2. What Happens When I Get Arrested?

You should be told why you are being arrested and the name or number of the arresting officer.

You should ask what station you are being taken to, although at large protests, the police officers do not always know.

You will probably be handcuffed.

You will be searched – usually just a 'pat down' by an officer of the same sex as you. The police are only allowed to strip search you if there is good reason to believe that you are concealing an item such as a weapon or evidence or drugs.

You will be taken to the police station. This may be individually, or you may be taken along with other arrestees. At recent mass arrests, the police have used buses for multiple arrestees, and there have been very long waits before arrival at the police station.

You will get 'booked in' at the police station. Your personal belongings will be taken from you. These are listed on the custody record and usually you will be asked to sign to say that the list is correct. You do not have to sign, but if you do, you should sign immediately below the last line, so that the police can't add something incriminating to the list. You should also refuse to sign for something which isn't yours, or which could be incriminating. They will ask you all kinds of questions about who you are and what you do (see above).

They will take your photograph. You don't have to comply, but they are allowed to use "reasonable force" to view your face.

They will take your fingerprints and DNA. Again, you don't have to comply, but they are allowed to use "reasonable force". Two important exceptions are being arrested for Breach of the Peace (not a criminal offense) and Obstruction of the Highway (a 'non-recordable' offense) – they should not fingerprints/DNA if arresting for these offenses.

You will then be put in a cell.