

GREAT LAKES PARANORMAL RESEARCH TEAM

Coming into the Paranormal Field for the First Time

Not much if anything has been written for those coming into the field for the first time. It will all seem a bit overwhelming and uncertain. But not to worry, if you are entering a team, your new para-co-workers have your back and will help you through your first months.

A few things are important for you to know. No question is a dumb question. This field is still in development and we are all learning and shaping it to make it better, ask all you need. We hope in time you will be able to make your own positive contributions to the field like everyone else. The more questions we are able to answer, the better.

You might be overwhelmed with a ton of ideas and questions in your head right now. Relax. We will give you some ideas here for you to be ready for your first investigation.

On the human side:

See if you can request for a mentor or ask who will guide you on your first investigation. Good info to know. You can always ask for a mentor as well, it always helps and is reassuring. The best way to start is to learn from those who have been there for quite a while. Experience is very important in the field. You can read all you want, but hands on is crucial.

Clothing:

If you don't have your team t-shirt or I.D yet, put aside if you are able to, a specific shirt and pants for any and all investigations. Preferably of dark color, brown, blue or black will do. Always avoid anything reflective, shiny or flashy logos. It can cause issues when filming or taking photos. Know that the pants and shirt should be washed ASAP after every investigation. That way you reduce / eliminate the chances of bringing any odd bacteria or other pests into your home. It also helps to protect your other daily clothing. It is kind of like having your special paranormal play clothes.

Other things NOT to wear/use/bring:

Perfume and colognes are discouraged because the paranormal can express itself through the sense of smell. Keep that in mind. The fewer smells in the mix, the better.

Be sober and drug free 100% of the time. You truly don't want the paranormal to take advantage of you while under the influence. Stay clean, clear and healthy. After all you are stepping in to help a person or family in need. Be there for them, all the way.

Anything that might jingle, clink, make other noises, flash, sparkle or get in your physical way, leave at home. Remember, you might need to sit on the floor, crawl under something, stick your head in a bush or climb a latter. So dress comfortably. (Just kidding about the bush).

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Cell phones: We understand the need for a cell, but put it on vibrate for any investigation. Keep it away from any EMF detectors, because it will interfere with the instrument. Wi-Fi and other laser type technology will interfere and give false info.

Tools:

This is always the biggest question, what should I get first? What is the best tool for me to use? What does everyone else use? Don't panic. You are just starting out in the field and there is much to learn about paranormal tools. For now, keep it simple and practical. Here are some beginning materials and tools you can get:

Not considered a paranormal tool, but essentials for the job:

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| Good flashlight: | You will be working mostly in the dark, either outside or inside. |
| A good wrist watch: | One you can see in the dark. Time is important during investigations. Important for start times, end times and any patterns that might begin to surface. |
| Pad, pen: | Important to make notes of all kinds, before, during and after. |
| Thermos: | If you want to bring a hot beverage with you. |
| Backpack for all investigations: | Or whatever is most practical and safe for you to carry to and from investigations. |
| A good calendar: | Whether it be on a wall or your phone. You will need to keep good track of dates and times of meetings, trainings and investigations. Remember to keep it in a private, confidential location if on paper. |
| A good, reliable email address: | It is extremely annoying and problematic when team members do not respond to an upcoming investigation. So be prepared and alert to your email or texts. Sometimes your team will ask you to create an email specifically for any paranormal stuff. It also helps keep your personal email private and safe. Check your email daily, always. |
| Small personal first aid kit: | The team <i>should</i> have a large one for the whole team. But just in case, have one available for your own use. |

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Good repellent and sunscreen Only if working outside of course.

Good weather gear of all types We usually avoid bad/dangerous weather. But if it is just sloppy and an inconvenience, the team will still go to the scheduled investigation. So be prepared.

Beginning paranormal tools:

It will be good for you to take time to look at paranormal tools, see what grabs your attention. See what tool you want to learn well and become a pro with that particular tool. Know that we avoid using tablets and cell phones. If you must use a tablet, always remember to turn off the WI-FI feature before using. WI-FI can set off EMF detectors and give false readings.

Voice recorder Digital, in the \$40-50 range will do. In the field you will mostly record sounds. So this is a vital tool.

Camera This one can be a bit pricey if you don't have one at home. Not an absolute for your first investigations. But, it is important that it have good memory, good battery time, can be downloaded to your computer. Looking at things on a bigger screen helps a ton. (Not from your cell, can be interfered or messed with or lost and quality is usually poor).

