

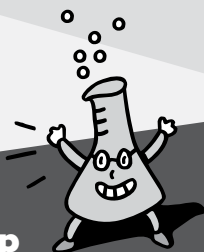


# Fingerprints



## What You Need

- pencil
- paper
- clear tape
- at least one friend
- magnifying lens (optional)



## Science Scoop

What makes a fingerprint? The skin on your fingertip has a **pattern** of ridges on it.

**Sweat and oil** get trapped in the ridges and make a sticky film. When you touch something, the **sticky film** gets left behind and makes a fingerprint. Everyone has **ridges** on the tips of their fingers but no two fingerprints are exactly alike. Scientists **compare** fingerprints and group them according to the **similar ridge patterns** they find. Most people's fingerprints look like a **whorl, loop, or arch**. What does yours look like?

No two fingerprints are **exactly alike**. But how is each one **unique**? Here's a way to find out!



- 1** In order to see your **fingerprint**, you need to make a **print** of it. Take a pencil and **scribble** on a piece of paper until you have a **big black mark**. Then firmly press your index finger (the one next to your thumb) in the mark, and rock it gently side to side.
- 2** Now get some clear **tape**. Put a piece of it over your finger, **press down** (don't rub!), and pull the tape off. Then **attach** the tape to the fingerprint chart. Look at it **closely**. What **type** of fingerprint do you have? A whorl, arch, loop, or something else? **Write** it on the chart.



whorl



loop



arch

- 3** **Collect** your friends' fingerprints and **attach** them to the chart. How many kids have **loops, whorls, or arches**? What was the **most frequent type** of fingerprint among you and your friends? Visit ZOOM online at [pbskids.org/zoom/activities/sci/fingerprints/](http://pbskids.org/zoom/activities/sci/fingerprints/) to enter your results and see how they **compare** to ZOOMers across the nation!



Keep **experimenting** with fingerprints. Are the prints on all of your fingers **similar**? Do your toes have **toe prints**? How could you **lift** a fingerprint off an object? **Try it out** and send your results to ZOOM at [pbskids.org/zoom](http://pbskids.org/zoom).

Sent in by Emily of Wilbraham, MA

# Chart Your Fingerprints

Attach each fingerprint to the chart and fill in whether it's a loop, whorl, or arch!



## Fingerprint Chart



**whorl**

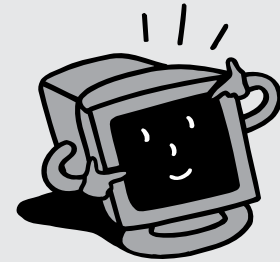


**loop**



**arch**

Name	Fingerprint	Type of fingerprint (loop, whorl, arch)



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Then instantly print out a copy of ZOOMerang—a newsletter filled with cast trivia and lots of fun ZOOM activities.



**Or, send a letter:**

ZOOM  
Box 350  
Boston, MA 02134

Don't forget to include your name and return address so we can send you a copy of ZOOMerang.



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