

The Blair House Lighting Project

In some rooms, double-tapping the top or bottom of the first light switch turns on or off all the lights. Single-tapping the outdoor kitchen switch turns on the kitchen porch light, while double-tapping the same switch turns on both the kitchen porch as well as the backyard porch light. Both the front and back fountain/landscape lighting, the porch lighting, the fireplaces, and even the pool lights are included in some of the master house scenes. Lighting scenes programming changes according to security system status: e.g. a "lived in look" scene is programmed for Vacation, while certain lights are on/others off for Away. When arriving home, automated lighting features begin as a vehicle drives over the sensor: the driveway lights illuminate. What follows is a "tour." The side door has a motion detector above it just inside, pointed down the hall. So when the side door is opened and the motion detector is "secure," the hall light comes on. However, if the motion detector is "not ready" when the side door opens, the side porch light illuminates. Walking down the hall towards this same door illuminates the hall light for 25 seconds. Going upstairs triggers a flex sensor under the first step, turning on the stairwell lights. Descending causes the same lighting response. At the top of the stairs, heading toward the Theater, a ceiling motion detector turns on the Guestroom/Theater hall light. If the projector is off upon opening the door, the theater lights illuminate to 100%. Three timers are set to different amounts of time: 10 seconds, 24 seconds etc. When the timers expire, their respective lights change levels. (If the door is already open, the floor sensor in the threshold detects entry.) On the hand held touch screen: *Pressing "Play" turns off the lights. *Pressing "Pause" illuminates at a low level *Pressing "Systems Off" brings lights up to 100% If the projector is on, and the door is opened, the hall light illuminates at a low level. The double-tap turns lights off when exiting. And the hand held touch screen can manually make lighting changes, as well.

The primary goal of automating the lights in this home was safety. After that, lighting preferences were programmed based on the clients' individual preferences. After an initial period of living with the first lighting programs, the clients made suggestions to change some of the lighting. The integrator returned several times to make programming adjustments to different needs. Now the lighting integration is tailor-fit; but as the family grows, they may outgrow the current lighting, and the programming will continue to change. Just as the landscape matures, so does the lighting! There is nothing more aesthetically pleasing than the beauty of this home accentuated by the lighting--especially in entertaining mode. Use of the fireplaces, landscape lights, and pool lights together creates a warm and soothing atmosphere. In fact, though the lights are not truly visible initially, when they come on automatically, it's not the lights that are seen but the home, itself. As for the sensors that trigger the lights: The overt ones are painted to match the walls to which they are attached, and the covert ones are in the framework. The wiring in the walls leads back to structured panels in a small control room located under the stairs. Nothing could be easier for the residents than automatic lights--except when they need or want something different. That's when they can manually make changes with a hand held

touchscreen programmed with individual room macros. Technology is at its best when simplicity is the outcome!