



Greater Pittsburgh Paranormal Society™

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E.V.P. “Electronic Voice Phenomena” Part – 2

“The Game”

By Andrew Underwood

The definitions of EVP are as varied as the methods that are used to capture this phenomenon. The definitions range from *“It is the subconscious mind imprinting itself within the magnetic matrix of the recording device being used”* to *“Aliens trying to communicate with us from another dimension.”* It is not my intent to prove one way or the other as to the authenticity of these claims, but to provide you with a brief history of EVP, the tools that have been used, and the techniques that have been applied. If you decide that exploring the realms of EVP is the direction you wish to go, then let this research be your guide.

Sarah Estep,
founder of the AA-EVP has developed a classification system for these recordings.

Class A: Recorded message that people usually agree upon, also headphones are not required.

Class B: This recording requires the use of headphones; also people tend to hear different messages.

Class C: This recording requires amplification, the use of headphones are required yet still seldom heard by others.

NOTE: "Class B - C" EVP's are the most common. It is rare to record a message that does not require headphones to understand, and that everyone can agree upon.

EVP: “The Game”

If you have heard the saying “*More than one way to skin a cat*” then you will understand why there are so many different styles and techniques to capture EVP. I have left the content as the author wrote it. By keeping it intact you will not only learn from their words but capture a bit of their personality in the process. There is a common thread that each of these techniques details. Take from them what you can, learn from their sage advice and create a method that best works for you.

— Andrew Underwood

Tech – 1: (http://www.aaevp.com/techniques/techniques_evp9.htm)

Audio Recorder

EVP has been recorded on all types of equipment. The built-in microphone on a portable tape recorder tends to pick up motor noise. Therefore, it is best to use an external microphone. It is also best to use a cassette tape deck with mechanical controls that allow easy, repeated review of the voices. Be sure the recorder has a counter. People report recording EVP on telephone answer machines and many other devices that do not have external microphones. Digital Voice Recorders (also known as an IC recorder or digital note recorder) are fast becoming the recorder of choice, but they are best used with a computer to analyze and store the recordings.

Microphone

A microphone will help you make a record of your comments during the recording session, and introduce external sound sources. EVP messages will have more meaning if you have a record of the questions asked and the recording circumstances.

Headphones

Since the EVP voices frequently are not loud, many voices will be missed unless headphones are used. The earmuff type, which completely covers the ear, is usually used.

Tape

Any low noise, high sensitivity tape may be used. 60-minute tape (30 minutes each side) is recommended.

Speaker

A separate speaker is not necessary but is good to have. With the speaker, everyone in the room can hear.

Scheduling

Entities will speak on tape at any time of day or night. In the beginning, however, it is advisable to record at a regular time and place. By doing this, the entities learn

when you will be recording. After making a connection with the entities, you will be able to collect EVP at any time and in any location. Try to find a place that will be quiet and free of interruptions. Background sounds are okay, but it is important that you are aware of these so that you will recognize what sounds are natural and what sounds are EVP. Keep your recordings short. You will want to listen to each part of the recording very carefully and this can take time.

Background Sound Source

We have found that the entities use sounds in the environment to help form EVP messages. Most recording situations have some background sounds, but you may wish to add sound to your recording environment. A fan, a radio tuned off-station or running water will work. Some people use foreign language radio or audiotapes. The entity will sometimes re-modulate your voice or other sounds in the environment. The lower quality IC recorders have a relatively noisy sound circuit and do not generally require added noise. As a rule of thumb, the higher the quality recorder, the more added sound is needed.

Recording

Vocalize your comments during an EVP session. Many experimenters begin with a short prayer and an invitation to friends on the other side to participate in the experiment. It can be helpful to begin an experiment by speaking your name and the date. We have found that the entities will often come through as soon as the recorder is turned on. These beginning messages are often the loudest, so it is a good idea to turn on the recorder and wait a few seconds before announcing yourself and then ask questions. Your questions should be recorded, and you should leave a period of time between each comment for the entities to respond.

Some experimenters make an "appointment" with the intended entity the day before during prayer or meditation. Some also provide feedback before the session so that the entities will know how the last experiment went. It is not necessary to record in the dark. You will find that experimenters try all sorts of devices and energy sources to help the entities communicate. You may also want to put written questions in the EVP experiment area the day before. We are told the entities can read these and may respond accordingly.

Playback

The paranormal voice is usually not heard until playback of the tape. Experimenters report that the voices tend to become stronger and clearer as the entities gain in experience, but at first the voices may speak in whispers. Voices may not be recorded in every session and it may take several sessions for you to discover the first voice. Hearing the voices is a learned ability. The entities seem to learn through practice how to come through more frequently and more loudly.

Keeping a Log

Maintaining a record of recording results is very helpful. Include the date, time, place on the counter where the message is received, the message itself, and the question asked. Be sure to label the tapes. Experimenters report that they feel weather may affect results. The aaevp.com site has geomagnetic and solar reports. There is also a link for moon phase information.