Temperature gauge You don't have to get too fancy with this one. They come in all sizes, colors, features and shapes. Find one at Home Depot or your local Wal-Mart. You can get one for \$10 and up. Depends on how fancy you want to get. It can be simple ones used in kitchens, can be a temp gun used in construction, can have temp plus date, plus weather readings. All up to you what you would like.

Trigger object A trigger object can be almost anything. It is mainly used when an entity has been known to move or play with things. It can be from a pen, to a ball, to a stuffed animal. Up to you what you would like to have available.

If you can start with one, two or all of these for your first investigation, you are good to go for your first few investigations! You don't have to go gang buster with tools. Just get what you can

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afford right now and the rest can be added later. It is good to give yourself time to have a few investigations under your belt. Time and a few practices will also help you figure out what tool you want to specialize in.

Training:

Of course you will need some training. If the topic did not come up during your initial team interviews and meetings, just ask for some training time with a member of the team. It will help answer a lot of your questions and you will go into an investigation a bit more confident.

Knowing the routine of what comes first, second and last helps ease the stress. But just remember there is nothing normal, routine or exact about the paranormal. It tends to be unpredictable more than anything else. So it is important to be very open minded and relaxed about going into the field.

Your first investigation:

Breathe! Relax! You will be fine. Once you have a date for your first investigation, do all you can to get a good night's rest. We understand the jitters and first time excitement, but it is important for this first time and all the rest of the investigations in your life to be rested, alert and ready to go. Check all your equipment the day before.

Don't forget to greet the client. It helps them when everyone is friendly and relaxed.

Make sure you have plenty of what you will need, a bit of money, any weather gear, and especially batteries. If you will be driving, make sure the car is in good condition for the trip and you have plenty of gas.

Know that there is a high probability that absolutely nothing will happen and it will appear boring. But don't trust that. It could be that things will appear on the recordings and not be experienced by you or your team. Participating in reviewing the recordings is an important part of the work. Each team has their protocols on how to do the work post-investigation. But if

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things do happen, just follow your buddies on the team in terms of what to do or not to do.

Screaming and running out of the building should NOT be one of them. Playing it cool as if it were “normal” is best.

So what is truly normal on any given investigation? It tends to be a lot of initial note-taking, observing, listening, asking questions of what possibly could be happening in X,Y,Z area or home. Once you settle down to investigate and really listen, usually nothing happens, or it takes quite a while for something to start to happen. And sometimes, it appears as nothing happened during the entire investigation. It can be disappointing at times. But you can't really declare nothing happened until you do your review of evidence.

What is not the norm on any investigation? What is not the norm is activity. Consistent questions and answers during your EVP session, for things to move, or for investigators to see shadows, hear voices, footsteps or have equipment fail left and right. So, activity is usually not the norm. It happens about only 10-20% of the time. The other 80-90% can be quite the yawn. But the satisfaction is to know you are helping someone in need, and that is worth every and all investigations.

After the investigation:

Get some rest, you will need it; especially after the first investigation, you might feel a bit drained. A lot of energy is invested in those first run-throughs. Once you get the hang of it, it won't be so draining. Being up late at night once or twice a month can be tiring, especially if the investigation was busy and just plain weird. It is not the routine to do so for most investigators. So feeling exhausted the following day will be normal.

If you need to review or talk about your first time experience with a team member, do so, they understand. Feel free to have a list of questions in terms of the experience, the process, and anything else that comes to mind. Learn all you can from each investigation.

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Choosing paranormal tools:

Here is a of some important questions you can take a look at and see if it helps you choose a tool you want to use long term in the field. It will also help you be realistic about equipment usage. Keep in mind there are tools coming out all the time, but it does not mean the new gadget really does the job. Choose with caution, common sense and realistic in terms of your own finances.

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|---------------------------------------|-----|----|-------------|
| Am I good at visuals and observation? | Yes | No | Somewhat |
| Am I good with sound? | Yes | No | Somewhat |
| Am I good with tech stuff in general? | Yes | No | Somewhat |
| Am I good with construction issues? | Yes | No | Somewhat |
| Am I an inventor? | Yes | No | Wish I were |

What I crave to have is:_____

How much would I have to save for the tools I really want?_____

What will not break my piggy-bank right now is:_____

Will I have to get into the routine and discipline of saving my pennies to afford the equipment I want or need? Yes No Other:_____

What will be practical and useful for me to use right now?:_____

What tools really do the job, collect the necessary data and which tools tend to be more experimental or “iffy” at best in the field right now?_____

What I don't have, but want to learn more about is:_____

What tool you think will feel most comfortable handling right now and why?
