

Halloween GUIDE



Safe Trick-or-Treating

Trick-or-treating remains a favorite tradition of American children, and it can be a fun way for kids to spend Halloween.

While traipsing around your neighborhood in the dark wearing costumes comes with a few more risks than a regular day, there's no reason it can't be a safe and sugar-filled evening if you take a few extra precautions.

Safe Kids Worldwide and the American Red Cross had tips for children and adults to ensure trick-or-treating is fun, fruitful and safe for everyone.

Don't go trick-or-treating alone. Safe Kids recommends children younger than 12 years old should always go with an adult; older children can go with other kids. Stay in groups and remain in familiar areas.

OUT AND ABOUT

Stay on sidewalks and in lighted areas. Pay attention to traffic; Halloween puts a lot of pedestrians on the road, often with children who aren't paying attention, and drivers shuttling trick-or-treaters around or going to parties. Pay attention to cars backing out of driveways, and keep a close watch on kids so they don't dart into the street. Don't cut across yards or go through alleys, and don't cross the street between parked cars.

Make sure costumes allow for clear vision. Masks should have large enough eyeholes that kids can see clearly. Face paint and makeup are better options than masks.

Decorate costumes and candy bags with reflective tape or stickers. This will make it easier for them to show up in a car's headlights. Have your children carry glow sticks or flashlights to be more visible. When possible, have children wear light-colored costumes.

Don't go inside a stranger's house for candy or treats.

AT HOME

Are you staying home to give out candy to trick-or-treaters? Follow these tips for safety.

Make sure pets are taken care of. If your dog is likely to get stressed out with the frequent doorbell ringing and parade of children, keep it in a back room to help it stay calm and not endanger children.

Keep your porch and yard well-lit. Clear the porch of obstacles trick-or-treaters could trip over.

Be extra cautious while driving. Go slowly, watch for children, pay attention and if you're going to be drinking at a Halloween party, call a cab or get a ride.



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History of Halloween

Halloween started as a religious holiday, moving from paganism to the Romans to the Christian church, with each successive holiday taking on the traditions of the holiday before it. In the United States, those early traditions were augmented as different groups from all over the world poured into the young country.

According to The History Channel, Halloween started with the Celtic festival of Samhain on Oct. 31. The day marked the end of summer and harvest and the start of winter, which was often associated with death. The Celts believed on the night before the new year, which began on Nov. 1, the boundary between the world of the living and the world of the dead became blurred. The Celts built bonfires and gathered to burn sacrifices to their deities while donning costumes, usually animal heads and skins. They then lit their own hearth fires from the bonfire to commemorate the start of the new year.

A couple of millennia later, about 43 A.D., the Roman Empire had taken over Celtic territory and Samhain, combining it with two Roman traditions. Feralia was a day in late October when the Romans commemorated the passing of their dead. The second day honored Pomona, the goddess of fruit and trees; her symbol was the apple, which likely explains the tradition of bobbing for apples.

Four centuries later, Pope Boniface IV, leader of the Catholic Church, established the feast of All Martyrs Day in conjunction with dedicating the Roman pantheon in honor of Christian martyrs. Pope Gregory III expanded that feast to include all saints and moved it from May to Nov. 1, and All Saints Day was born. By the ninth century, Christianity spread to the Celtic regions, and in 1000 A.D., the Catholic Church changed made Nov. 2 All Souls Day to honor the dead. It was celebrated similarly to Samhain and called All-Hallows; the night before became known as All-Hallows Eve.

The early Americans didn't take to the holiday, although as people spread from colonial New England and the rigid religious beliefs found there, celebrating the holiday became more common in the southern part of the country. As immigrant groups from throughout Europe settled in the U.S., celebrations like harvest festivals, at which partygoers shared stories of the dead, told fortunes, danced and sang, as well as other mischief, sanctioned or not.



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DIY Costumes for Children

Halloween costumes can be complicated and expensive, especially when you find yourself a few days out and needing ideas.

Fortunately, no matter how long you wait or whatever your budget, with a little creativity and a glue gun, you can deck out your kids in a fun costume for class parties and trick-or-treating.

Parenting and Country Living offer ideas for costumes you can make at home with items you have around the house or that are easy to find.

Make spaghetti and meatballs with a red and white checkered tablecloth, off-white yarn foam balls and a little paint, using a saucepan for a hat.

Become a cute pig in blanket with pig ears and nose out of pink foam and a pink headband, along with glitter glue, elastic and a blanket.