Computer Recording

You can substitute a computer for the tape recorder if you wish. Your computer should have an audio input jack, speakers, headphone jack and sound player application of some form. Windows comes with a Sound Recorder application that will work. A sound editor like Audition or Audacity is most popular because these applications allow for easy amplification, filtering and reversing of the sound files.

You can either make the recording on a tape recorder and then play the tape into the computer for review, editing and storage, or attach a microphone directly to the computer and use the sound editor as a tape recorder.

When transferring into a computer, make sure the computer is set for "Line In" recording in "Sound and Multimedia" in the "Control Panel" of your Personal Computer. If you must take sound from the "Earphone" jack of your recorder, consider purchasing an "attenuating cord" to match the difference in resistance between the two jacks. Radio Shack can help.

A Note About Digital Voice Recorders

If you are using a digital voice recorder, we recommend that you listen to the playback in a quality tape recorder or in your computer. You will be surprised at the quality of the sound track when it is not listened to with the little built-in speaker. You need not use an external microphone, as the devices do not make internal noise.

Should you decide to purchase a digital voice recorder for EVP, keep in mind that cheap is good. The less expensive recorders usually use a lower sample rate, which produces more noise and it is that noise we believe the entities use to form the voices. There is one model of the Panasonic line that is now being sold on eBay for far more than it originally cost and very much more than it is worth. The recorder was well liked by EVP experimenters because it was one of the first; however, other models and other brands have since been made available and they work just as well.

Tech – 2: (<http://www.evpzone.com/techniques.html>)

We use a digital voice recorder (RCA model RP5010) without an external microphone. Our settings are: volume on the highest level, highest quality for recording, conference, voice activation turned either on or off (both ways work for us). When doing recordings in our home, we do not use white noise; such as a radio being tuned to between stations so only the 'white noise' is audible. (This is the only recorder we've ever tried. Other kinds of recorders would probably work as well).

When we begin to record, we sometimes ask for the spirits to speak to us, tell us their names, etc., that we would like to hear from them. We always show them respect. And thank the spirits at the end of the session. Or we'll just turn the recorder on without saying anything. The recorder is either laid down or carried with us. We have recorded for as long as 30 minutes, but 15 minutes is average. A cemetery, vacant state mental hospital and in our home have been places where we have recorded EVP's.

WavePad is used to edit our recordings. For clarity, we may need to remove a little hum or hiss or use auto spectral noise reduction (applied to voice) and amplify. We try to keep the editing to a minimum. We often find there is another message when the recording is played in reverse.

Tech – 3: (http://www.ghostweb.com/evp_how.html)

How to record EVP
by Dr. Dave Oester

I recently evaluated an audio tape sent to me filled with what I was told was excellent EVP. After listening to this tape filled with squeals and excessive feedback, I felt I needed to take some time and teach some fundamentals about capturing EVP. Electronic Voice Phenomena is what we call capturing the voices of the dead with an audio recorder, either audio tape or digital format. The techniques that I will describe are simple, but effective. If you follow these techniques you should have the same success as I do.

Any recording device may function as your EVP recorder. I have used micro cassette recorders, regular hand held audiotape recorders, disc and digital recorders. While I may favor the digital format, the audiocassette tape recorders work equally as well. If you have questions about your EVP recording device, take this simple test. Turn your volume up to high and then back it off a hair. Record for two minutes. Play the recording and listen to the background noise. What do you hear? If you can hear the natural sounds found in the background noise, you are all set for ghostly EVP. However, if you cannot hear the natural sounds in the background because of squeals or other interference that block out the soft quiet background sounds, then this recorder is not acceptable. The two-minute recordings should be without artificial noise that interferes with the background sounds. You want a quiet two minutes, free of electronic squeals and or electronic hum that distorts the background sounds.

Valid EVP will sound human with human emotions often being expressed in their voices. This is the human quality retained by the "beyond the grave entities" known as spirits, souls or ghosts. Be aware that first generation digital recorders were poor recorders because those devices recorded digital static that fooled many people into thinking that had captured demonic or at least angry tormented souls yelling at them. The second-generation recorders solved this problem and no longer are these digital recorders sensitive to digital static.

Long recording time is not necessary. The traditional approach to recording EVP is to record hours and hours on tape then listen for hours and hours to those recordings. Very boring! If you follow our protocols and ask permission before recording, I have found that recording for ten minutes max at any one location has been most successful. If I move to a different location at the site, I start a new recording. I announce in a soft voice the location. While recording, I refrain from talking and from conversations. I am thinking of those whose voices I am seeking. I am wondering about this lives and what they might be doing. If I am visiting a cemetery, I will stand before a headstone and read the words as I think about the person buried there. I may read their name out loud and their death date.

Do not walk around while recording because the sounds of your footsteps are loud and clear. Footsteps become annoying and will cover up the voices of the dead. Find a spot and stand still for two or three minutes and if you want to move to another spot go quickly and again stand still. Do not move the recorder in your hand nor stroke the recorder with your fingers because the friction on the recorder case is recorded as a loud noise. Experience at home so you know the limits of your recorder. If power lines are near, you may get a sixty-cycle hum on the tape that is annoying.

