

## Step one: Is your house haunted?



No one can tell you whether or not your house is haunted.

However, by eliminating all *natural* explanations for what you're experiencing, *you* can decide whether or not your house has a ghost.

Ruling out what's normal (and can be fixed) is *always* your first step when a house might be haunted.

First, keep a diary of your experiences in the house.



Keep a diary of what seems to be going on in your house.

- Easy - DIY
- Ask a pro

It can be a simple, spiral bound notebook or some sheets of paper.

Every time you think you may be encountering a ghost, write down everything about it, including how *you* felt about it.

Note the date, time, and weather conditions.

Write down who's in the house with you.

Include what you're experiencing, including things you see, hear, smell, or feel, and any odd tastes you notice in your mouth.

At first, *include every possible detail*. Did you eat recently, and what was it? Had anyone expressed strong emotions (positive or negative) right before the incident?

Take photos if you can, and include prints of them in your diary.

See if you can find *any pattern* to what's going on, such as a time, day of the week or month, or something about the weather.

Keep this for at least four or five encounters, or until you see a pattern -- whichever comes first.

You're doing this so you know exactly *when* the odd events are most likely to happen.

With that information, you can schedule a professional to be in the house when whatever-it-is happens.

That's important. Professionals must be able to *witness* the phenomena to tell you if there's a normal explanation.

It's a lot like taking your car to a mechanic. Unless he can hear the noise (or whatever the problem is), he can't diagnose what's causing it.

The more information you gather ahead of time, the better your chances of finding out what's causing the problem, *quickly*.

However, if you see *no pattern at all*, a professional may be able to ask you additional questions that narrow the possible explanations.

For example, in the autumn -- around Halloween -- people often turn on the heat in their homes.

After a couple of weeks, the wood in the house can dry out, and shrink slightly. This can cause doors to pop open by themselves, floors to creak, and other physical phenomena.

A handyman or home heating expert may be able to tell you if *that* explains your ghostly experiences.

Here's a sample entry in a diary  
at a haunted house.

Date: Wednesday, June 9, 2010

Time: 10:00 p.m. to about 11:25 p.m.

Weather: Rainy night, windy, no moon.

Who was there: I was at home, alone.

What happened: I was in the kitchen, feeling happy as I prepared a snack. Then, I heard a moaning sound coming from the attic. It was slow and muffled. There was a smell like pipe smoke, too.

I felt startled, but not scared.

When I turned on the attic light, the noise stopped. The smell went away quickly. There's no a/c in the attic, and the windows were locked shut.

I checked the entire attic and there was no smoke. The attic smoke detector was still working okay.

When I returned to the kitchen, I noticed that my left shoulder ached, and I felt sad for no reason.

About ten minutes later, the sound in the attic started again. The aroma of pipe smoke didn't return.

The noise stopped just before 11:30 p.m. but I still felt a little sad, and unsettled by what was going on.

When I woke up in the morning, my shoulder was fine and the sadness was gone. However, I was still uneasy about what had happened the night before.