Create a Rubik's cube with a square box. Glue green, blue, orange, yellow and red paper to the sides, and make the squares with black electrical tape.

Got a love for the Man in Black? With a black button-down shirt, black pants and a toy guitar, transform your child into Johnny Cash for the holiday.

Maybe Poison or other old-school rock is more your style.

Print an image from an '80s rock band onto iron-on printer paper and iron it onto a black T-shirt, pair it with a wig of long black hair, jeans and toy guitar and you have a little Axl Rose.

Turn your baby into a baby panda with a black onesie, a white beanie and black and white felt. Do the same with a black sweat suit for older children.

Go sunny or cloudy. Use a large yellow sweatshirt, orange and yellow felt and pipe cleaners to create a sun and a blue or white sweatshirt (or gray if your child is feeling stormy) and quilt batting to create clouds. Add a smiley face to liven up the costume.

Create a hot air balloon. Use helium balloons, or a large ball attached to a stick, and a box.

Dress your child up as Harry Potter with a pair of black-framed glasses and a red-and-yellow striped scarf, along with a lightning-shaped scar made of eyeliner. You can add a wand or a robe if you want (for taller children, think about a graduation robe, or even a black sheet or tablecloth) or use different colored scarves to indicate different houses.



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Trunk or Treat

An increasing number of church and community groups are doing trunk or treat programs to keep kids off the streets and still give them a chance to dress up and get candy. While kids will take treats from an undecorated trunk, why not have a little fun with it and decorate the back of your car?

You can go easy or complex, even pairing costumes to match if you're so inclined. The Creating Really Awesome Fun Things (C.R.A.F.T.) blog has ideas of all types to make your trunk a popular parking lot stop.

MAKE A GIANT MOUTH

For a fun, easy and low-cost option, use a big piece of red paper or a red tablecloth cut in the shape of a tongue and white paper to create upper teeth. You could cheeks or eyes around the open trunk to create more of a face, but keeping it to just the mouth will be enough to get some big smiles from trick-or-treaters.

BUILD AN ARK

Use cardboard to build the side of a boat and a ramp. If you have pairs of stuffed animals, use them, but if not, make pairs of animals to fill the trunk. Have a pair or two of animals on their way up the ramp into the ark.

CHANNEL CHARLIE BROWN

Create a pumpkin patch. Kill two birds with one stone and use pumpkin trash bags filled with leaves from your yard in the back of a truck or, if you're using a trunk, get pumpkin-shaped candy buckets or make pumpkins, leaves and vines out of construction



LANCE CPL. CHRISTIAN OLIVER CACHOLA/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

paper. Make images of Peanuts characters to spruce it up. Use a pumpkin costume to make your baby the Great Pumpkin.

BUILD A CAMPFIRE

Set up a tent in the back of

a truck, SUV or van, pull out a lawn chair, build a pile of wood and use red, orange and yellow tissue paper to create flames. If you want to dress up to go with it, wear your comfiest camping clothes —

jeans, sweats, a ball cap or a T-shirt.

INVESTIGATE A CRIME SCENE

Get some yellow caution tape and a CSI cap and you

have yourself a crime scene investigation. Throw some clues in the trunk (know your audience; bloodstains aren't fit for every activity). If you can, draw a chalk outline of a person.

Easy Costumes For Adults

Whether you're dressing up to volunteer an elementary school party or a no-kids-allowed costume party, find quick and easy costumes that you can put together at the last minute. The blogger at Creating Really Awesome Fun Things (C.R.A.F.T.) has lots of creative ways to dress up for Halloween.

Become a stick figure by using clear packing tape to attach glow sticks to a black leotard, sweat suit or other all-black outside. You need at least 14 glow stick necklaces per adult costumes.

Miss playing Operation? Get a light-colored sweat suit, cut the body parts out of construction paper and attach them to your clothes. Don't forget about the bright red (lighting up is optional).

If you already have an all-red outfit, go as a ladybug. Affix black dots made of felt or vinyl to your red outfit and a couple of pipe cleaners to a black headband and you're ready to go. This can be a good option for work; it's easy to take the dots and headband off.

Make a white sandwich board out of poster board or cardboard, put a smiling picture to one side and **dress up as your own Facebook wall.** You can even invite coworkers and partygoers to write on your wall.

Break out your red and white vertical stripes and a red and white beanie and **become Waldo.**

If you've got the time to blow up a couple dozen balloons, **dress up as a bunch of grapes.** Get a green, red or purple sweat suit, blow up the balloons to different sizes



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and tape them to the suit.

