

Starting up

- Think about the police in your country or one you know well. Is it more important
a) for police officers to be present in particular areas, or
b) to use technology, such as video cameras in public places, to catch criminals?
Give reasons.
- Read through the whole article. Then do the exercises.

Reading 1

Read the article again. Then complete the commentary using correct forms of the words below.

case	court	criminals	evidence
examine	forensic	investigate	privacy
suspects	victim		

When a c_____ commits a crime, the police look for e_____ – information that shows who did it – in order to solve it. When the police look for information in this way, they i_____ a crime. More and more, the police use digital f_____, for example obtaining information from computers and phones used by criminals and their v_____ – the people who suffer from crime. They use this information to build a c_____ against the s_____ – the person they think committed the crime. This information will be used in c_____, during a trial. Some people are worried about p_____, for example the private lives of the people affected by crime, when they have to give their phones and computers to the police so that the police can e_____ them.

How digital forensics is changing the Metropolitan Police

In the Metropolitan (Met) Police's most advanced forensics lab, there is not a fingerprint or trace of blood to be found. Instead, technicians sit at desks looking at spreadsheets, reading pages of data and playing videos from crime scenes. Here, the Met's digital forensics team solves cases by examining mobile phones, laptops, games consoles and even car entertainment systems for the data hidden within.

For the police, this is the future of crime-solving; looking at every message, photo and communication on a suspect's phone can revolutionise the process of building cases against criminals. But the skills needed are rare and the work itself expensive and time-consuming. The question is whether police forces can increase the size of their digital investigations when budgets are tight and government spending is on increasing the number of frontline officers. But even if police bosses can fund better digital forensics, privacy campaigners fear this could break human rights laws. According to Mark Davis, a former police officer who now advises forensics staff on how to build cases against criminals, there's a digital witness in every crime. "You may not always be able to find a fingerprint," he said. "But it's impossible to think of a crime where there isn't a phone involved or a CCTV camera on site."

The work of digital investigators has boomed along with the growing use of new technology. Every device connected to a network represents a possible key to solving a crime: Met investigators trying to work out when a house fire broke out eventually found the timing by calculating when the last key had been pressed by players on the home's games console. They once got data from a victim's heart pacemaker and worked with the manufacturer to calculate the time of death. Of all digital forensics work, obtaining phone and computer data from electronic devices is the most time-consuming.

Downloading the contents of a smartphone, which is standard practice even in minor crimes such as drug possession by drug dealers, can take between five and seven hours. An officer has to be present the whole time to ensure the process is done correctly, and this limits their availability for other police work. The most worrying development, according to Silkie Carlo, director of campaign group Big Brother Watch, is that those who report sex crimes and domestic violence are being asked to hand over their smartphones and other devices so police can look into the relationship between victim and criminal. "This is bad enough for suspects of crimes but when it happens to victims as well, that's not right," she said. At the same time, the Met is being told by courts that they are not doing enough to examine phone data, and they are not doing it fast enough. The digital forensics lab in Lambeth has now put in place better systems to help officers find the information they need within downloaded data.



© The Financial Times Limited. All Rights Reserved.

Vocabulary 1 – related forms

Complete the table with words from the article, and related forms.

verb	noun
	investigation
	solution
examine	
entertain	
message	
	revolution
	fund
	advice
boom	
	calculation
download	
	report

Vocabulary 2 – examples

Now use the nouns in the table above to replace the words in italics in these examples, keeping the same meaning.

- the *big increase* in the number of people using social media
- the *money available* to the police for preventing crime
- the *big change* in the way that the police work over the last 30 years
- the *process to find* the exact place where someone disappeared, using advanced mathematics on mobile phone data
- the *information given* to people by the police to help prevent crime
- the *answer* to the question of who committed a robbery in Bond Street
- the *music* on BBC Radio 1
- the *information received* by the police about an accident in Edgware Road
- the *process* to find those responsible for a big robbery at Heathrow Airport, collecting evidence and interviewing hundreds of people
- the *analysis* of blood from a crime scene
- a *text* on a victim's mobile phone
- an *app* on someone's mobile phone, obtained from the internet

Grammar – (not) enough

Put *enough* in the correct place(s) in the sentences, before or after the underlined word(s).

