

SCIENCE MINDED:

Fingerprints



Take a look at your fingers. Look closer at the tips. Each finger has a different fingerprint! As you go about your day, you leave fingerprints behind you made of your skin oils, just as if your fingerprints were stamps. You leave the clearest fingerprints on surfaces that are smooth like glass or metal.

While you can find fingerprints without any tricks (especially if you have messy hands), some fingerprints aren't as visible. Because these prints are made of skin oils, things that stick to oil, like baby powder, can help you find the hidden fingerprints.

First get permission to make a small mess. Then find a place that might hold fingerprints (a doorknob, a table, a drinking glass, etc.). Using a soft brush, dust baby powder very gently over the surface and then gently blow the extra dust away from the surface! If you see any fingerprints, you can capture them by gently laying a piece of tape over them. When you raise the tape, the fingerprint will stick to it!

For more information about fingerprints and how to find them, check out this article from Scientific American:

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/finding-fingerprints/>

