

[http://www.yardhaunter.com/halloween\\_lighting.html](http://www.yardhaunter.com/halloween_lighting.html)

## **HALLOWEEN LIGHTING TIPS**

Creating your Halloween Haunt almost always means the addition of strings of decorative lights, strobe lights, black lights, Special FX, electrically powered decorations and the list goes on. Properly used, lighting will all add to the ambience of your haunt.

Whether you haunt your yard, garage, house or all three, you will most likely be adding an assortment of lights. Strings of decorative lights, flood lights, strobe and black lights and the list goes on.

Over the years we've learned how important proper lighting techniques are to Halloween haunting. Properly done, lighting can make the scene, while poor implementation can ruin it.

A graveyard scene is a perfect example. Lets say you've created a small graveyard in your front yard using a dozen quality tombstones, a couple of fake ravens and a few pumpkins.

If you under-light the graveyard it will not be very visible and have little or no impact on your visitors. Conversely, if you over-light the area you can ruin the effect by making it to stark.

In the case of a graveyard scene like the one above, we would recommend adding a couple blue colored flood light to illuminate the graveyard, setting one on either side. Check out the pages to the right for more ideas.

## **HALLOWEEN LIGHTING TIPS - THUNDER & LIGHTNING**



One of the most popular special effects to add to a Yard Haunt or Halloween Party is simulated thunder and lightning. Imagine a bright white flash of light, followed by the deep rumbling sound of thunder coming from your yard haunt!

When we received our Deluxe Lightning Machine kit from [Halloween Connection](#) we were anxious to try it out, but restrained ourselves until the sun went down so we would get the full effect. It only took about ten minutes to set it up and we were ready to go. We switched the speakers and strobe light on, popped the Thunder CD into the player and hit the play button.



Suddenly, there were several bright flashes of white light, followed shortly by the deep rumble of thunder. We sat entranced for almost half an hour watching, listening and waiting for the rain to come. All we could think about was what a great addition this was going to our yard haunt this Halloween.

The nice thing about this system is that it does not simply repeat the same lightning/thunder sequence over-and-over again, but is random like the real thing. The Lightning Machine creates an incredibly realistic effect of thunder and lightning, and needless to say we were very impressed!

### **The Lightning Machine - Haunted Enterprises**

Originally designed for the haunted attraction industry, the Lightning Machine is now available to the public. Since the flash of light from real lightning is seen before we hear the thunder, the method of simulating it must be capable of synchronizing the sound of the thunder and the flash of light generated by a strobe unit. This unit does just that!

Setup is easy with only three cables to plug in. One cable goes from the CD player's headphone jack to the amplified speakers. Another cable goes from the CD player's line-out jack to the Lightning Machine unit. The third cable goes from the Lightning Machine unit to the strobe light. Pop the thunder CD into your player, adjust the sensitivity knob for the desired effect and you're done.

Unlike comparable units, this Lightning Machine unit does not require a separate power adapter as it draws its power from the strobe light itself. And because the Lightning Machine uses a strobe light, instead of a regular light bulb or flood light, the lightning created is a brilliant white light, just like the real thing. The 75 watt Chauvet Techno Strobe 2000

(included in the deluxe kit) is a real bad-boy, powerful enough to add the effect of lightning to most home haunts. It has flash and speed control, and you can even daisy chain multiple strobe light units to only one Lightning Machine unit. This allows you to have lightning in several areas at the same time with only one Lightning Machine unit.

The basic kit includes the Lightning Machine unit, custom thunder CD and full instructions. You will need a stereo system or CD player with amplified speakers, Chauvet Techno Strobe 2000, and a couple of cables.

The deluxe kit includes: the Lightning Machine unit, a Chauvet Techno Strobe 2000, all adapters and cables needed, custom thunder CD and full instructions. We highly recommend the Deluxe kit - All you need to do is plug it into your stereo system or a CD player and it's ready to go without having to find and buy the other pieces. Also available or strobe lights and cables sold separately so if you want to add more you can.

This lightning machine, put together and sold by **Halloween Connection** has become one of their most popular products! At \$229.00 for the full kit, it's something that you just HAVE to have to complete your Halloween haunt!! Get one quick, before they run out for the Halloween 2008 season!