When you play back your EVP recordings, listen to the background sounds. Nestled in those background sounds are human voices in conversation or in making statements to you. This can all occur within a minute or less. Listen carefully and never discount human voices until you have separated them and listened very closely to determine if it was anyone in your group. Several times I thought I had picked up Sharon's voice, but upon closer examination, I found the voice to be another woman who was speaking. Some times you get complete sentences, other times just a work or two, but those voices will be human sounding often filled with human emotions.

When conducting an investigation, never belittle or poke fun at those who have passed beyond the grave. This is asking for trouble and if you have someone like this in your group, ask them to leave. Negative people breed negativity and should be avoided. If you want to succeed in recording the voices from beyond the grave, a little common sense and manners are required. I was on one investigation and one of the couples arrived after having a fight. They were not in the best of spirits and later their negativity affected the entire group investigation. No one got any EVP as long as they were around that couple, but when I walked away from them, I got EVP and learned a good lesson along the way. We established Standards and Protocols for a purpose. Too many ghost hunters are violating these Standards and Protocols and producing nothing but dust bunnies that they are calling spirit orbs.

The ghost phenomena was consider rare with ghosts only found in or around haunted sites. This line of thinking was popular and accepted as fact. I said on national television that ghosts are everywhere when ABC News Nightline did a thirty-minute segment on us. The show was aired November 24, 1994. I suggested that any town could have ghosts. I suggested that the spirits of the dead were not limited to haunted sites, but could be found anywhere. I did not think that this statement would one day be interpreted as meaning that anytime you pointed a digital camera and snapped a few digitals, you would get spirit orbs. All you will generally get are flying dust bunnies or yellow pollen orbs or airborne spores. This is where common sense must be used. Dust orbs are spheres, but they are not the souls or spirits of the dead that appear as balls of light.

Too many people write to me and say that their house is haunted. They list all the strange and paranormal events and say that got proof, clusters of spirit orbs captured with their digital. While they may feel that their flying dust bunnies are proof, it clearly demonstrates that they are grasping at straws to find visual evidence of the haunting. Instead of using a digital camera, why not turn on your tape, disc or digital recorder and see if you can capture any spirit voices. I guarantee that no dust bunnies will interfere with your recording, no pollen will sneak in and confuse you with their beautiful sphere shapes and best of all, you will get to hear human emotions from beyond the grave. Now you have some proof of your haunting.

Tech - 4: (http://www.evpuke.com/evp_equipment.html)

EVP Equipment & Recording Methods

We have outlined below some very basic information about EVP recording equipment and recording methods. Although many researchers have a preference to certain methods of recording, we feel that in order to conduct our research effectively that we should cover as many different methods as possible during our experiments. Of course, in time we have found that certain methods are more effective than others.

Analogue Recorders

Up until the late 90's, analogue recorders were the only means of capturing EVP available to researchers. From early reel-to-reel recorders to solid-state professional audio recorders, there are many variations available. It traditionally takes longer to capture EVP on an analogue recorder, but when you do, you will find that the voices are much clearer than that of digital with a higher volume of class A voices. Many of today's researchers still prefer the use of analogue recorders during their experiments due to the clarity of the voices coming through. You will find that analogue recordings contain a high level of background hiss, which is where many of the voices can be found during analysis. We recommend the use of an external mic, which should be positioned a few feet from the recorder to avoid the noisy mechanism of the recorder contaminating your recordings. Always use a fresh tape when starting a new recording session as tapes can get worn over time. Previous recordings may not be overwritten properly and may bleed through the tape into newer recordings.

Digital Recorders

The digital age is upon us and there are many digital audio recorders available on the market, from basic digital Dictaphones to solid-state professional digital audio recorders. Digital recorders are extremely portable and most have an in built microphone. Many of them have a built in flash memory that can give you hours of recording at the touch of a button and files can be managed easily. We have found that digital recorders are most effective for capturing EVP when used on the lowest quality settings. These settings appear to generate a higher degree of background hiss, which is where many of the voices can be found. This is much like using white noise as carrier signal for EVP voices to come through.

One of the most talked about digital recorders for recording EVP is that of the Panasonic RR-DR60 IC Recorder. The RR-DR60 is a voice-activated recorder that has shown over time that it is highly effective for capturing EVP. Inexplicable voices seem to come through on this recorder in abundance, even when used inside a Faraday Cage to rule out external interference. Unfortunately many of voices captured on the RR-DR60 seem to be extremely distorted and require much work using filtering software. Nonetheless, these recorders are extremely interesting from a research point of view and many more experiments are required to find out why this recorder is so effective in comparison to other digital recorders. Unfortunately the Panasonic RR-DR60 is hard to come by these days. The Sony ICD range of recorders are also highly effective for capturing EVP and like many other digital recorders, can be slipped into your pocket and taken just about anywhere for experimentation purposes.

External Microphones

External microphones can be used with any recording device that has an input socket. We utilize many different microphones during experimentation including parabolic microphones, induction microphones, condenser microphones, dynamic microphones and radio microphones (wireless). It is important to experiment with different types of microphone during research as they can all have their own distinctive sound. Two of the most useful microphones are the parabolic, which is used to pick up distant noise and amplify noise that occurs in close proximity, and the radio mic (wireless). We mainly experiment with different microphones using analogue recorders.

