

Motorize Your Fingerprint Brush

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Dusting for suspected latent prints can be easier using a fingerprint brush attached to an electrical hand tool. Electrical drills or screwdrivers provide speed and ease for processing large scenes for items.

Crime scene processing techniques and procedures are as varied and diversified as crimes themselves. Although new methods and equipment routinely come and go,

the old standby method of dusting to develop latent prints has basically remained unchanged for years. Fingerprint brushes are dipped into powder and the surfaces with suspected latent prints are brushed for the purpose of visualizing the latent prints. Dusting itself may be on the verge of being an antiquated technique due to the ready availability of portable fuming tanks, forensic light sources, and dyes.

However, for those who still prefer to "dust" or to follow fuming with "dusting", the use of a fiberglass fingerprint brush, mounted on the end of an electrical hand tool, such as a low speed drill or screwdriver, can be a blessing at large crime scenes or processing of large items. The shaft of the

brush may have to be adapted to fit the chuck of the tool. Cordless electrical hand tools enable the user to process items when electrical outlets are unavailable. Simply use the motorized brush to initially develop the print, but do not overdo it. Then finish or "dress" the latent print using manual methods as before. Care must be taken not to use high speed tools or an excessive amount of powder. Also, only the extreme ends of the bristles of the brush should make contact with the surface. A second brush or atomizer can be used to carry the powder to the surface. It is recommended to practice using the new equipment prior to actual use of crime scene evidence.

This is a handy little tool, which may be of help, when dusting for latent prints. It may not be the invention of the century to make fingerprint work a breeze, but an additional tool for large scenes or items.