

# Halloween

GUIDE





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# Poltergeist Party Games

Throwing a wicked good Halloween party is as easy as pumpkin pie with these great party games.

## WITCH HAT RING TOSS

Set up a ring toss game with using witch hats as cones. Make a cone out of black construction paper and use rings cut from paper plates to for them to toss. Bonus points: Use glow-in-the-dark paint to make it tougher for bigger kids.

## STRING OF DONUTS

Using twine, run a string across the party area and then hang donuts. Kids

can't use their hands to gobble the sweet treats.

## BEAN BAG TOSS

Carve a gaping mouth of out some jack-o-lanterns and make tiny bean bags to toss inside. Bonus points: After the sun goes down, take away the bean bags and put in tea lights to make your jack-o-lanterns shine. This same method works great with plastic golf balls and clubs to make a rousing game of pumpkin golf.

## PUMPKIN CHECKERS

Make a large checkers board on bur-lap but instead of the traditional red-and-black discs, use white and orange mini pumpkins. You can also do this

for tic-tac-toe.

## PUMPKIN PATCH STOMP

Before blowing up the balloons (note: don't use helium; just your regular old lungs), put candy or tiny toys inside. Blow up orange and black balloons and scatter them around the yard. Have your little ghosts and goblins stomp them to retrieve the prizes.

## EYEBALL HUNT

It's like an Easter egg hunt, but with googly eyes. Put them all around the yard and set prizes for who can collect the most eyes.

Pin the Spider on the Web

Just like pin the tail on the donkey,

but with webs and spiders. Creepy good fun.

## POKE A PUMPKIN

Cut up toilet paper rolls into smaller cylinders. Glue the cylinders onto a board in the shape of a pumpkin. Fill the cylinders with treats and top with orange tissue paper. Let the kids pick a cylinder and punch it out to collect their prize.

## CANDY GUESSING GAME

Fill a big ol' jar full of candies (keep track of how many bags you use) and have your guests guess how many candies are in the jar. Closest guess wins!

# Couples Costumes

Hey, big kids get to have fun, too, and that includes dressing up.

If you and your significant other are hitting the town this Halloween (or even just the block with the kiddies), consider one of these adorable couples costumes.

## HAN AND LEIA

Star Wars is having a moment (again? Still?). Take a cue from the classic movie and go out this Halloween as Han Solo and Princess Leia. You love it? We know.

## BACON AND EGGS

Is there a better combo than you and your honey? Maybe it would be if it involved bacon. One of you be an egg and the other some strips of bacon. You'll make everyone hungry.

## DISCO KINGS AND QUEENS

So maybe vintage is your thing. Dust off the go-go boots and leisure suits and go as the rulers of the disco. Big time bonus points if your outfits are actually from the 1970s.

## FRANKENSTEIN AND HIS BRIDE

There's no better time for giant hair and green skin. Frankenstein and the Bride of Frankenstein are almost universally recognizable.



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## THE INCREDIBLES

This is even better if you've got kids the right age. Mr. and Mrs. Incredible costumes are widely available and a great family costume idea.

## MR. AND MRS. POTATO HEAD

The great thing about this costume idea is that it's as easy as slipping a costume poncho

over your head. Fill your potato head with some crumpled paper and you're good to go.

## PEANUT BUTTER JELLY TIME

Slip this easy peasy costume — each part is a poncho with a picture of bread covered in, well, peanut butter or jelly — and bam, togetherness as great as America's favorite lunch.

## MICKEY AND MINNIE

Is your love magical? Go out on Halloween as Disney power couple Mickey and Minnie. Aw, shucks.

Of course there are tons of other couples costumes inspo from Disney movies. Take Sven and Anna from "Frozen" or Aladdin and Princess Jasmine from "Aladdin."

Just pick your favorite Disney

movie and run with it.

## GROOVY, BABY

Free love and flowers. It's time to tap into your inner hippie for an easy costume.

## YOU'RE THE ONE THAT I WANT

Grease is the word and your inspiration for these 1950s inspired costumes.

# Trick or Treat Safety

Halloween done right is a whole pumpkin full of fun, but the holiday can quickly turn into a very real nightmare.

Costumes, pumpkin carving with sharp objects, festivities that mostly happen after dark, fire, and lots and lots of candy all pose dangers to your family. Here are some safety tips for coming through Halloween in one piece from the Mayo Clinic.

## CARVE YOUR PUMPKINS, NOT YOURSELF

If you have littles around, consider offering alternatives to pumpkin carving for little hands. This can mean painting, glittering or stickering small craft pumpkins. Let the adults do the carving with sharp knives.