Desktop/Laptop Computers

It is possible to record sound directly into a laptop or desktop computer via an attached microphone. Many researchers use this method and have successfully captured many EVP voices recording directly in software such as Adobe Audition. Of course, computers are essential for analyzing your recordings and laptops in particular are excellent for field recording.

Inter Frequency

The Inter Frequency method of EVP recording is used by many of today's researchers and was also a favorite of past researchers such as Friedrich Jürgenson, Konstantin Raudive and Raymond Cass. This method involves providing a background carrier noise whilst recording, such as white noise, which was traditionally provided by tuning a radio in between channels. Many skeptics believe that the anomalous voices picked up in this way are actually stray radio signals. Interestingly enough we have never come across any cases where music has been recorded using this method, which is the main content of today's radio broadcasts. You can generate various frequency tones for experimentation purposes such as white noise, pink noise and brown noise in software such as Adobe Audition to avoid the need for a radio. We recommend experimenting with various different frequency tones during research.

Raudive Diode

Konstantin Raudive devised his own method of improving the quality of his EVP recordings. Through experimentation he found that using a Germanium Diode plugged into a recorder instead of a microphone vastly helped improve the quality of the voices. We have found that the Germanium Diode is capable of picking up radio waves and is best utilized in conjunction with a Faraday Cage (see below). You will find that the diode will not pick up your own voice or any noise contamination from your recording area. We highly recommend experimenting with this device.

Faraday Cage

The Faraday Cage is a very useful tool for EVP research. The cage is utilized to shield your recording equipment and to effectively wipe out the chances of electromagnetic or radio interference. A very good example of a Faraday Cage is the cooking compartment of a microwave oven, which is designed to stop microwaves escaping. Try placing your mobile phone inside an **unplugged** microwave and calling it from a land line. You will find that the signal will not get through. Utilizing a microwave for home EVP experiments is an ideal way to ensure that your EVP voices cannot be explained by electromagnetic or radio interference.

Telephones & Answering Machines

There are many reported cases around the world of EVP or anomalous voices appearing on telephone answering machines. There are also many cases of people having telephone conversation with friends or family members who have long since departed this world. We have had experience of this and are truly fascinated by these other cases. We would very much like to hear from anyone who has experienced anomalous voices via the telephone for research purposes. When listening to telephone answering messages always pay particular attention to the start, the end for voices breaking through. This phenomena seems to occur on both digital and analogue

answering machines and there are even cases of mobile phone messages containing anomalous voices.

We have provided some basic information about EVP recording equipment and recording techniques. Of course there are many more methods of recording EVP and we recommend experimenting with as many methods as possible. There is much to learn about the reasons why these voices appear on our recording equipment, so please do not be scared to try something new.

Tech – 5: (<http://www.paratexas.com/ghostpg6.htm>)

Extensive laboratory methods have been devised using "white noise generators" (from which the voices must be electronically extracted) and others tune to open frequency ranges on radio and TV bands. The simplest method though, is just to open a fresh new audio tape, stick it in a good quality portable recorder with a "plug-in" microphone, (don't use built-in mikes, they're too noisy), and give it a try. Better yet, use a modestly priced digital recorder. It is believed that the inherent noise level of the IC components provide a great white noise source which contributes to the success of the endeavor.

Research and experience in the field has shown us that certain individuals will collect EVP at a phenomenal rate whereas others may have mediocre, or less, results. This appears to be the result of psychic communication between the experimenter and the spiritual entity. There are indeed, strong indications of a mediumistic relationship in the acquisition of the phenomena, even though the operator of the recorder may not have awareness of this fact.

Tech – 6: (http://virginiaghosts.com/hale_evp.phpBasic)

To hear EVP, the major piece of equipment you will need is a device for recording the voices. Traditionally this has been a tape recorder, but in recent years videotape and computers have also been used successfully – note that all three of these systems store information via electrically magnetized media.

Assuming that you will want to start out with basic audiotaping, a rule of thumb is that any reasonably good quality machine will work for recording the voices, but you should use the best deck available for playback. Thus, a small portable unit should suffice for field research and recording in secluded locations. In fact, some experimenters suggest that the 'noisy' audio characteristics of inexpensive portables can make for better EVP. Furthermore, a battery-powered recorder will be less susceptible to stray radio signals being picked up through the AC power line. Regardless of your choice for a recorder, it's generally advisable to use a good hi-fi quality unit for playback when trying to listen to the elusive voices. Some pro caliber models provide for variable speed adjustment or 'pitch' control, and this might prove very helpful with deciphering EVP.

In theory, the old reel-to-reel machines should offer superior recording capabilities, but a good cassette deck is hard to beat for ease of use and widespread availability. You should use the best quality tape available, either the 'Type II / High Bias / CrO2' or the 'metal' tapes are preferable, but check to make sure your deck has a selector switch for recording on these higher grade tapes. Any cassette unit will play

them, but not all decks can take advantage of their improved high frequency characteristics in the record mode (most portables don't). And don't use your deck's Dolby or other noise reduction system since the noise you filter out might be Thomas Edison with further instructions!

