

Hand Gesture Control Using Arduino

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Abstract- *Hand Gesture Control Light using Arduino is an innovative system that enables users to control electrical lights through hand movements without physical contact. The main objective of this project is to provide a smart, touch-free lighting solution using gesture recognition technology.*

The system uses a camera and computer vision techniques with Media Pipe and NumPy to detect hand gestures, which are processed and transmitted to an Arduino board through serial communication. Based on the recognized gesture, the Arduino controls the switching operation of lights such as turning ON or OFF. This technology improves convenience, energy efficiency, and hygiene by eliminating the need for traditional switches. The proposed system can be effectively used in smart homes, automation systems, and assistive environments for physically challenged individuals.

The project demonstrates a low-cost, user-friendly, and efficient approach toward home automation using embedded systems and gesture recognition.

Using keywords- *Hand Gesture Recognition, Arduino, Home Automation, Light Control System, Computer Vision, MediaPipe, Serial Communication, Touchless Control, Smart Lighting System, Embedded System.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The Technology has revolutionized the way we interact with devices, making human machine interaction smoother and more intuitive. One such innovation is hand gesture control, which allows users to operate devices without physical contact. This project focuses on using Arduino, a micro-controller platform, to control lights using simple hand gestures.

Traditional light switches require physical contact, which can be inconvenient or even unsafe in certain situations, such as with wet hands or in sterile environments like hospitals. Gesture control offers a contactless, hygienic, and accessible alternative. By simply waving a hand in front of a sensor, users can turn lights on or off, or even control brightness levels. The heart of this project is the Arduino board, which processes input from sensors—such as IR sensors, ultrasonic sensors, or a gesture recognition sensor (like the APDS-9960).

When a specific hand motion is detected, the Arduino interprets the signal and sends a command to a relay module connected to a light. For example, waving a hand left to right could switch the light on, while a reverse gesture turns it off. This system is cost-effective, easy to build, and ideal for smart homes, classrooms, or healthcare facilities.

It also promotes accessibility for elderly or physically challenged individuals, who may find traditional switches difficult to use. By combining basic electronics with microcontroller programming, this project offers a hands-on learning experience in automation and embedded systems. It is a great way for students and hobbyists to explore how sensors and controllers work together to create interactive, intelligent systems.

In summary, hand gesture-controlled lighting using Arduino is a smart, user friendly, and innovative solution that reflects the future of human-device interaction. This project, Hand Gesture Control Lights using Arduino, focuses on controlling lights through hand gestures detected by sensors. The system uses an Arduino microcontroller, which processes input from sensors such as an IR sensor or ultrasonic sensor to detect the motion or position of the hand. Based on the detected gestures, the Arduino sends signals to switch the lights ON or OFF.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Gesture recognition has become a key area of research in the field of human computer interaction, particularly for creating contactless and intuitive control systems. The combination of computer vision algorithms with microcontroller based automation offers a powerful method for building smart environments. Recent advancements in real-time hand tracking using tools like Media Pipe and OpenCV have enabled the development of efficient and accurate gesture recognition systems without the need for physical sensors.

Media Pipe, developed by Google, is a cross-platform framework for building multimodal machine learning pipelines.

Its hand tracking module provides real time detection of 5 hand landmarks with high precision. When combined with OpenCV, a widely used opensource computer vision library, it enables efficient video capture, processing, and gesture classification through a standard webcam.

This allows for tracking hand positions and recognizing gestures such as open palm, fist, or finger counts, which can be mapped to specific commands. Various studies and open-source projects have demonstrated gesture-based control using only vision-based input. These systems reduce hardware complexity and cost while enhancing user interaction. In recent literature, integration with Arduino has become common, where gesture outputs are transmitted via serial communication (USB). The Arduino then processes these commands to control electrical devices like lights through relay modules.

This approach offers several advantages: it eliminates physical contact (improving hygiene), improves accessibility, and enables scalable control over multiple devices. Challenges such as varying lighting conditions, camera placement, and background noise have

been addressed through advanced filtering and landmark-based gesture detection.