Once you're all carved, you also need to be careful with those candles that light your jack-o-lanterns. Place lit pumpkins on a sturdy surface away from curtains and other flammable objects. Never leave them unattended. If you're going trick-or-treating, put a battery-operated LED tea light or flashlight in your pumpkin instead.

## COSTUME SAFETY

Choose kids' costumes that are brightly colored and made from flame-retardant material. If you're going out after dark, put some reflective tape on



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the costume or treat bag so that oncoming traffic can see your little ghoul. Make sure the costume is weather-appropriate for either warm or cool weather, depending on your region, or loose enough that they can wear an extra layer underneath. Check costume length to avoid them tripping and make sure they wear

appropriate footwear for your activity, especially if you're going to be walking for any length of time.

## TRICK OR TREATING

Adults should walk with kids younger than 12 and, even then, give your child a piece of paper with their name, your name, your address and

phone number to carry with them in case you get separated. Make sure you leave with a working flashlight with fresh batteries.

If your older kids are setting off without you, set firm ground rules. Plan a route in advance and review safety rules before they leave. These include:

- Staying with the group.
  - Walking only on the sidewalk.
  - Approaching only clearly lit homes.
  - Never going inside a home or car for a treat.
- Make sure someone in the group has a working cellphone with enough battery to make it through the night.

# Candy Exchanges

A great post-Halloween tradition is being awash in candy and sweet treats.

If you're looking for a way to make it magically disappear (and not go to your hips), look no further than a candy exchange.

## WHAT IS A CANDY EXCHANGE?

Businesses, charities and more will take your Halloween goodies and exchange them for other gifts, discount cards and more. Exchanges are particularly popular with dentist's offices, who will trade candy out for more tooth-friendly prizes.

## DONATE TO CHARITY

Another way to get rid of the piles of candy in your house is to donate them to charity. Some charities, such as Operation Gratitude and Soldiers' Angels, send care boxes to members of the military serving away from their families. You can also set up a drive yourself and collect candies from your neighborhood or child's classroom to take to the charity.

Ronald McDonald House, which helps keep sick children and their parents together during hospital treatments, also sometimes accept donations of candy for the families it's helping. RMHC has locations around the country for you to donate to.

You can also call your local

food pantry, homeless shelter or nursing home to see if they'll accept the candy.

## SWITCH WITCH

Think Elf on the Shelf or the Easter bunny but fewer shenanigans and at Halloween. There's a Switch

Witch toy and book and, after Halloween, you just switch out the candy for healthier treats or toys. The kids can pack up the excess candy after Halloween, leave it in their room, and then the Switch Witch visits and leaves them a toy.

## USE IT IN SCIENCE EXPERIMENTS OR CRAFTS

The mommy blogosphere is full of ideas on how to use up leftover candy in ways other than noshing on it. You can paint with candy, use it to do some candy math, see what candy sinks or floats and

much, much more.

You can also bake with it (cookies, anyone?) or save it up to decorate your gingerbread houses in just a few months. It can also fill up your holiday Advent calendars or make treat bags to pass out to the homeless in your area.



# Campfire Recipes

Spooky, chilly October nights are great for sitting around a fire, telling ghost stories and making delicious treats.

Here are some campfire friendly recipes that are devilishly delicious.

## S'MORES

The classic campfire treat — graham crackers, chocolate and a toasty marshmallow. Jazz your s'mores up with fruit (strawberry slices are a great choice), extras such as peanut butter or making a s'mores bar with lots of candy options to add to your campfire creation.

## FOIL PACKED NACHOS

### Ingredients

Tortilla chips  
Lean ground beef  
Your favorite taco seasoning  
Canned green chilies, drained  
Canned diced tomatoes, drained  
Canned black beans, drained  
Diced onion  
Mexican blend shredded cheese  
Sour cream for garnish

### Directions

1. Brown the ground beef over medium high heat on the stove. Stir in taco seasoning to coat, then add the tomatoes and green chiles. Remove from heat and set aside.
2. Fold foil packets into the desired serving size. Make sure you fold the foil in half, then use one half to hold the food and the other half to cover.

3. Place chips at the bottom of the packet, then sprinkle with the ground beef, black beans, onion and cheese, as desired.

4. Fold the other half of the packet over and pinch shut. Cut a hole in the top of each packet so that steam can vent and keep the chips from getting soggy.

5. Place on hot coals or the outside

of the fire for 12-15 minutes or until the cheese is melted.

## WALKING TACOS

The ultimate in tasty convenience food. Use a grab bag of corn chips as the base of your taco. Add the toppings to the opened bag grab a fork, and start following the kiddies

around for your trick-or-treating. Set up a party-friendly walking taco bar with pulled pork, ground beef and plenty of other toppings for your guests to choose from. For vegetarian guests, grill veggies and offer beans. Offer salsas, cheeses and other condiments and off you go.