Your machine should have a counter display to help keep track of where the voices are on the tape – a counter that's easily readable in dim light is a plus. Also, your playback deck (or auxiliary amplifier) must have an earphone jack. Earphones are considered essential for listening to the faint EVP voices, and though a deck that permits earphone monitoring while recording is advantageous, don't expect to hear any EVP until you play the tape back – this is one of the many mystifying peculiarities of the phenomenon. The ' earmuff ' style headphones are good to help block any outside noise while listening for EVP, but personally I find a good quality set of the lightweight 'walkman' type phones work fine and are much more comfortable for extended use. Be sure your headphone's plug matches the jack on your tape deck by the way; there are two standard sizes (1/8" and 1/4") and each size is available with either mono (2 conductor) or stereo (3 conductor) connectors. Radio Shack can fix you up with an adaptor if needed, and while you're there be sure to ask the salesperson if they have any EVP recorders;)

Your recorder must be equipped with an auxiliary input jack to accept the plug from an external microphone or other input device. If the only mike you have is the one built into your recorder, I say give it a try, but the better quality your microphone, the better quality you can expect your recordings to be. A reasonably good one can be purchased for \$10-\$30. If possible, you should try different mikes with your recorder to see which combination gives the best sound quality. (Incidentally, there is a simple trick for using a small inexpensive speaker to make a very effective microphone, details upon request.) Check that your deck's input jack will accept the microphone's plug; again, these usually come in 1/8" and 1/4" sizes. Some professional microphones use what's called an XLR connector and these aren't compatible with standard recorder inputs.

Hopefully, your recorder will allow manual adjustment of the recording input level with either a meter or light display to indicate the strength of the input signal. You will want to set the level as high as possible without causing distortion or feedback. Inexpensive portables often have automatic level control only, and these might not pick up the weak and transient EVP's.

Alright . . . now you're set with a tape recorder, tape, earphones and mike, you know how to plug it all together, and you've familiarized yourself with operating the components of your EVP detection system. You're ready to try the first method of EVP recording, referred to (naturally) as microphone recording. In a quiet setting, clear your mind and focus on your goal of receiving a message from the paranormal. With the tape deck recording, state your name, as well as the date and time. You may also want to comment on atmospheric conditions, etc. This will help establish a systematic approach, and serve as a reference when listening to your tapes in the future. Next, verbally invite the spirits (voices, energies or whatever) to speak into your equipment. You might frame this as a question, either general or specific. It seems to be helpful for the researcher to get the conversational ball rolling, so say whatever you feel is appropriate. Then, just sit back quietly and let the tape run for about five minutes or so. After this time, you could either ask again for another communication and repeat the process, or simply go ahead and playback the recording to see if any messages has appeared.

Generally 10-15 minutes of recording time might require 30 minutes to an hour of playback and listening. Listen to your tape with the volume up and treble control set to maximum, but don't expect voices to come booming through loud and clear – at least not right away. Most EVP will be faint and very obscure, just barely detectable above the background noise. Ever seen those pictures where you have to look for hidden objects – a face in the tree limb, etc.? EVP is like that. As you're listening, you might notice an odd bit of static, a buzz, a whine, a crackle, or a brief swishing noise like two pieces of sandpaper being rubbed together. Note the counter setting and listen to that segment over again a few times. Do you begin to sense some detail within the noise?

EVP voices speak abruptly, usually in a high speed, somewhat monotone pitch that lacks the rhythm and inflections of normal human speech. Repeated playback often seems to help 'develop' the voices. As your hearing becomes more finely tuned to the process, you may eventually extract a few words or a sentence fragment from what at first appeared to be just a slight glitch in the tape – and thus, you will have captured your first EVP.

Now that you have mastered the techniques for microphone recording of EVP, I must inform you that most researchers consider it to be the least effective method. Clear strong voices are rare, and the microphone's sensitivity to ambient sound can mislead the experimenter into thinking that a passing car or creaking chair leg might be EVP. Raudive explored two other techniques, which he called 'radio recording' and 'diode recording'. Most serious researchers have used a variation of one of these methods, said to yield more numerous and higher quality EVP.

The radio method calls for taping from the output of an ordinary radio which has been tuned 'in between' stations so that no regular broadcasts are heard, just the white noise of background static. The radio's output can be plugged directly into the tape recorder, or you can try a hybrid approach and place your microphone in front of the speaker. The radio's volume should be turned down fairly low for this, you will have to experiment to find the most effective setting. Many of Raudive's EVP messengers spoke out in favor of the radio method, and this was also the technique preferred by Sarah Estep who was founder of The American Association of Electronic Voice Phenomena and a recorder of EVP for many years. Estep claimed best results with a radio tuned to the aircraft band (around 125 MHz), Raudive used the regular AM broadcast band, others have used FM and even television frequencies. An obvious criticism of the radio method is that one might just be picking up stray bits of ordinary radio broadcasts. With the proliferation of cell phones, cordless phones, pagers, baby monitors and other wireless devices we have today, plus the band-packing number of television and radio stations out there (AM, FM, CB, Ham, short wave, satellite,) this is an ever more valid concern. Some experimenters have reported successful results using a variety of other white noise sources in lieu of the radio (both electronic and natural such as flowing water) . Still, it's quite possible for the tape recorder itself to act as a radio receiver if strong signals happen to be originating nearby, and especially with the unit's recording level set to maximum. Even international short wave broadcasts can come through with ghostly effect at times when ionosphere conditions are just right.

