

KEEPING A PARANORMAL JOURNAL

One of the best things you can do to prepare for an upcoming investigation is to keep a journal over a period of four weeks or longer that logs occurrences and experiences you think might be paranormal. Should you and your household choose to share your journals with PPI, they can offer a cohort study that will assist our team in tailoring their investigation to the needs of the case. In fact, journaling has sometimes yielded enough conclusive evidence to make a full investigation superfluous. In most cases, though, a good journal is simply a research tool that helps uncover patterns such as when activity is likely to occur, increase, decrease, or coincide with other activities and circumstances

It can also serve to chronicle your own progress and keep behaviors like confirmation bias in check. (To learn more about these, see "Spooking Yourself: Confirmation Bias & Myth-Making").

Finally, a journal can be a personal diary for details you may be unwilling to share with other household members. For those reasons, we encourage thorough and honest logging into your journal, but we naturally understand any request to submit a redacted version of your journal, or to withhold it altogether.

Below is an overview of the content most frequently recorded in an average journal entry:

<p>PRIMARY INFO Record the essential data.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ your name ▶ today's date ▶ the date of the occurrence (if different from today's date) ▶ time of occurrence (as precise as you can make it), in hh:mm ▶ room or location where the event happened
<p>SECONDARY INFO Record secondary info about environmental conditions, if known.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Weather conditions ▶ Solar activity ▶ HVAC on/off ▶ Outside noises (street noise, dogs barking, helicopters, etc.) ▶ Inside noises (blaring tv/music, children at play, appliance noise, etc.)
<p>WITNESSES Note all witnesses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Who, besides you, also witnessed the event? ▶ Who was present but did not witness the event? ▶ Who was not present? ▶ Don't ask anyone else what they witnessed; work alone when you journal.
<p>DETAILS In your journal entries, reference and detail any of the sensory perceptions at right that are applicable, and describe what efforts you made, if any, to understand the anomalous occurrence.</p>	<p><i>Auditory</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • voices (talking, singing, crying, screaming, etc.) • anomalous sounds (music, footsteps, running, knocking, closing doors, etc.) • strange silence <p><i>Taste and Smell</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • out-of-place fragrances (perfumes, floral scents, etc.) • odors (smoke, putrid smells, toxic fumes) • strange or unexpected flavors <p><i>Visual</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • apparitions (partial- or full-body, solid or see-thru, moving or static) • light and shadow forms (orbs seen with own eyes, flashing, smoky forms) • objects disappearing/moving (doors shutting, furniture moving, etc.) <p><i>Tactile</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cold or hot spots • touching, slapping, groping, scratches, etc. • headaches, dizziness, unusual pain <p><i>Behavioral</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • electrical disturbances • strong random thoughts or emotions • uncharacteristic behaviors and tendencies • loss of focus
<p>ALTERNATIVE CAUSES Outline any possible alternative explanation for the event you experienced.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Prescription glasses ▶ Earphones/headphones ▶ Illness, agitation, or strong mood ▶ Medication side effects

SAMPLE JOURNAL ENTRIES

April 23

23:22

Living Room

Reading; shadow critter moves south to north, new ceiling to my left. My cat sees it too. I watched him before I turned to try to see it. It faded before the wall.

April 24

11:22

Patio

As I cross through the doorway I felt something stab me in the chest on the right, and through my back.

03:00

Bedroom

Cat woke me wailing with a night terror.

April 30

03:16

Bedroom

I had three night terrors last night. I screamed because a ghost (female) was trying to materialize beside the bed.

May 3

07:30

I am startled awake by a woman's voice saying [loudly; authoritatively], "Ma'am." No one there inside or outside. Voice was very clear, not muffled. I had earplugs in. [Apparition materialized from the waist up; mutton sleeves, maybe Bohemian; younger ghost, but didn't disclose her name]

May 6

00:00 - 01:00

Tapping on headboard.