

## Capturing the Prints

Once the family of the deceased has placed an order or given permission to capture a fingerprint, you're ready to begin the fingerprinting process. Essential to the creation of the finished keepsake is capturing a clear and distinct fingerprint. Meadow Hill and the family of the deceased depend on you for this important step in the process.

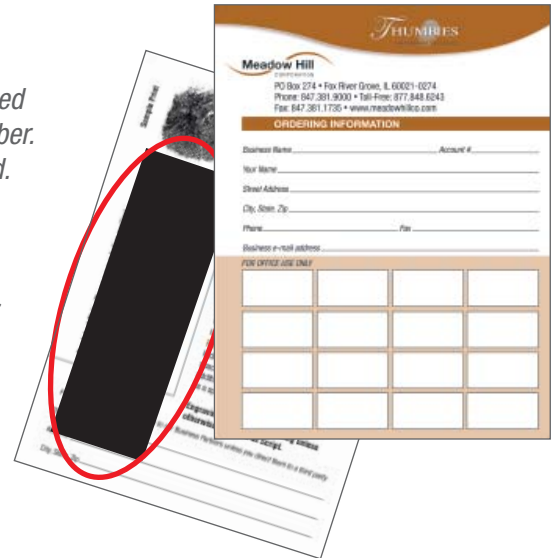
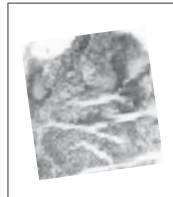
### Taking Adult Prints

*Your Keepsake Program Kit contains folded order cards and pre-addressed return envelopes. The order cards are pre-coded with your account number. An ink strip (circled in red) is attached to the backside of each order card.*

#### STEP 1 Examine the print area.

*If the thumb is scarred or does not have a decent pad, try a forefinger or a large toe. In cases where there has been significant trauma to the body, interesting skin patterns can also be found on the arches of the feet, palms of the hand, knees, or elbows. Meadow Hill suggests that when you turn to these alternatives, you explain it to the family and have them sign off on the print.*

Age lines criss-cross the prints of older adults. These *life* lines reproduce beautifully in the finished keepsakes.



**STEP 2** Remove the pre-inked strip from back of the card. Then carefully peel back the top sheet.

**STEP 3** Practice taking prints on any blank sheet of paper. Lightly tap the deceased's thumb on the inked surface two or three times and then tap the inked finger on the order card. Do not roll the thumb or press too hard.

### Sample Prints



Good clear print!



Too much ink,  
too much pressure



Too little ink,  
not enough pressure



Good ink coverage,  
but rolled and smeared

**STEP 4** Meadow Hill’s artisans will select the best portion of the best print for casting. Also, take a couple of **extra prints that you can keep in your file** at the funeral home in the unlikely event the order card is lost in the mail or if the family should question the authenticity of the print. Plain white index cards work well for this purpose.

*The more prints we have to choose from the better our chances are of finding a really good one to scan and cast.*

**STEP 5** Clean the inked finger with a wet cotton paper towel, or massage cream. A drop of hand lotion that contains alcohol removes every last bit of ink.

## Taking Infant Prints

Infants and children under the age of three pose a problem when it comes to capturing a reproducible print. While they have fingerprints, the defining ridges are so fine that it is difficult to get sufficient contrast. If we enlarge the print, it no longer looks like a child’s print, and if we do not, the prints look like black smudges and the resulting cast appears grainy and resembles sand paper.

Recognizing this problem, Meadow Hill’s artisans developed two solutions:

- The first solution uses a print of the child’s entire hand or foot. This print is miniaturized and centered on our oval charm. A high polish is put on the surrounding surface. A samples of a handprint or footprint is found in your light-colored display.
- The second solution uses a print from the palm of the hand or arch of the foot. While it is not as recognizable as a fingerprint, the young parents know what it is. They understand that the print is uniquely their child’s and are most appreciative. A high-polished rim is often placed around these prints to highlight what print is there.