If your recorded voices continue for more than just a few words, seeming a little too clear, and too much like normal human speech – well, that's probably just what it is. Using short well-shielded cables for the input connections, and perhaps a radio frequency filtered power supply (built into many of those surge protection power outlet strips) should help to minimize radio cross talk.

The third technique advocated by Raudive was called diode recording and it involves the use of a very simple electronic circuit similar to the crystal sets of early day radio. Three experimental circuits were presented in Breakthrough and these were said to have produced the best volume and clarity of all EVP techniques. Surprising then that diode recording seems to have been the method least studied by researchers – probably because of the electronics construction involved, although the few parts required are inexpensive and readily available. The diode circuit is built into a metallic enclosure, which is connected to an earth ground (cold water pipe, ground prong of electric outlet, driven rod, etc). A short length of shielded cable connects the diode circuit to the recorder.

Note that regardless of the method you choose, you should still record the time and other pertinent information, as well as verbally ask for a message, etc. just as you would for microphone recording. Keep in mind that a 'true' EVP will usually impart a message relevant to the question being asked or say something of personal significance to the researcher. Don't be discouraged if voices fail to appear in your first attempts – persistence is the key. Successful tapers agree that regular sessions performed at about the same time each day will eventually yield consistent results.

I've tried to cover all the basics in this EVP 'primer', but I must admit that I've only scratched the surface. After more than 40 years of intensive research by highly qualified scientists using rigorous control methods, as well as experimentation by ordinary folks in their homes, EVP is firmly established (at least to all but the most closed-minded skeptics) as being a bona fide electro-magnetic phenomenon. In recent years numerous books, magazine articles, and web sites have appeared, helping to spread awareness of the phenomenon. Yet questions still far outnumber the answers. No one can say with certainty just what or 'who' is causing the voices to appear on tape. And curiously, recording techniques that work well for one person might not yield any results at all for another, and vice versa. Despite the best efforts of researchers throughout the world, it doesn't seem that much progress has been made in constructing an EVP 'receiver' that is substantially more effective or reliable than the methods described in this paper and used by Jurgenson, Raudive, et al. in the early years – but this just means that the field is wide open for amateur explorers to discover a new breakthrough of their own!

Tech – 7: (<http://paranormal.about.com/library/weekly/aa102901a.htm>)

If you'd like to experiment with EVP, all you need is a portable cassette tape recorder and some new high-quality cassette tapes. Make sure you use new tapes because you want to avoid any possibility of having voices or noises previously recorded on the tape.

Use an audiocassette recorder with an external microphone and a source of mild white noise, such as a radio tuned between stations. (Or, as other researchers have done, you can also experiment with the quiet of a cemetery or house; just be sure it is far from traffic noises that might interfere with the recording.) Place the microphone a few feet from the radio.

Turn on the tape recorder and introduce the session. For example: "Good morning. Its Tuesday October 31, 11:59 p.m. I welcome all spirits." Then ask three or four questions. Replay the taped sequence and listen closely. A set of earphones can help make the short, faint voices more audible.

While some people are lucky enough to get a clear EVP on their first try, others might find that it takes several weeks or even months of experimenting to achieve success. World ITC says, "As you conduct voice experiments on a regular basis, the voices might get louder and clearer as your contact field (the field of thoughts, feelings and life energies between you and your spirit friends) grows stronger. It requires a clear mind, focused intent, positive thoughts, and a balanced temperament to ensure the best possible results."

Tech – 8: (<http://thebeyond.info/evp.htm>)

Equipment: First off you want to make sure that you have the right equipment for recording. You will need a recorder and a microphone. You may also want a program to use to clean your recording up on your computer.

Location: Outside locations aren't impossible, but they're VERY problematic when recording E.V.P. There are too many uncontrollable noises. Wind, traffic, and other people, will constantly play havoc with your recordings. It can be so bad that if you should, by chance catch something on your recorder, there's no way that you can claim it to be paranormal. There are far too many other possibilities. Indoors are best, but understandably, they're not always possible. If you're going to record, make sure that it's in a location where you can account for EVERY sound.

Nothing: Its true. A lot of people do absolutely nothing. They turn on their recorder and just set it down and leave it to record whatever it records. A lot of people get good results this way.

White Noise: Many investigators believe that spirits need an outside noise source to harness so that they can manifest their own voice. I've tried it. It hasn't worked for me yet, but others have reported progress. Some think that this technique is useless. My mind remains open on the subject. No evidence has been presented to support either opinion.

Provoking: Some try to be insulting & mean to the ghosts to get them to retaliate. Some may not like this technique, but it can bring results.