Women can don a dark blue collared shirt, tie their hair up in a red and white polka dot bandana and **take on Halloween as Rosie the Riveter.** Flexing is required

for maximum effect.

If you've got a bandana and are feeling a little wilder than Rosie, wrap it around your head, put on some mirrored, frameless sunglasses and **go as country legend Willie**

Nelson. The beard and long hair are optional, but encouraged. Add a toy guitar and you could become an old-school rock star.

Dress up as a tourist — cargo pants with lots of pock-

ets, a camera around your neck, a T-shirt from your vacation getaway of choice and a big bag or fanny pack. Act the part and take a bunch of selfies, the cheesier the better.



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Decorating Your House

A ccording to the Haunted House Association, Halloween is the second-most decorated holiday of the year, with Americans spending almost \$7 billion a year on candy, costumes and decorations.

Whether you're throwing a Halloween party for friends or putting together a haunted house at a school, church or community party, the association has ways to put together a fun-

ny-scary haunted house that everyone can enjoy.

CREATE A CEMETERY IN YOUR FRONT YARD

Put up a gothic fence, add some gravestones, spread cobwebs through the trees and have a zombie or two coming up out of the ground to make your front yard scary. You can make your own gravestones out of foam and come up with your own epitaphs. Build a coffin out of pine boards for the porch.

Halloween is also a good time to put off yard work; piles of dead leaves is a quick and easy way to add a spooky, abandoned feel to the yard.

DECK OUT THE DOOR AND WINDOWS

You can break out the cobwebs and spiders to grace the corners of your doorway and put a flickering light bulb in the porch light. Add a fake black cat in the shadows of the door or hang a skeleton in the corner. For windows, you can replace your regular curtains with tattered old curtains or put a TV with computer-animated graphics in front of your window, displaying ghosts, ghouls, witches, werewolves, monsters and vampires.

ADD CREEPY MUSIC AND OTHER EFFECTS

Set up speakers and play a spooky

soundtrack or eerie noises. If you're catering to younger children, play "Monster Mash" and other fun, not-scary Halloween music. You can rent a fog machine, either for the door when people come trick or treating or inside if you're having a party.

MIX UP THE INSIDE

For a party, turn off all the lights, cover your windows with black fabric or tablecloth and light your house with candles and strings of colored lights. Black silk draped over the mantle or along the stairs combined with more cobwebs adds to the spooky fun. For a more interactive party, create a haunted house in your garage or backyard.

Don't Pitch that Pumpkin

It's Nov. 2, the candy has been picked over and all the chocolate bars consumed, the costumes are packed away for next year and Halloween is officially over. But the jack-o-lantern, perhaps now more sad than scary, sits on the front porch.

You could throw that pumpkin away, or you could take one of Mother Nature Network's suggestion to giving that smiling gourd a new, potentially tasty lease on life.

EAT IT!

Carving pumpkins don't have quite as much flavor as pie or sugar pumpkins, but add a little extra nutmeg and you'll find yourself with delicious cookies, pancakes, pumpkin butter or a traditional pumpkin pie. Cut the pumpkin in half, cut off any burned or waxy parts (rinsing the pumpkin inside and out is a good idea too), then roast it in the oven until it's tender. Let the pumpkin cool, then peel the skin away. You can puree it in the blender and use it in any recipe. It also goes well in risotto or pasta, or make a savory pumpkin soup.



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DECORATE WITH IT

Halloween may be over, but pumpkins go well with Thanksgiving too. Put vegetable oil on your pumpkin (this prevents it from getting rotten) and fill them with colorful flowers or plants, make a bird feeder or, if you've got a couple of jack-o-lanterns, build a "snow" man. Pull your

kids in to help decorate and don't be afraid to get a little silly.

PUT IT ON YOUR FACE

Sound weird? Orange, fleshy vegetables aren't just good for your insides. Pumpkin has vitamin A and C and is full of antioxidants, and you can make a face mask, hair condi-

tion, pumpkin body scrub or even a pumpkin pedicure. According to How Stuff Works, you mix half a cup of pumpkin puree, a raw egg and a bit of honey, then apply that to your feet and wrap them up with plastic wrap for 15 minutes.

COMPOST IT

If you leave the pumpkin

outside long enough, it is going to rot. Why not use that to your advantage? If you do your own composting, or want to give it a shot, throw your pumpkin onto the pile with other plant products and wait for it to decompose into a thick, loamy soil that will be great on your garden come spring.