This project builds upon these findings by implementing a real-time hand gesture based light control system using Media Pipe, OpenCV, and Arduino. It highlights the synergy between software-based gesture recognition and hardware-based automation to achieve a practical and innovative smart home solution.

Research on gesture-controlled switching spans two main approaches:

(A) non-vision sensors integrated with micro-controllers (Arduino/Raspberry Pi), and

(B) vision-based hand-tracking using OpenCV/Media Pipe. Both aim at touchless, hygienic, and accessible control of appliances—especially relevant for smart homes.

A. NON-VISION, SENSOR-BASED GESTURE CONTROL

1. Ultrasonic/IR distance sensing (HC-SR04, IR pairs).

Multiple prototypes show reliable on/off or directional gesture detection by measuring hand proximity and sweep direction with one or more ultrasonic sensors. Studies demonstrate mapping “near/far” or “left/right” gestures to appliance commands, with Arduino doing thresholding/debouncing.

Benefits include low cost, no camera, and privacy. Reported limitations are false triggers from spurious reflections and sensitivity to placement and ambient acoustic noise.

2. Dedicated gesture devices (APDS-9960).

Work using the APDS-9960 (integrated RGB + proximity + directional gesture engine) shows robust recognition of up/down/left/right/near/far with simple I²C interfacing to Arduino; typical demos drive relays for lights. These modules reduce algorithm complexity but require clear line-of-sight and careful enclosure design to avoid ambient IR interference.

3. Pir-assisted motion /gesture detection.

DIY implementations combine PIR for coarse motion detection with microcontrollers for simple “wave-to-toggle” behaviors. They are energy-efficient but offer limited gesture vocabulary (usually presence/wave) and less deterministic control compared to ultrasonic/APDS-9960.

B. VISION-BASED GESTURE RECOGNITION

1. OpenCV /Media Pipe pipelines.

Recent work uses webcams with OpenCV (sometimes Media Pipe hands) to classify finger poses and dynamic gestures, then trigger IoT relays/Smart-Home actions. These systems support rich gesture vocabularies (e.g., finger-count dimming) and work at a distance, but need more compute, stable lighting, and a camera—raising cost and privacy questions for simple light control.

2. IoT-integrated vision systems.

Several studies integrate gesture recognition with cloud/mobile apps, enabling remote monitoring and hybrid control (gesture + app/voice). They report good usability but higher system complexity compared to pure Arduino sensor builds.

III. RESEARCH & METHODOLOGY

1. Research Background:-

In recent years, gesture-controlled systems have become increasingly relevant in the domains of automation, accessibility, and smart homes. Traditional switch-based systems, although effective, require physical interaction and are less hygienic and accessible. With advancements in computer vision and micro-controller integration, gesture-based control systems offer a contactless, intuitive, and modern alternative.

This project combines Media Pipe and OpenCV for real-time hand gesture detection with Arduino for hardware level control of electrical devices, specifically a light bulb. The core idea is to track hand gestures using a camera, interpret them through Python, and send corresponding commands to the Arduino for switching the light ON or OFF.

The demand for automation and smart control systems has increased due to advancements in embedded systems, microcontrollers, and human-computer interaction (HCI) technologies.

Traditional switching methods using mechanical switches are simple but have several drawbacks, such as lack of accessibility for differently-abled individuals, hygiene issues due to frequent touch, and limitations in modern smart environments. To overcome these challenges, gesture recognition technology has emerged as an effective solution.

Gesture-based systems allow users to interact with machines using simple hand movements, eliminating the need for physical contact. Such systems have been widely explored in robotics, gaming, healthcare, and home automation.

Early Research

- Initial gesture recognition studies were mostly vision-based, relying on cameras and image-processing algorithms. While effective, these systems required high computational power, good lighting conditions, and raised privacy concerns.
- To provide a simpler and cost-effective alternative, researchers started using no vision sensors like Infrared (IR) sensors, Ultrasonic sensors, and dedicated gesture modules (APDS-9960) to detect hand movement and direction.