Q & A: Have a list of questions to ask the spirit. It's a technique used by most ghost hunters. You ask a question, and pause and give the spirit a chance to answer on the recorder.

Tech – 8: (<http://www.missouriparanormalresearch.com/EVPartlidfsssss.html>)

Methods & Techniques for Capturing EVP

Now that you are all equipped and ready we will go through some more common methods of capturing EVP. Remember, there is no wrong or right way and everyone will tell you they do it a different way as well. These basic methods will start you off and with success you will modify and develop your own.

Basic Rules

Before we start on the methods and techniques, I will list some basic rules, which

should be followed at all times no matter what the method used.

Always respect the unknown! Try asking them if you can record them, use “please” and “thank you” and in general be courteous to what you are trying to record.

When asking questions or before leaving a recorder to sit at a location. Try explaining to the unknown what the recorder is and what it does. Also, let them know where they need to speak into it at if they want to be recorded. When I use a portable digital IC recorder I will state “This is a recorder to record your voice, when the red light is on you can speak into the silver box if you want to be heard. Thank you for allowing me to visit you and for trying to talk to me.” If you are using an external microphone that is black then you can ask them to speak into the black stick, etc.

Identify all living human parties at the location on the recorder and allow each one to state their name into the recorder so you have a sample of their voice for later reference.

Verbally date and time stamp the tape or recording with your voice and if you want include the location, conditions and other notes pertinent to your investigation.

Never whisper around your recorder and remind others not to as well. This will add confusion during your final analysis if it is a person or EVP. If you need to talk or communicate with someone else then speak your normal tone and possibly note afterwards it is you to simplify your final analysis.

If you leave a recorder in a room of a house or somewhere outside, then notify others in your party where it is located and ask that they verbally announce their entrance into and exit from that area so it will be captured on the recording, then scuffling, breathing, stomach growling, etc.

If you are with your recorder when attempting EVP then verbally note any odd background noises, movement, people in the background talking, etc. Such as “Jim in your group coughs”. If your recorder is recording instantly state “Jim, Coughing”, so you know later what that noise was. The same would go with a camera or equipment that makes noise as well. If someone takes a picture while you are recording then say “Picture” right after it is done so you know later what that weird click or electronic noise was.

If you are being interactive and asking questions during the session then allow 20 to 30 seconds for the possible spirit to give an answer before going to the next question. Many times it will take a spirit some time to get out an answer. Almost like they have to power up then discharge the answer.

If you are being interactive then try limiting your sessions to 3 to 5 minutes maximum then restart a new one. Analyzing various smaller segments is much easier than trying to keep up with the analysis of a 30 or 45 minute continuing session.

REMEMBER- following these basic rules will help with the validity and accuracies of your final results.

Methods & Techniques

Now we will dive into the various methods and techniques of capturing EVP. Like I stated earlier, these

are basic methods and with practice you will develop the right combination that works for you.

Passive

The passive method involves just placing your recorder in an area and leaving it (stationary) and the other would be just carrying your recorder around while you walk without asking questions (moving). In the passive method you do not interact and you just let your machine record the ambient surrounding for later analysis. You may want to utilize your voice activation feature, especially if placing it in a room for hours, if you have one so the recorder only records when it is sensing something. Otherwise you may end up with hours of audio to analyze.

I am personally not an advocate of using the voice activation feature because I feel that you may miss something since most spirits can only say a few words then it may not activate fast enough to capture the full phrase and only leave you with a word or part of one, if that. Remember if you practice the passive method while moving verbally note any sounds, equipment, scuffling, and other noises to simplify your final analysis.

Interactive

The interactive method involves human interaction where you will try to ask the unknown various questions. You can do this either stationary or while moving. I do not recommend using the voice activation feature during this method at all and I personally have missed out on parts of EVP's when I first tried using it when I started recording EVP. Remember to allow the 20 to 30 seconds after your question before asking the next one and to abide by the earlier mentioned basic rules of respect, etc.

What Questions to Ask?

The questions you ask will vary per each location and investigation where you can interject specific ones that may apply to the specific environment or legend of the haunting. However a good set of versatile ones, which are generic for all locations, can include:

Questions specific to document of an intelligent existence and possibly identify the spirit or entity:

Is it o.k? if we come in here and talk to you?

Is there anyone here who would like to speak to us?

My name is _____, I (or we) am (are) not here to harm you (introduce people with you) can you please tell me yours?

I am ___ years old, how old are you?

Are there others here with you?

What color is your hair?

What color are your eyes?

Can you show yourself to us?

Can you knock on the wall 2 times for us?

Are you married?

I have ___ children and their names are _____ (if you have any or mention grandchildren, etc.) then ask Do you have any children? What are their names?

This is a nice place, Is this your home?

How long have you lived here?

Questions to identify the possible era or time frame the entity is from or perceives

What year is it?
Who is the President of the United States?
Do you have a car?
Do you have a buggy?
Do you like baseball? Who won the World Series?
Who is your favorite boxer?
What is your favorite song?
What church do you go to?
What school did you go to? When did you graduate?

