



***Creative Halloween 101:  
Make Halloween  
More Exciting***

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## Chapter 1: Halloween – Its History and Origin

Halloween is one of the most awaited and celebrated holiday for the Christians and it comes just second in popularity to Christmas. Millions of people indulge in celebrating, treating and merry making in the festive season, but very few are aware of the history and the true origins of Halloween. The facts and legends about Halloween are as interesting and captivating as the holiday is itself.

If you love the holiday season and fun that Halloween brings along with it, then it is necessary that you understand the true and real origins of the occasion. The original history of this festive occasion traces its roots on the 31<sup>st</sup> of October, which is known as Celtic calendar's last day. Originally, it was celebrated as a pagan holiday with the purpose of honouring the dead.

Halloween is actually referred to as "All Hallows Eve", and it has a rich history which dates back to more than 2000 years. All Hallows Eve is the evening just before All Saints Day and it is celebrated by Christians throughout the world to mark the conversion of pagans. It is celebrated on the 1<sup>st</sup> of November, because the Catholic Church made the honour to the saints on this day.

### **Tracing the origin of Halloween:**

Since the time, when Halloween started being celebrated, there have been several versions regarding the origin and the old customs of the festive occasion. Halloween is viewed differently by the diverse cultures, but the basic fundamental

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tradition and customs remain unchanged. The culture of Halloween can be rooted back to the Druids, a popular Celtic culture of regions like Britain, Ireland, and Northern Europe. Its roots lay in feast of Samhain, which was celebrated annually to honour those who are dead.

The Samhain actually signifies the end of summer, or November. Samhain was celebrated as the harvest festival, with several huge sacred bonfires, which marked the end of Celtic year and the beginning of another one. There were many practices involved in the Samhain celebration, based on superstition.

The Celts had the belief that the souls of those who are dead wandered along the streets and villages after the sunset. Since, several spirits were considered to be friendly, treats and gifts were left out to calm the evil ones. This was done to ensure that the crops in the coming year would be in abundance. This custom later evolved into trunk-or-treating.

## **Chapter 2: Significance of Trunk-Or-Treat**

Halloween is celebrated throughout the world as a traditional a time for kids and adults who are still young at heart to slip on ghostly costumes and wander around their neighbourhood to collect the prized treats, and have fun. It is usually done at the night time. People decorate their houses and display several treats outside their home, where the kids can come and collect them.

Trunk or treat is usually celebrated by roaming around from one house to another. But, what about the places which are sparsely populated? And what would those people do who live in rural areas, much farther away from town. There are many parents who drive their costume clad kids from home to home. Sometimes they even organize special Halloween events for the children to participate and enjoy. On the other hand, people who love distributing treats during this holiday season, but get very few in return. It can be too exasperating. Such people usually receive few trunk-or-treaters mainly because they live in a place which has less number of children.

Due to such issues, mobile trunk or treatings are becoming increasingly popular. A group of people gather around a park of schools with decorated vehicles at a designated time. It gives the trunk-or-treaters enough time to display their brilliant costumes and collect the Halloween treats. It is a fact that nothing can replace the charm of house-to-house trunk or treat practices. Nut, the form of mobile trunk-or-treating is becoming popular as going door-to-door becomes difficult.

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Some of the mobile trunk or treat events are loosely organized by groups of friends, while some sophisticated ones are organized by a committee, a business, or sometimes even the town. If you plan to organize a trunk or treating event with your friends then remember to decorate your vehicle with a little creativity and imagination.

### **Here are some important trunk-or-treat tips:**

- ✓ Always get the permission from the business or school before using their parking lot to organize the mobile trunk or treat.
- ✓ Halloween tailgating must be held in a well-lit area.
- ✓ Inform the local law enforcement, and fire department about where you are about to organize the event.
- ✓ Check with local newspaper if there is going to be a trunk or treat organized in your town, if not then try organizing one.
- ✓ Always use common safety measures to ensure that the kids are safe.
- ✓ Take a folding chair with you so that you can sit down and enjoy some refreshments too.
- ✓ Never leave your child alone in any of these events. It is a better idea to accompany them.

### Chapter 3: Milestones of Halloween

Halloween is one of the most popular holidays being celebrated even today. The history and origin of Halloween dates back to more than 2000 years. Even today it is widely popular among both kids as well as adults. It is celebrated with much enthusiasm and fun. Here are some of the important milestones in the history of Halloween.

