



How to Capture Facts on Film

- 1) Photograph the entire collision scene in a panoramic view.
- 2) Take a series of photographs from the point of origin of the event through the final vehicle positions. Overlap the scenes to ensure that every part of the collision scene is captured.
- 3) Use a known and standard interval of measurement while taking photographs. Move forward along a line, such as lane marker on the road edge or center stripe.
- 4) Show the driver's view of the scene as each vehicle approached the crash area. These photographs should be taken at driver eye-level; for a car, about 3'6" from the ground and for a commercial vehicle, 6'9" above the ground.
- 5) Photograph traffic control devices such as signals; speed, stop, curve ahead and construction signs; road markings; and the location of any of these that are missing.
- 6) Snap pictures of the roadway surface to show features, including whether it is rough, smooth, rounded or flat.
- 7) Show any obstructions such as signs, debris, trees and general topography with particular emphasis on the angle your driver had if his or her view was impeded by this obstruction.
- 8) Take pictures of evidence left on the roadway such as tire marks, roadway scratches, gouges and grooves, and fixed object damage. If no skid marks are present, document possible locations where skid marks should have occurred.
- 9) Hold an accurate measuring device next to skid marks and vehicle damage when taking pictures (i.e. ruler, measuring tape, dollar bill, etc.)
- 10) Photograph all parts of every vehicle involved in the collision, including undamaged areas of the vehicle. Take a photograph of each side of all vehicles. Take a photograph of the vehicle at each corner to show two sides at once.
- 11) Capture the position of the interior of adverse vehicles, including the position of all light switches, the speedometer and the gear shift.
- 12) Take photographs to document any damaged baggage or evidence of improper loading.
- 13) Take photographs for any witness position to show what the witness could or could not see.
- 14) Snap pictures of spectators, witnesses and their vehicles, including license plates numbers. These could help positively place them at the scene.
- 15) Do not take pictures of any gory scenes such as dead bodies, pools of blood or injuries.
- 16) Photograph evidence of alcohol or drug use in the other vehicle(s) if present.
- 17) Focus on the positive. Any and all photographs could end up in the hands of a plaintiff's attorney or in front of a jury trial as enlarged color photographs. Therefore, act as an advocate for your company when taking photographs.
- 18) Talk with senior management or safety director for additional pictures prior to leaving the collision site.