- 1 “This is bad for suspects of crimes but when it happens to victims as well, that’s not right,” she said.
“This is bad enough for suspects of crimes but when it happens to victims as well, that’s not right,” she said.
- 2 The Met is not doing to examine phone data, and they are not doing it fast .
- 3 Digital investigations are expensive and the Met doesn’t have money .
- 4 Forensics labs don’t have employees to do everything that they need to
- 5 Some say that the labs aren’t working efficiently .
- 6 Campaigners say that the police are not careful in relation to victims’ privacy.
- 7 Professional criminals are beginning to be clever to avoid leaving evidence of their crimes.
- 8 The Met are asking for money and equipment to deal with this new trend.
- 9 The police say that campaigners have talked about protecting criminals’ rights.
- 10 Some people reply that there can never be protection of peoples’ rights in general.

Reading 2

Which two of these are correct 'takeaways' from the article?

Digital forensics:

- a) raises problems for the privacy of victims.
- b) can be used to say where crimes will happen in the future.
- c) will one day be used to solve all crimes.
- d) raises problems for the privacy of criminals.

Further discussion / Group work

- 1 What do you think about the increasing use of video cameras in streets, public buildings etc to prevent crime? Give your reasons.
- 2 Police ‘trying to work out when a house fire broke out eventually found the timing by calculating when the last key had been pressed by players on the home’s games console. They once got data from a victim’s heart pacemaker and worked with the manufacturer to calculate the time of death.’ Think of more real or possible examples where information from electronic devices could be used to help police solve crimes.

ANSWER KEY

Reading 1

When a criminal commits a crime, the police look for evidence information that shows who did it – in order to solve it. When the police look for information in this way, they investigate a crime. More and more, the police use digital forensics – for example obtaining information from computers and phones used by criminals and their victims – the people who suffer from crime. They use this information to build a case against the suspect – the person they think committed the crime. This information will be used in court, during a trial. Some people are worried about privacy for example the private lives of the people affected by crime, when they have to give their phones and computers to the police so that the police can examine them.

Vocabulary 1 and 2

verb	noun
investigate	investigation - i)
solve	solution - f)
examine	examination - j)
entertain	entertainment - g)
message	message - k)
revolutionise	revolution - a)
fund	funds - b)
advise	advice - e)
boom	boom - a)
calculate	calculation - d)
download	download - l)
report	report - h)

Grammar

- 2 The Met is not doing enough to examine phone data, and they are not doing it fast enough.
- 3 Digital investigations are expensive and the Met doesn't have enough money.
- 4 Forensics labs don't have enough employees to do everything that they need to.
- 5 Some say that the labs aren't working efficiently enough.
- 6 Campaigners say that the police are not careful enough in relation to victims' privacy.
- 7 Professional criminals are beginning to be clever enough to avoid leaving evidence of their crimes.
- 8 The Met are asking for enough money and equipment to deal with this new trend.
- 9 The police say that campaigners have talked enough about protecting criminals' rights.
- 10 Some people reply that there can never be enough protection of peoples' rights in general.

Reading 2

a) and d)

Articles sourced from the Financial Times have been referenced with the FT logo. These articles remain the Copyright of the Financial Times Limited and were originally published in 2019. All Rights Reserved. FT and 'Financial Times' are trademarks of The Financial Times Ltd. Pearson ELT is responsible for providing any translation or adaptation of the original articles.

With a worldwide network of highly respected journalists, the Financial Times provides global business news, insightful opinion and expert analysis of business, finance and politics. With over 500 journalists reporting from 50 countries worldwide, our in-depth coverage of international news is objectively reported and analysed from an independent, global perspective.

For more information: <http://membership.ft.com/pearsonoffer/>