Main Tests for drugs:

(See “Color Tests” packet of information for more detail regarding what these tests are etc.)

First a screening test is done to exclude possibilities. These tests are generally quick and relatively cheap. A confirmation test must then be performed to confirm exactly what drug it is. These tests often involve using high tech lab equipment.

1. Color tests – mix the drug with some reagents and look for the color change. Need to know what color indicates a positive test result and which reagent to mix with each drug.
2. Identification of Marijuana by microscopic analysis – look for short hairs having the shape of bear paws on the upper side of the leaf. These are called cystolithic hairs on leaves etc.
3. Microcrystalline test
4. Chromatography
5. Spectrophotometry
6. Mass Spectrometry

The best machine/test for drugs combines Chromatography and Mass Spectrometry. The GC/MS machine will do gas chromatography and mass spectrometry to confirm drugs and poisons in your samples.