Questions to validate geographic location can include:

What Street do you live on?
What city or town do you live in or close by?
What State do you live in?

Other Generic Question that can prove valuable if answered is:

Would you like us to leave?
Do you want to leave here?
Can I (or we) help you in any way?
Do you have a message for someone?
Do you want to tell us something?
Did anything bad happen to you? What happened to you?
Are you lonely?
Are you or were you ever a human like us?
Do you come from somewhere else? Where are you from?

The above are just some basic questions that can help you identify the existence of an intelligent spirit or entity and also some information about them if they are able to answer. Remember when you are done asking questions let them know that you will listen to your machine and if you can hear them that you will try to come back and let them know (only if you plan on going back to that location). Be polite and respectful and thank them for talking to you and allowing you to visit them and say "Goodbye". If you know more about the history, legend or further details about the site you are at and its related haunting then you can ask specific ones to that location of possible identified spirits there.

Best conditions, places and time for recording EVP attempts?

This is a question asked many times. I think you will receive enough answers to cover every possible condition, place and time. Personally I have had luck at varied times in known places with paranormal activity. Some have luck while in their house, at work or even in their car. Some people will state they have better luck after an electrical storm, when the humidity is high or during a full moon. Yes, many factors may increase the ability to detect and communicate with the paranormal. Trying to speculate the best conditions, place or time would be the same as trying to speculate the winning lottery numbers. Grab your recorder and go out when you feel like hunting for EVP and remember do not get discouraged to quickly if you do not succeed the first few attempts. Try different times, places, under different conditions and you will eventually find the right combination for you to have success. Also, don't hesitate in asking

around if you know others that have paranormal interest and if you do not know anyone then try on the internet to find a local paranormal or ghost hunting group and email them or look for their online message board or forum.

Tech – 9:

(<http://usersites.horrorfind.com/home/ghosts/phantomhive/evp.html>)

Rules for EVP group Recording-Always use fresh new tapes!!!

The following rules should be followed to ensure the validity and accuracy of any anomalies discovered during playback. It is very difficult to remember a specific incident or phrase after hours of recording.

Everyone should speak in their normal voice and refrain from making any unusual sounds, including whistling, whispering, loud chewing of gum, etc. Try not to laugh or speak loudly in case the voices begin to speak while the humans are speaking.

Have each person record a baseline for their name. They should state their name along with a few additional words. I have seen a few instances where the spirits appear to be imitating someone present at the investigation.

If anyone makes an unusual noise, he should clearly state to the recorder his name and the type of sound, e.g., that was Robert and the floor squeaking.

Try to eliminate multiple conversations as this complicates listening for EVPs during playback.

The best questions are normally those that can be verified or can be answered simply. Each question should be asked two or three times. (At least 20-30 seconds wait time between your questions and keep them exactly the same)

** Introduce yourself and whoever is assisting you. Ask for permission and ask spirits to help you.

- Would you like to talk to us? (Asked x3)
- Can you tell us your name please? (Asked x3)
- Are you male or female? (Asked x3)
- How are you feeling? (Asked x3)
- Do you know what year it is? (Asked x3)
- Are you here all the time? (Asked x3)
- Is there anyone else with you? (Asked x3)
- What are their names? (Asked x3)
- Are there children there? (Asked x3)
- Do you know who we are? (Asked x3)
- Do you know today's date? (Asked x3)
- Are you a spirit? (Asked x3)
- Are you resting here? (Asked x3)
- Are you happy? (Asked x3)
- Is there anything you want to say? (Asked x3)

*** Repeat the list. You can add your own questions as you think of them but keep them uncomplicated and repeat them after 20-30 seconds.

*** Always be polite when doing EVP, avoid cursing or vulgarity. Speak clearly and normally. Make sure others are aware you are doing EVP experiments and they follow protocols (no whispering or using unusual voices). Explain any unusual sound you hear including other members talking, coughing, sneezing or laughing and whispers) Cars and other natural sounds-including animal sounds.

Conduct 30-minute question and answer sessions where everyone at the investigation site is in the same place. Questions are asked one at a time with an appropriate period between questions to allow for the spirits to answer

“The Game”

In conclusion:

If you take the time to go through each of the different techniques listed above, you begin to understand that you can make capturing EVP as easy or as hard as you want it to be. Don't be daunted by the para-speak and technical jargon used. Just remember the following and you will do great.

- **Be prepared**
 - With the right equipment, and that doesn't mean the most expensive.
 - Read and study about the environment you are going in.
- **Be respectful**
 - Remember whom you are speaking to.
- **Be patient**
 - Don't give up because you fail to catch something every time.
- **Listen**
 - If they are there give them a chance to speak to you. Don't rush through your questions.
- **Learn**
 - Learn what works best for you, try new things and have fun with it.

Works Cited (Techniques)

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Tech - 7: (<http://paranormal.about.com/library/weekly/aa102901a.htm>)

Tech - 8: (<http://thebeyond.info/evp.htm>)

Tech - 9:

(<http://usersites.horrorfind.com/home/ghosts/phantomhive/evp.html>)