A. Arduino in Gesture Control Research

The introduction of Arduino microcontrollers has significantly advanced gesture controlled applications due to their:

- Low cost and availability.
- Easy programming with open-source libraries.
- Compatibility with various sensors (IR, Ultrasonic, PIR, APDS-9960).
- Simple interfacing with relays and appliances.

Numerous projects have demonstrated the use of Arduino for gesture-controlled lighting and appliances, making it a popular platform for both research and practical implementation.

- Many gesture-control systems are either too complex (vision-based) or limited in accuracy (simple IR-based).
- There is a need for a low-cost, reliable, and easy-to-use system that can be implemented in households without complex setups.

Methodology

1. System Design and Planning

- Identify the main components required:
Arduino Uno (micro-controller)
Sensors (Ultrasonic sensor / IR sensor / APDS-9960 gesture sensor)
Relay module (to control AC light bulb) or LED (for prototype testing)
Power supply & jumper wires
- Define the gestures to be used:
Example: Wave Right → Light ON, Wave Left → Light OFF.
- Prepare the block diagram showing the interaction between sensors, Arduino, and light output

2. Hardware Setup

- Sensor Placement:
Position the sensor at a suitable distance to accurately detect hand gestures.
- Arduino Connections:
Connect the sensor pins (Trigger, Echo for ultrasonic or SDA/SCL for APDS-9960) to Arduino input pins.
Connect the output pin of Arduino to a relay module or LED.
- Relay and Light Bulb: Use a relay module to control a 230V AC bulb safely. For testing, an LED is used.

3. Software Development (Arduino Programming)

- Write a program in Arduino IDE to:
Initialize the sensor.
Continuously read sensor data (distance or gesture direction).
Compare the values against predefined thresholds to recognize gestures.
Send ON/OFF signals to the relay/light

4. System Integration

- Combine hardware and software.
- Test for correct detection of hand gestures.
- Ensure that:
 - o Light turns ON when the correct gesture is detected.
 - Light turns OFF with another gesture.
 - No false triggering occurs from random movement.

5. Testing and Calibration

- Test the system under different lighting and environmental conditions.
 - Adjust sensor sensitivity and gesture distance range for accurate performance.
 - Record system response time and reliability.

6. Final Implementation

- Implement the system with a real AC light using the relay module.

- Ensure safety by proper insulation of high-voltage components.
- Demonstrate the working prototype in real-world scenarios (home, lab, or hospital setting).

A. System Design:

The system is divided into two major parts:

1. Software System: Responsible for gesture detection using camera input and Python programming.
ARDUINO IDE,
PYTHON INSTALLATION,
VISUAL STUDIO CODE.
2. Hardware System: Arduino-based relay control to switch the light using component:
ARDUINO UNO,
JUMPER WIRE,
BREADBOARD,
5 LED LIGHTS,
CABLE.

B. Gesture Detection Using Media Pipe and OpenCV :

1. A webcam is used to capture the real-time video feed
2. Using Media Pipe's Hand Tracking module, 21 key landmarks on the hand are detected.
3. OpenCV processes the video stream and tracks movements such as:
 - o Open hand = Light ON
 - o Closed fist = Light OFF
4. These gesture conditions are coded in Python to map specific gestures to text commands like "ON" or "OFF".

C. Communication Between PC and Arduino

1. A serial communication channel is established using a USB cable
2. Python sends the "ON" or "OFF" string to the Arduino through the Serial.py library.
3. Arduino reads the command via the serial port and switches the relay accordingly.
4. The Arduino receives the gesture command.
5. A relay module is connected to a digital pin (e.g., D7) of Arduino. • Based on the command, the relay switches the connected light ON or OFF

IV. WORK PLAN FOR THE STUDY ON (HAND GESTURE CONTROL LIGHT'S USING ARDUINO)

The work plan outlines the structured steps involved in the design, development, and testing of a hand gesture-controlled lighting system using Media Pipe, OpenCV, and Arduino. This plan ensures that the project is completed in a systematic and timely manner.

Literature Survey and Research (Week 1):

- Study existing systems using gesture control and Arduino.

- Review technologies like Media Pipe, OpenCV, and serial communication.
- Understand how relay modules work with Arduino.
- Identify the hardware and software tools required.