## CAMPFIRE DESSERT CONES

Let kids pack a waffle cone with candies, marshmallows chocolate chips and more. Wrap each cone in foil, then cook over the fire until heated through. It should take about 10 minutes. Let them cool a bit before serving.



# Pet Costumes

Halloween isn't just for humans anymore. There's lots of opportunities for your pets to get in on the fun, too.

In 2019, Marketwatch says Americans spent nearly \$500 million on pet costumes. A Rover survey found that about half of dog owners planned to dress their pup for Halloween, with the average costume costing about \$20. Here are some great ideas to get your four-legged friends trick-or-treating this year.

## LIONS, TIGERS AND SHARKS?

Dressing your pupper as another animal is a lot of fun. Land sharks, tigers, unicorns, lions and more all festoon pet shops around Halloween. Make sure your pet's costume is sized for your furry friend and fits properly so that he can walk and move freely while wearing the costume.

## SIT, SCARE, STAY

Goblins, ghosts and more are also popular pet get-ups. You can get onesies patterned with bats, spiderwebs and other poltergeist prints. For the more finicky Fidos out there, look for bandanas or collars that fit the bill so that aren't uncomfortable.

## SUPERHEROES

It's a bird, it's a plane, it's Rex! You can find superhero



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costumes galore for your dog. One thing you want to make sure is that his costume is weather appropriate. Don't doll him up in capes and boots if Halloween is typically warm in your area. Dogs can overheat quickly.

## ILLUSION COSTUMES

Some pet costumes are

headpieces with a body that hangs down, transforming Ruffers into a bear, clown, dinosaur or whatever you find. These are great costumes for dogs because they're body's not covered, allowing them to keep cool. But if you've got a chewer, you may want to opt for something they can't easily reach.

## SO CUTE I COULD EAT YOU UP

Food costumes are also popular again this year. Dress your dog up as a taco, hot dog (super popular among dachshund owners), pizzas and more.

## TOYS AND MORE

Costumes might not be

your dog's thing. Some dogs don't like to be dressed up, but they can still join in the fun with a Halloween-themed collar and leash, a Halloween toy and special Halloween treats.

And it's not just dogs. Pet stores also have costumes, toys, beds and treats for cats, small pets and even ones to match with owners.

# Hauntingly Good Jokes

Come to trick-or-treat armed with plenty of tricks in the form of these great Halloween jokes.

**Why did the Headless Horseman get a job?**  
He was trying to get ahead.

**How do vampires get around on Halloween?**  
On blood vessels.

**What do ghosts wear when their eyesight gets blurry?**  
Spooktacles.

**Why didn't the skeleton go to prom?**  
He didn't have anybody to go with.

**What's a zombie's favorite cereal?**  
Rice Creepies.

**Who did the ghost invite to his party?**  
Any one he could dig up.

**Where do the ghosts go on vacation?**  
The Boohamas.

**What did the fisherman say on Halloween?**  
Trick or trout.

**Why are ghosts bad at lying?**  
Because you can see right through them.

**Where do baby ghosts go while their parents are at work?**



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**Dayscare.**

**How do you fix a broken jack-o-lantern?**  
A pumpkin patch.

**What type of plates do skeletons use?**  
Bone china.

**Where do ghosts like to trick-or-treat?**  
Dead end streets.

**Who do monsters buy their cookies from?**  
Ghoul scouts.

**Why is the cemetery a great place to write a story?**  
Because there are so many plots there.

**What do demons eat for breakfast?**  
Deviled eggs.

**What's a vampire's favorite fruit?**  
A neck-tarine.

**Why do ghosts hang out at bars?**  
Because of the boos.

**Why do ghosts make the best cheerleaders?**  
They've got spirit.

**What kind of monster is the best dancer?**  
The boogieman.

**What is a witch's favorite class?**

Spelling

**What do you call a chicken that haunts your house?**  
A poultrygeist.

**How do monsters like their eggs?**  
Terrorfried.

**Who are the werewolf's cousins?**  
Whatwolves and when-wolves.

**What did the mummy have friends?**  
He was too wrapped up in himself.

**What do witches use on their hair?**

Scarespray.

**The maker of this product doesn't want it, the buyer doesn't use it and the user doesn't see it. What is it?**  
A coffin.

**What do ghosts use to do their makeup?**  
Vanishing cream.

**Who is ruler of skeletons?**  
Napoleon Bone-apart.

**Where does Dracula keep his money?**  
A blood bank.

**How do you get into the cemetery?**  
A skeleton key.