



Introduction to Ghost Hunting – Part One

A free course by Fiona Broome, founder of HollowHill.com

Welcome to our free, four-part course in basic ghost hunting, presented by Hollow Hill, the ghost hunters' website. <http://www.HollowHill.com/>

What you'll learn during the next four lessons:

- How to start ghost hunting
- Where to find ghosts
- What to expect and what to do
- Ghost hunting as a hobby and as a profession

If you have any questions during this course – or as a ghost hunter – check the FAQs at the end of this lesson. If you don't find your answer there, be sure to let us know at Hollow Hill. Use the Contact link at the top of every webpage (or from our homepage, if you're reading one of the old pages).

Each lesson is designed to take one week, part-time. However, you may need more or less time, depending upon your schedule, interests, and experience levels.

Though your lessons will arrive in email once a week, you can visit the course webpage if you'd like to preview your next lesson. <http://www.hollowhill.com/courses/IGH/part1.htm>

Also, the online version of the course will always include links to the current print (PDF) copies and audio portions of the lessons. (However, if you remain on our course mailing list, you'll also receive notices when we update or add new materials.)

The Basics

Things to think about before you go ghost hunting

Before going ghost hunting, it's important to set your goals as well as your boundaries. When people don't do this, they often lose their focus and continue ghost hunting after it stops being interesting or fun.

Or, they spend too much time or money before realizing that the topic never interested them that much, anyway.



What attracts *you* to ghost hunting?

Are you looking for proof of ghosts, and – if so – what would you need to encounter (or experience) to feel that you've found enough proof? Decide this ahead of time.

Is your interest more scientific or spiritual? If you're a skeptic or looking for scientific evidence of hauntings, you'll focus on measurable phenomena such as cold spots and EMF (Electro Magnetic Field) surges.

If your interest is primarily spiritual, you'll probably develop your psychic awareness of the spirits.

Are you doing this for fun, and does it *have* to be fun? Decide how frightened you are willing to be, before you leave a haunted site or even quit ghost hunting. This is important: Never stay at a haunted place when your "gut feeling" tells you to leave.

It's fine if you go on a few ghost hunts just to see what it's like. However, if you're ghost hunting simply because you're curious, it's fine to stop after two or three ghost hunts.

We sometimes meet people on ghost hunts who... well, we're not sure why they're there, and it seems that they aren't too sure, either.

If the site is truly haunted, that lack of focus can be dangerous. If you're not paying attention, mischievous spirits can push you, isolate you from your friends, or do other startling things.

To help clarify your goals, see the “Reasons for Ghost Hunting” notes at the end of this lesson.

Tools you'll need

I want to make this very clear: You need *no* equipment to go ghost hunting.



Many ghost hunters use a flash camera, a digital thermometer, a voice recorder, an EMF meter (or hiking compass), or some divinatory tool such as dowsing rods.

However, most new ghost hunters – and at least a third of the experienced ghost hunters on our investigations – use no tools at all. They observe. It's much easier to notice the subtle things when cameras, noisy meters, etc do not distract you.

So, don't rush out and buy anything to start ghost hunting.

In fact, even if you plan to use ghost hunting tools later, try a few ghost hunts without *any* tools, or with just a simple flash camera. (Whatever you already own or can borrow.)

Some investigators are receptive to sounds while others aren't. Some consistently capture anomalies (orbs, vortex images, etc.) and others don't.

It's a good idea to get a sense of *how* ghosts contact you, *before* you invest in any tools. For example, if you don't seem to pick up EVP (recorded ghostly voices), don't waste your money on an expensive digital voice recorder.

For more about this topic, see our Hollow Hill article, [Basic tools every ghost hunter must have](http://hollowhill.com/basic-tools-every-ghost-hunter-must-have/), at <http://hollowhill.com/basic-tools-every-ghost-hunter-must-have/>

We'll talk about new, more sophisticated tools -- and backups -- in a later lesson.

Protection

The only thing that we suggest for new ghost hunters is some sort of spiritual protection. In case you're in a frightening situation, it's smart to feel protected by Deity or something representing your spiritual beliefs.

This could be garlic, a Bible, a pentacle, blessed salt or even your "lucky socks." Generally, ghost hunters carry something small or unobtrusive.