### **Lightning Tips and Safety**

Positioning your Lightning generator is important. If you have a peaked roof, place the unit just behind the peak. You can also place the unit up in a tree as an alternative to the roof. We like to place a Lightning Machine unit on the roof, pointed up into the trees behind our graveyard scene. For our indoor Halloween party, we place a Lightning Machine unit outside facing the windows to the room where the party will be held. This gives the effect of a raging thunder and lightning storm outside.

Safety note: As with any electrical device, do not use outdoors if there is any chance of moisture of any kind, such as rain. Don't allow extension cords to run through water or snow on the ground. Make sure that the cord is placed in such a way as not to become a hazard to guests.

### **HALLOWEEN LIGHTING TIPS - FLICKERING LIGHTS**



The Lighting Effects Machine causes ordinary house lamps to flicker to spooky sounds. Sound-sensitive lighting effects machine makes your house lamps brighten, dim and flicker as though they have a short-circuit.

Just plug lamps into controller, slide the included sound effects CD into your player, adjust the sound sensitivity control and your house is haunted! Works with your own music CDs too.



Controls up to 500 watts of lighting (that's five 100 watt light bulbs). Sound effects CD features thunderstorms, creaking floors, beating hearts, buzzing electrical current and much more. With built-in microphone, on/off/sensitivity switch, LED power indicator light, extra fuse and 6 ft. power cord. ETL listed. Not for fluorescent lighting. 5"W x 6"D x 3"H.

To make your Jack-O-Lanterns glow nicely without real candles, use one of the many types of battery powered "candles". Some come in multi-colored lighting and some come with a flicker feature that makes them look like real candle light. They are great for anywhere that you don't want to use an open flame and can also be used in a haunted scene setting as back light when placed behind small objects.

### **HALLOWEEN LIGHTING TIPS - BLACK LIGHTS**

Black lights can be a great addition to your Halloween haunt and displays, and buying black light fixtures is the easiest way to add black light to your Halloween haunt. If you turn on a black light bulb in a dark room, what you can see from the bulb is a purplish glow. What you cannot see is the actual **ultraviolet light** that the bulb is producing. Our eyes can see the visible light in a spectrum ranging from red through orange, yellow, green, blue and violet. Above violet is ultraviolet light, which we cannot see.



Black light fixtures come in a variety of sizes and powers, from mini-lights that are only 4 inches long to full length 4 foot units. Black light fixtures are available from many sources year round, including department stores, specialty shops and online. The price

varies depending on the size of bulb the unit uses, and where you make your purchase. Avoid the incandescent bulb type black lights. While they generate a pretty color, they put out very little ultraviolet light. Stick with the fluorescent tube type.

Since UV light is not very strong and doesn't travel very far it's important to use the right strength/size black lights to illuminate your Halloween props, decorations, etc. Use smalls (18" to 24") lights on smaller area and displays where you can position the unit(s) close. Use larger 4 foot units to cover large areas, scenes and props. When ever possible the black light unit should be positioned and/or camouflaged so that it cannot be seen by your visitors.

Wearable fluorescent products come in a plethora of styles, including, Fingernail Polish, Body Paint, Hair spray, Wigs, Contact Lenses, Costumes, Masks, Decorations, Makeup, and the list goes on.



Costumes and masks that have glow-in-the-dark (fluorescent) properties make a great addition to your black light haunt. The ***Totally Skele-Bones*** costume available from ***Fun World*** has very realistic looking sculpted bones that glow in the dark, which makes them perfect for use under black lights. For more information on these great costumes and some spooky ways of using them see the [Skeletons](#) section.



Paint your Halloween props with glow paint to illuminate. Painting your props with this invisible fluorescent paint will make them glow eerily under black lights enhancing there overall effect. You can also use it on Halloween signs, costumes, masks, skeletons and other decorations.



If you have a graveyard scene with tombstones, you can trace over the epitaph's with glow in the dark fabric paint or pens. When it dries it should be transparent, but will glow eerily under the black light. If you have a graveyard scene with tombstones, you can trace over the epitaph's with glow in the dark fabric paint or pens. When it dries it should be transparent, but will glow eerily under the black light.



