

### Tools of the Trade

### Infrared Lights and Why We Use Them in the Paranormal World

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When it comes to hunting ghosts we prefer to use Infrared (IR) lights for several reasons. Since most investigations take place at night, IR lights preserve our natural night vision keeping investigators safe when navigating unfamiliar terrain. They also provide illumination for modified cameras that will not interrupt or interfere with normal, unmodified cameras. IR lights can be purchased commercially or made right in your very own home!

As paranormal investigators and enthusiasts alike we typically conduct our research at night. There are several advantages to this. Contrary to popular belief paranormal activity is not exclusive to the dark. We do this because life is typically calmer and our equipment is very sensitive (not to mention most investigators have day jobs). Since working in the dark is our forte; we need to remain safe, but not to forget to collect data. In come our IR lights. Infrared, on the light spectrum, is what is before the color red; hence the name infra-red (literally meaning "before red"). This means that the human eye cannot pick up this type of light but a modified camera will. Since the cones and rods in our eyes are not affected by IR, this preserves our natural night vision. There is no "after image" when exposed to IR making it a huge advantage in that we are not disoriented.

The problem with our tools is that most of them have a primary purpose that is something other than paranormal. When it comes to our IR lights, we can find some intended for security systems that require an adapter for the battery, or we can make our own. When making your own IR light, take into consideration of what you are using it for. Is it going to be a short range light? Are you going to be using it outside? How much light output do you need? Once you figure that out all you will need to do is collect the parts and put them together. What I have personally done was use a small ABS plastic project box, a couple 10mm IR LEDs, a resistor, battery connector, and a switch. Remember to use your knowledge of electricity and not shock yourself. It is a simple circuit and is not hard to construct. You can also add fun modifications such as hot shoe mounts, handles, and whatever else would work for your application.



IR Light



Sima Mobile IR Light – Rechargeable



Custom Mobile IR Light – 9V



Custom Built Super IR Light – AC or Batter Charger/Pack