If you're not sure what to use, read our article, [Spiritual protection for ghost hunters](http://hollowhill.com/protection-tools-ghosts/), at <http://hollowhill.com/protection-tools-ghosts/>

Sometimes, people ask us what to use if they're Atheists or don't believe in spiritual protection. That's a difficult question to answer. In frightening situations, we've seen people switch in a matter of minutes from calm, logical thinkers to emotional wrecks.

If you think that anything might have protective powers or be a source of comfort for you, bring it with you. This could be a swatch from your childhood "cuddle blanket" or a religious medal, an MP3 of traditional hymns or an MP3 of Broadway tunes.

It's not so much what you carry, as your belief that it helps when you start questioning your previous spiritual beliefs (or lack of them) if things turn truly terrifying during an investigation.

Who to go ghost hunting with

Two of our most important rules are:

1. Never trespass, and
2. Never go ghost hunting alone.

The main reason never to go ghost hunting alone is because so many haunted places are isolated. Safety is a concern. If you encounter someone frightening – living or dead – you should not be alone.

In addition to strange people, many haunted sites



present physical risks. Unmarked graves (depressions the size and shape of coffins), exposed tree roots, and snake holes are common in overgrown cemeteries. Abandoned or neglected buildings can have loose boards, uneven stairs, and a rodent population.

If you're in a rural or wooded area frequented by hunters (whether or not it's hunting season), it's smart to wear something reflective, or a neon-colored vest or jacket. (They're inexpensive at stores such as Wal-Mart.)

Remember that *a cell phone is not enough for safety*. In many haunted places, perhaps because EMF levels are high, your electrical equipment isn't reliable. So, never think that it's okay to go to a deserted, haunted place on your own. If you need to call for help, your phone may not work.

There are good reasons to find a local, informal ghost hunting group, and sign up for one of their casual investigations.

However, some people prefer to try ghost hunting with a few interested friends before getting involved with a group. That might be a good idea.

It's best to go ghost hunting with people who share your interests. If you're a skeptic, you'll probably have more fun with other skeptics. If you're a believer, investigate with other believers.

But, when you're new to ghost hunting, we recommend keeping an open mind... and choosing companions who are interested in the paranormal but – like you – are willing to objectively consider the evidence.

Recommended reading: [Guidelines for Ghost Hunters](http://hollowhill.com/guidelines-for-ghost-hunters/), at <http://hollowhill.com/guidelines-for-ghost-hunters/>

Also, [Skeptics and why ghosts go missing](http://hollowhill.com/skeptics-and-why-ghosts-go-missing/), at <http://hollowhill.com/skeptics-and-why-ghosts-go-missing/>

When to go ghost hunting



Many haunted sites are haunted day and night. (Gilson Road in Nashua, New Hampshire is.) However, most ghost hunters get the best results at dusk and after dark. There are many reasons for this, and I'll talk about them in another report.

If you're going ghost hunting with an established, organized research group, you'll follow their schedule.

However, if you and a friend or two are exploring a haunted place, arrive shortly before dusk. Then, you can see what's there while you still have daylight. Since

the intensity often builds after dark, you can leave when the paranormal energy exceeds your comfort levels.

In summary

In this week's lesson, we've discussed what you could think about before becoming a ghost hunter, goals you might set, tools you'll need (none), spiritual protection, who to go ghost hunting with, and when to go ghost hunting.

In our next lesson, we'll share some tips for finding haunted places, and how to tell which ones are worth investigating.

Recommended homework

These steps are optional, but they'll help you get the most from your upcoming ghost hunts.

1. Begin a diary or journal about your ghost research. It can be any blank journal, a composition book, or notebook paper.

To start, write about your interest in ghosts and haunted places. Why are you ghost hunting? Are your interests scientific or spiritual? If they're partly (or entirely) spiritual, do you feel that you are psychic or have related spiritual gifts?

2. Choose a small item that's a spiritual talisman, good luck charm, or represents spiritual protection (or comfort) for you. Start carrying it daily in your pocket, purse or backpack.

3. Ask a few close friends if they're interested in ghost hunting. Think about two or three people who might be ideal companions on your investigations.

