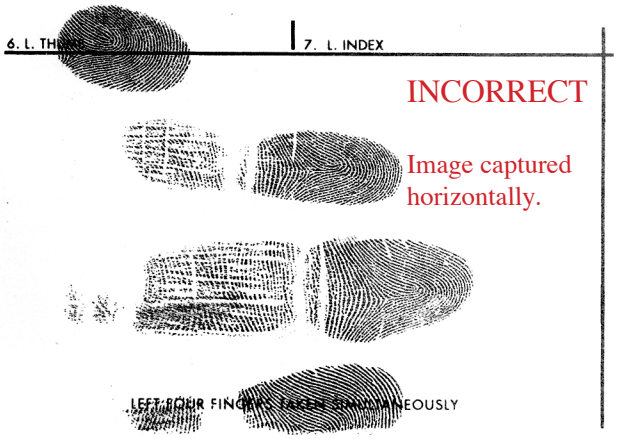
Image captured at an angle.



CORRECT

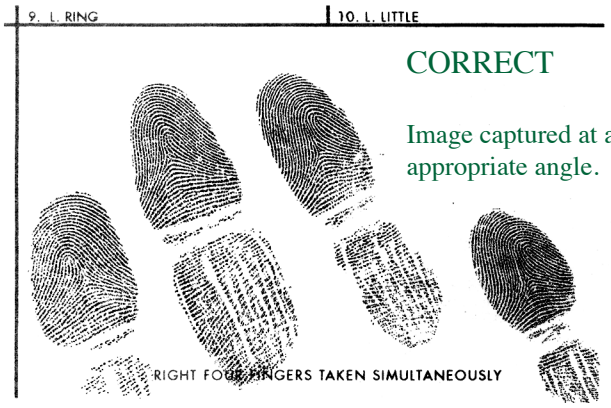
Capture image in a vertical upright position.

Proper Capture of Plain Fingerprint Impressions



INCORRECT

Image captured horizontally.



CORRECT

Image captured at an appropriate angle.

White Lines/Cracks/Worn Ridges within Fingerprint Pattern Area

INCORRECT

Indicates dry, rough skin.
Fingerprint ridge detail not visible.

CORRECT

Worn ridge detail may be improved with the following:

1) Ridge Builder
2) Corn Huskers Lotion
3) Lotion containing Aloe Vera
4) Massage finger to force blood to fingertips

Roll Fingerprints Nail to Nail

Loop

INCORRECT

1) Delta needs to be present in a Loop pattern.

Whorl

INCORRECT

2) Deltas need to be present in a Whorl pattern.

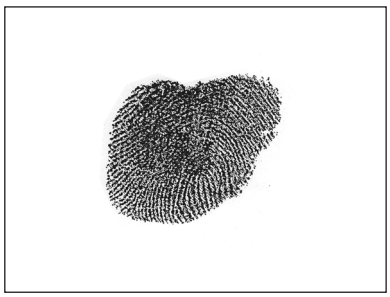
Loop

Whorl

CORRECT

1) Roll finger in a smooth continuous motion from nail to nail.
2) Roll thumbs towards subject. Roll fingers away from the subject.
3) Ensure entire first joint of the finger is in constant contact with the card.

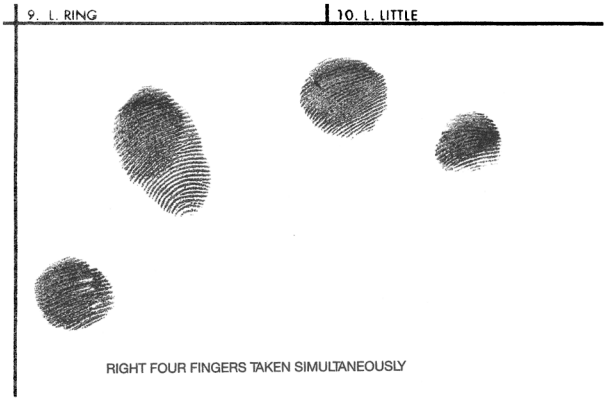
Complete Pattern Area Not Present in Rolled Impressions



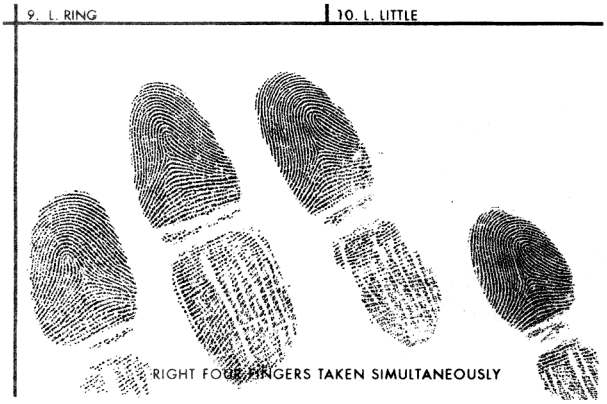
INCORRECT

CORRECT

Complete Pattern Area Not Present in Plain Impressions

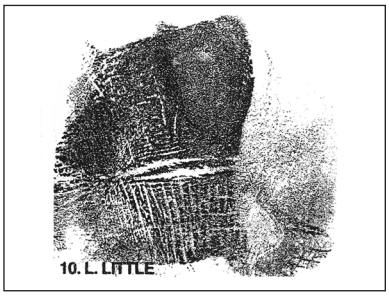


INCORRECT



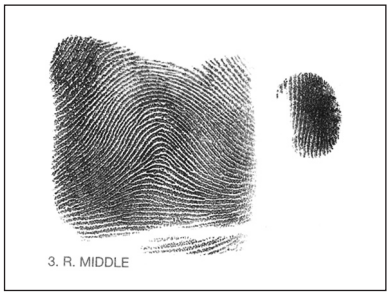
CORRECT

Non Discernable Images/Smudges



1) Do not apply excessive ink to the fingertip.
2) Do not apply excessive pressure to the fingertip.
3) During capture, turn subject's wrist and simply guide the finger being printed.

Multiple Images



Do not record multiple fingerprint images in a single fingerprint block.