Did you know there's a Glow in the Dark Ouija Board are made by Parker Brothers/Hasbro? These are the weirdest Ouija boards available. They Glow very brightly under a black light. Although smaller than the standard Ouija board, the Glow In The Dark Ouija more than makes up for the size difference in the unusualness of it!



Use glow in the dark window paint to add to your decor. Write messages on windows that can't be seen until a black light hits it. Write scary warning messages on your front walk using colored chalk or washable fluorescent paint. By dressing in black shirt and tights and spotting glow paint all over yourself, you can stand against a black wall and all that will be visible is the paint under a black light.



If you need clothing, sheets, cotton rope (for rope spider webs), or other fabric to glow in the dark, you can soak it in Woolite laundry soap or RIT Whitener/Brightener for an hour or so. Wring it out and let it dry. It will glow bright blue.



The **Black Light Hair Spray** from **Fun World** is great for painting your props. This spray goes on nearly invisible and should be sprayed onto the prop as evenly as possible. It helps to spray the paint on while the prop is under a black light so you can actually see it. Painting your props with this invisible fluorescent paint will make them glow eerily under black lights enhancing their overall effect. You can also use it on Halloween signs, costumes, masks, skeletons and other decorations.

For the ultimate in black light power have a look at the Chauvet 400 black light unit. This 400 watt, high power, long throw black light fixture is powerful enough to create brilliant UV effects even in very large rooms. Covers an area of 25 x 50 feet and makes a great dance floor effect for DJs or night clubs. Integral ballast and hinged safety grill for easy lamp changes. Ready to go with included bulb! 110 volt. Dim: 16x17x21 in. Wt. 30 lbs. Retail for around \$479.95

As with any electrical device, care must be taken to protect against electrocution and accidents. Make sure that the cord is hidden from view and not where it can be tripped over or snagged on. No electrical fixture should be used outdoors if the weather is bad, i.e. raining, very high humidity, etc.

Obtained from  
Omarshauntedtrail.com

## **HALLOWEEN LIGHTING TIPS - STROBE LIGHTS**



Strobe lights are often seen in commercial haunts, but you can use them for the same effect at home in rooms, hallways or even outdoors to frighten and disorientate your trick or treaters. If done correctly strobe lights can add a great effect to your Halloween haunt, display or party, but if done poorly it will annoy your visitors and take away from the overall atmosphere. Caution should be used in a haunt as strobe lights can trigger seizures in some people. You should make sure to place signs up that strobe lights are in use.

Strobe Light units come in a variety of shapes, sizes and power ratings. Prices range from about twenty to hundreds of dollars and more. Choosing one that fits your particular need depends on what effect you will be using it to create. Many companies manufacture them at a variety of prices. Cheaper may seem appealing and if they break down you can throw them away. But if you don't want the added expense of buying new ones every year, spend the money on good lighting the first time.

### **Strobe Lights can be purchased online at [Halloween Effects](#)**

As with any electrical device, care must be taken to protect against electrocution. Make sure that the cord is hidden from view and not where it can be tripped over or snagged on.



Strobe lights can be aimed into the fog generated from a fog machine to make a creepy and disorientating effect.

For best effect you should aim the light either up or down through the fog, not directly in the path your visitors will be coming from.

Sci-fi or alien type displays can be added to using strobe lights. Place a small strobe light inside of a large foam pumpkin. Don't use a real pumpkin because of their moisture content, it can cause the light to short out. If you have tall trees near your

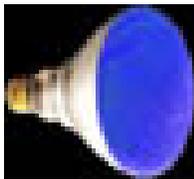
house you can place a strobe light on the roof pointed up towards the trees. This gives the leaves and branches the look of movement even though they are still. Place a strobe light at the end of a hallway that trick or treats have to walk down, it causes a very disorienting effect.

## HALLOWEEN LIGHTING TIPS - FLOOD LIGHTS



Illuminating your Halloween haunt for maximum effect does take some planning, but the rewards will be worth it. This often over looked ingredient can greatly add to the feel and impact of your Halloween haunt.

Outdoor colored flood lights are great for illuminating an area or prop with just the right light. We always try to use the lights in a way that the light is not focused directly on any area, but is indirectly lighting a section. The flood light fixture should always be hidden from view when ever possible. Place them behind things such as tombstones or other props. These typically run 100 watts each, so make sure you don't overload your circuit breakers!