4. Read how-to articles at HollowHill.com and other ghost hunting websites. Take notes in your journal. Ask us at least one thoughtful question at a HollowHill.com article. Or, you can use our HollowHill.com Contact form. (It's at the top of most pages at our website.)

Additional Free Resources

This lesson, online:

<http://www.hollowhill.com/courses/IGH/part1.htm>

Listen to Fiona's additional notes about this lesson:

<http://www.hollowhill.com/courses/IntroGhostHunting-Part1.mp3>

FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) about this free course

1. I want my next lesson. (Or, I didn't receive one of my lessons, or my certificate of completion.)

These lessons are sent automatically by an email service. We can't send you just one lesson, or resend it. The complete series of lessons is at our website, on special course pages.

The certificate is available only through email. If you're not receiving your emails, check your spam folder and whitelist HollowHill.com. If that doesn't help, sign up for the courses again.

2. I need to change my email address.

You'll need to re-register as if you're a new student. We can't manually change emails.

3. I want to stop the lessons, and just read them online.

That's fine. Click "unsubscribe" at the foot of our latest course email. However, you will not receive a certificate of completion. Certificates are sent automatically to all students *after* they receive (and, we hope, complete) the four main lessons.

4. How can I become a licensed ghost hunter?

There are no official ghost hunting licenses. You can study paranormal subjects at some colleges, and earn a related degree. However, while some ghost tours and groups issue "ghost hunting licenses," there are no standardized boards of certification that can provide *anything* that's universally accepted throughout this field.

Never pay anyone for a ghost hunting license. No official paranormal licensing board exists.

At the conclusion of some courses, you may receive a certificate. Technically, any certificate makes you a "certified" practitioner in whatever the course covered. So, when you hear someone say, "I'm a certified ghost hunter," it means that they took a course in ghost hunting and were given a certificate for doing so. It could be a two-hour class or a two-year course of study. Being a "certified ghost hunter" won't impress real professionals.

5. Will there be more courses?

Yes. All current and former students will receive an email announcing new courses as they're released, if the student is still on our course mailing list. *If* there's a fee for any new course that we announce, you'll receive a special discount offer during the first week that it's available.

Some of our courses, reports and ebooks will also be available through affiliate programs. We'll announce this in future mailings.

REASONS FOR GHOST HUNTING

The following notes may help you understand your interests in ghost hunting, and set goals.

To answer a question

- Do ghosts exist?
- What happens when people die?
- Where do ghosts live?
- Are there other *real* things in the paranormal world?
- Is residual energy real?

Fun and entertainment

- Consider your choices and start with one or two, such as TV shows, ghost tours, events and conferences, stage performances, local ghost hunts, etc.
- Decide *ahead of time* how much time and money you're willing to spend.
- Is it *important* if the entertainer is just a performer, and some or all of it is just an act?
- If you're looking for a 'good scare', keep safety issues in mind. Know the difference between fun and when logic is telling you that you're not safe.

Keeping a friend company

- Find out what your friend needs, besides companionship. Should you be the voice of logic? Tell him or her when it's getting late, or something seems dangerous or too expensive? Ask!
- If you decide to get involved with ghost hunting, set your own goals.
- Just because your friend has more experience with this subject, don't assume that he or she is an expert.

Fame, fortune, power and popularity

- If you want to become rich or famous, this isn't the best field. Google Trends says that searches for "ghost hunters" and "ghost hunting" have been declining since Halloween 2007. Searches for "ghosts" and "haunted places" have declined steadily since late 2004.
- Market yourself to a niche. Choose one of the following, or mix several to match your own, unique interests: Believer or skeptic, with a focus on science, psychic realms, or folklore, in a particular area or aspect of this field.
- Beware of scams and con artists. Check *all* of the person's credentials, not just one! The more impressive the reference or claim, the more important it is to verify it. Never spend (or give, or loan) money that you can't afford to lose. If the money is intended for a charity, *write the check to the charity*, not to the person who's supposedly collecting the money for them. (After all, that's a requirement so you can claim your tax deduction.)
- Set a clear, achievable career goal. It could be money, number of fans, being on a particular TV show, number of public investigations, etc. When you've reached that goal, work towards a new goal. Complacency is like the dinner bell for critics, trolls, moles and gossips. Always *complete what you start*, and then announce your new, exciting project.