*Very often the hospital where the child was delivered has done your work for you. Hand/footprints of infants are routinely taken in delivery rooms or hospital nurseries; generally they are excellent prints. Ask the parents if they have such a hospital record. If they do, Meadow Hill recommends that you make a copy of the print or scan the print. The print can then be e-mailed to us or mailed. Please follow the scanning instructions below.*

### Scanning Infant Hand & Footprints

1. Open your scanning program.
2. Preview the document.
3. Take your cursor and draw a box around the footprint or handprint.
4. Zoom in on the selected area.
5. Adjust the margins so that the entire footprint or handprint is inside the box.
6. Set the resolution at 600 dpi.
7. Scan at 100%. Do not enlarge or reduce the print.
8. Do not try to clean up the print.
9. Save as a jpeg, using the child’s full name to identify the print.
10. Attach the jpeg to an e-mail; put the child’s name in the subject box. Make sure to identify the funeral home, contact person and phone number in the body of the e-mail.
11. E-mail to [info@meadowhillco.com](mailto:info@meadowhillco.com).
12. Fill out the order card as you would normally and fax it to us at 847.381.1735.
13. Call 1.877.848.6243 if you have any difficulties.

*If prints were not taken at the hospital, please follow the following steps:*

**STEP 1** Ask the parents what they would prefer hand or foot and do not assume anything. We often cast the print of a foot that has only three toes or a foot with six toes.

**STEP 2** Remove the pre-inked strip from the back of the card. Then carefully peel back the top sheet.

**STEP 3** Tap the hand or foot of the child on the ink strip. If the child's hand or foot is wider than the width of the ink surface, take both sides of the ink strip and tape them side by side, thereby doubling the width of the strip.

**STEP 4** Do not roll the hand or foot nor press too hard. Place the prints you send to Meadow Hill on an order card or alternatively, on a plain, white index card or piece of paper.

**STEP 5** Clean the inked surface with a wet cotton swab, a wet paper towel or massage cream. A drop of hand lotion that contains alcohol removes the last bit of ink.

## Reminders

### Ink an Interesting Area of the Finger

The finished keepsake looks *exactly* like the print you send us. In selecting the area of the finger to ink, look the most interesting character lines. Creases and age lines give the finished Thumbie® its character.

### Questionable Prints

If Meadow Hill receives a print that will not produce a quality charm, we will call you. You then have the option of contacting the family to explain the situation. Some families will cancel; others will tell you to go ahead as it may be the only keepsake they will have. It is possible for Meadow Hill to go into the digital file and "clean up" a print pixel by pixel, but we will only do so with the permission of the family.

### Take an Extra Print for Your Files

Since the U.S. Postal System, UPS, Fed Ex and other delivery services are not perfect organizations, they occasionally misplace things. Meadow Hill strongly encourages you to take a couple of extra prints of each decedent. Keep them in the individual's file at the funeral home until such time as you receive the finished Thumbies®.

### Create Keepsakes for Long-Deceased Family Members

Meadow Hill can create Thumbies® from any hard copy of a fingerprint. That means a family who has fingerprints can create keepsakes of long-deceased loved ones. Sources of fingerprints include: military discharge papers, employment cards, firearm registrations, arrest records, and birth certificates. (In the past, it was common practice to fingerprint both mother and child on birth certificates.) As with infant prints, the easiest way to get these prints to us is to scan them and send them electronically.

#### **Meadow Hill's Archival System Allows You to Create Duplicates!**

Each print Meadow Hill uses to create a keepsake is archived in a digital format. This allows you to offer additional keepsakes to families at any point in time—

This service also permits us to make replacements for lost units.

To reorder any keepsake, simply fill out a new order telling us what the family wants. Mark "DUPLICATE" after the deceased's full name and fax it to our offices, at 847.381.1735.