Blue light is our color of choice for anything ghostly such as graveyards and haunted houses.

- Point a blue flood light into the fog from your fog machine.
- Illuminate your graveyard scene to give it an unearthly glow.
- Use to light props in your haunted house.



Green lighting produces what we call the "X-Files" look. It can be used for many themes including:

- Alien sci-fi type scenes
- Swamp and marsh scenes
- Mad scientist laboratory



Red lighting can add an eerie effect with much impact! We like to use red lighting to illuminate our:

- Vampire themes
- Devilish themes
- Witch themes



Amber flood light bulbs come as close to the color orange as you can find. These are great for night time lighting:

- Use to add highlight to your Pumpkin Patch or Corn field
- Halloween party

## HALLOWEEN LIGHTING TIPS - IMAGE PROJECTORS



Image Projectors are holiday lighting devices used to project an image onto a wall, garage door or any flat surface. They run off of regular household electricity, so all you do is plug it in. While there are several manufacturers, they all generally come with a selection of holiday related picture slides, including our favorite, Halloween.



Basically, you secure the unit to the ground via the attached stake, supply electricity and it projects the image of the particular slide onto a wall or flat surface.

Most of these can project the image up to distances of 50 feet and can be used both indoors or out. You can also use one in conjunction with a fog machine to create a really eerie Vortex effect. Read the "Vortex" article for more information.

Check out the "Vortex" article on the [Got Fog?](#) website on how to create a vortex effect using a projector and fog machine.



Image projectors such as the one pictured here are usually available at most discount stores during the Halloween and Christmas seasons for around forty dollars.

It's a cool effect no matter what holiday you use them for!

## HALLOWEEN LIGHTING TIPS - LIGHTING SAFETY

Halloween haunts usually mean strings of decorative lights, fog machines, strobe and black lights, animatronics, electrically powered decorations and the list goes on. These things all add to the ambience of your haunt, but they also create the added dangers of fire, electrocution and other nasty and potentially disastrous accidents. It is very important that you look for and eliminate potential dangers from your Halloween lights and decorations that could lead to fires and injuries.

Carefully inspect each electrical decoration. Cracked or frayed sockets, loose or bare wires, and loose connections may cause a serious shock or start a fire. Discard damaged sets and buy new.

Fasten outdoor lights securely to trees, house walls, or other firm supports to protect the lights from wind damage. Use only insulated staples to hold strings in place, not nails or tacks. You can also run strings of lights through small hooks (available at hardware stores). Don't staple or nail through light strings or electrical / extension cords, you could damage the wire or insulation, which could lead to an electrical shock or fire.

Don't overload extension cords or allow them to run through water or snow on the ground. Before using any light strings, animated displays or other electrical products outdoors, make sure the product is approved by a nationally recognized certification organization and marked "for outdoor use", it should be UL Rated.

Use no more than three standard-size sets of lights per single extension cord. Don't use electrical decorations or light strings on materials that could catch fire. It is important to turn off all electrical light strings and decorations before leaving home or going to bed. Follow the use and care instructions that accompany your electrical decorations. Most light sets and props will include how many can be safely strung together.

Rule of thumb, most household circuit breakers are rated to ten or fifteen amps (you can tell by looking at the breakers themselves), and household current is generally 110 volts. Amps times volts equal the amount of watts that a breaker can handle without tripping off. With caution, learn what breakers protect each section of your home and label them. Don't overload your circuit breakers/fuses or you could cause them to overload and shut down.

For added protection against electric shock, plug outdoor electric lights and decorations into circuits protected by ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). Portable outdoor GFCIs can be purchased where electrical supplies are sold. GFCIs can be and should be installed permanently to household circuits by a qualified electrician. Inside the home, they come in handy for appliances such as blow driers, irons and any household appliance that pulls a lot of power.

Lastly, turn off all lights when you go to bed or leave the house. The lights could short out and start a fire as you sleep or while you are gone. Always have at least one fire extinguisher available and know how to use it. In homes with small children, take special care to avoid decorations that are sharp or breakable.