




FORENSIC SCIENCE

EVIDENCE




The Legal Significance of Evidence

If the Responding Officer's findings upon arriving on a scene of an incident show that a criminal law has been broken, then **proof** must be established.



Corpus delicti

(Latin for "body of the crime") – is the material facts showing that a crime has been committed.

The Legal Significance of Evidence



Corpus delicti

(Latin for "body of the crime") – is the material facts showing that a crime has been committed.

Corpus delicti → **Crime**

You can't have one without the other

The Legal Significance of Evidence

Corpus delicti

In the case of a death, the dead body is NOT the Corpus delicti. Instead, it is **the evidence that indicates criminal wrong-doing** that is the Corpus delicti.

Cut break lines, a bullet hole in the window, etc. are the pieces of evidence needed to prove that a crime has been committed.



The Legal Significance of Evidence

Corpus delicti

CAN BE

prima facie evidence

“On the surface” evidence that is sufficient on its own to establish a given fact or guilt of committing a crime.

The Legal Significance of Evidence

Corpus delicti

CAN BE

circumstantial evidence

Seemingly disconnected facts from which proof of a crime being committed can be deducted.

The Legal Significance of Evidence

Corpus delicti

CAN BE

-OR-

CAN BE

prima facie evidence

circumstantial evidence



Rules of Evidence

- Guidelines that ensure that evidence collected will be admissible in court.

U.S. Constitution



The **Fourth Amendment** of the U.S. Constitution protects citizens from **illegal searches and seizures**.

Rules of Evidence

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Exclusionary Rule



Evidence obtained **in violation** of the U.S. Constitution is **inadmissible** in court.



Rules of Evidence

- Guidelines that ensure that evidence collected will be admissible in court.

Relevancy



Evidence used in court must **relate to, or bear directly on**, the fact at issue – if not ... admissibility in court may be **denied**.

Rules of Evidence

- Guidelines that ensure that evidence collected will be admissible in court.

Materiality



Evidence used in court must be **important enough to influence** the court's opinion – if not ... admissibility in court may be **denied**.

Rules of Evidence

- Guidelines that ensure that evidence collected will be admissible in court.

Competency



The piece of **evidence** OR of a **witness** offering testimony must be **credible** – if not ... admissibility in court may be **denied**.

Rules of Evidence

- Guidelines that ensure that evidence collected will be admissible in court.

Exclusionary Rule 🍌
Relevancy 🍌
Materiality 🍌
Competency 🍌