Requirement Analysis (Week 2):

- Define the project scope and functionality.
- List required hardware: Arduino UNO, led relay module, jumper wires, webcam.
- List required software: Python, OpenCV, Media Pipe, Arduino IDE, Serial.py library.

System Design (Week 3):

- Design software flowchart for gesture detection logic.
- Plan hardware circuit: Arduino to relay to light bulb.
- Decide which gestures (e.g., open palm, fist) will control ON/OFF actions.

Implementation – Software (Week 4):

- Install and configure Python, OpenCV, and Media Pipe.
- Write code to detect hand landmarks using Media Pipe.
- Map hand gestures to string commands like "ON" and "OFF".

Implementation – Hardware (Week 5):

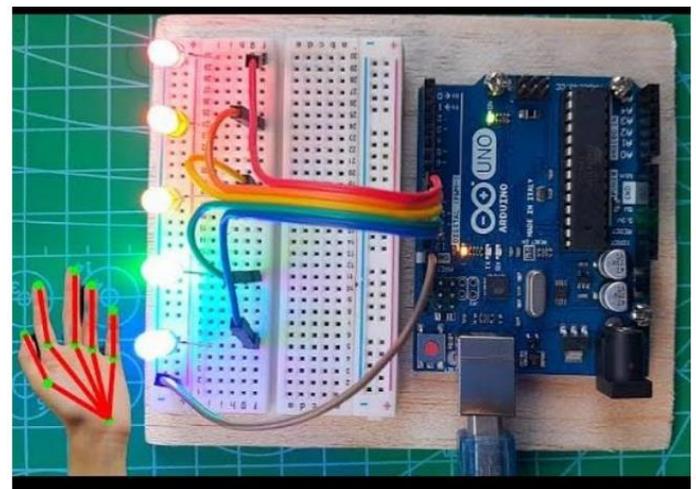
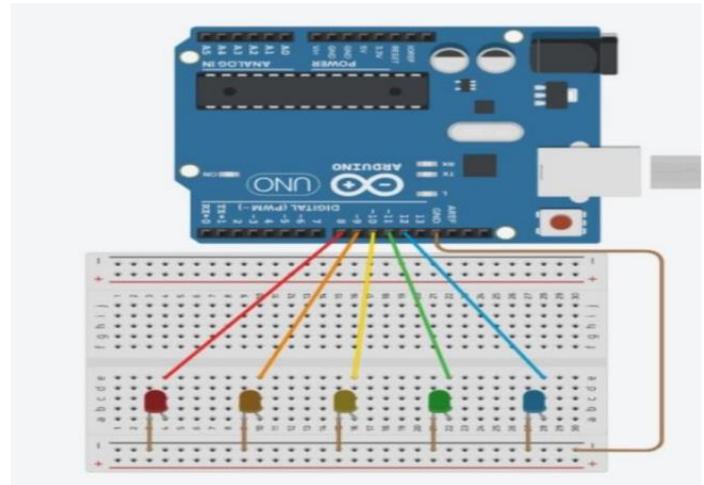
- Set up Arduino with relay and light circuit.
- Write Arduino code to receive serial input and control relay.
- Test with manual commands to ensure reliable light switching.

Integration and Testing (Week 6):

- Connect Python code with Arduino via USB serial.
- Test full system: webcam detects gesture → sends command → Arduino controls light.
- Debug any issues related to communication or gesture recognition.

Documentation and Final Report (Week 7):

- Compile introduction, objectives, methodology, circuit diagram, code, and results.
- Prepare presentation slides and finalize report for submission.



V. CONCLUSION

The Hand Gesture Controlled Lights effectively demonstrates how Media Pipe, OpenCV, and Arduino can be combined to create a smart, touch-free lighting system.

By recognizing hand gestures through a webcam and processing them in Python, the system sends commands to Arduino to control a light via a relay.

This project enhances hygiene, improves accessibility, and provides a modern alternative to traditional switches. • It is cost-effective, educational, and suitable for smart home applications. With future enhancements,

This system can be expanded for broader automation, offering a foundation for intelligent, gesture-based control in real-world environments

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