**„Halloween Capital of the World“**- Anoka, Minnesota, a civic leader of the 1920s suggested the idea of celebrating Halloween town wide with Halloween parade. Treats like bags of popcorn, candy, peanuts were given to the children who participated in the parade. Since then, with the exception of 1942 and 1943, Halloween has been celebrated in the town. Anoka proclaimed the town as the „Halloween Capital of the World“ in 1937.

**„Wilton Enterprises“** - To celebrate Halloween, Wilton has been offering a wide selection of baking, candy making, cake decorating, and cookie. Apart from the lip smacking treats and delights, the company also offers seasonal publications and classes on how to prepare holiday desserts and treats.

**"War of the Worlds"** - This is another important milestone when the Mercury Theatre radio aired a special program, which was an adaptation of "War of the Worlds", a book by H. G. Wells.

**"Peeps"** - Peeps have been very popular since 1952. These are the sweet little candies that have been established as a tradition and a holiday favourite. Some of the popular Halloween peeps include pumpkins, bats, cats, and ghosts. These peeps are now available in a wide variety of flavours.



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**"Vampira"** - This was the first horror show that was hosted in television from 1954-1955. This television show was based in the Halloween themes and they showed mostly low budgeted horror films.

**"The Simpsons show"** - The Fox Television Network aired the "Simpsons" Show in 1990. The show was known as the "Treehouse of Horror". This Halloween special of Simpsons has become a craze worldwide and are much liked by the fans.

**"Pumpkin Masters"** - Paul Bardeen, in 1987, invented and marketed the first ever pumpkin carving tools and kits. This has given a new dimension to the celebration of Halloween. This has allowed people to make new and much more sophisticated carvings for Halloween.

**"The Haunted History of Halloween"** - The history channel aired a well-researched and unbiased documentary on Halloween, in 1997. This show describes the origin and takes us on a journey, three thousand years back of this pagan holiday.

## Chapter 4: Halloween – The Customs and Traditions

Have you ever wondered how this popular pagan holiday began and who started these eccentric traditions? Let's take a journey into the traditional lane of Halloween and find out about the local as well as globally practiced customs and traditions of Halloween. The ways of looking at this festival differ from country to country, but the traditions remain the same throughout the world. Here are some traditions that make the soul of Halloween.

### **Celebrating the customary bonfires:**

It was a tradition for Druids in Northern Ireland to perform traditional ceremonies, and make sacrifices to please their gods. The Celts used to bring fire woods and make their Samhain bonfire also known as fire festival, on hilltop. They would often fling the bones of slaughtered cattle, to the flames. This bonfire tradition is done on every Halloween night in Ireland with the belief that the sun will burn brightly after the dreary winter.

### **Donning the dazzling costumes:**

The Celts originated the tradition of wearing Halloween costumes at the time of making the huge bonfire. They dressed themselves up in animal skins and head gears to disguise themselves as demons and spirits. The ceremonies included telling stories, dancing, and reading fortunes.

### **Celebrating the tradition and custom of jack-o-lanterns:**

The Celts also originated the custom of carving „jack-o-lanterns“. The story behind this custom

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goes like this - there was a miserable man called Jack who trunked the devils. Not permitted to enter heaven or hell, he was left alone to roam on aimlessly on earth. Jacks used to place a coal piece inside a carved turnip to keep the evil spirits away. These days, pumpkins are used in the place of turnips and are kept outside with the same intention.

### **Trunk or Treating:**

The tradition of trunk or treating was initiated in Ireland, several years ago. To prepare for the All Hollow's, the poor used to request the rich people to donate gifts, food, and money. It would lead to a huge gathering and feasting.

## Chapter 5: Halloween As Celebrated 'Today'

Some concerns regarding the celebration of Halloween has led to making certain changes. Nevertheless, it still remains of the most popular holidays celebrated today. It is especially very popular in Ireland, where it is considered as a „public holiday“. Many parts of America also celebrate it as a holiday. This festive occasion has become a very important day in the promotions calendar used for commercial purpose.

In England, the traditional bonfire of Halloween has mostly moved to the celebration of Guy Fawkes on the 5<sup>th</sup> of November. Thus, the significance and popularity of Halloween festival has faded off in many parts of the world. Health concerns expressed regarding the customs of Halloween, such as bobbing for apples, has led to major changes. Today, people prefer to stay indoors and watch a horror movie in DVD. With such changes in the customs, the door to door collection of sweets and other treats have taken a back seat.

These days, some adults also find the idea of going door to door and asking for treats uncomfortable, especially the custom of threading a trunk if treats are not given. Whereas there are some people, who go out of their way in decorating their houses and hanging gifts and sweets outside. They also love playing with the children on Halloween themes and sound effects that help in creating a ghostly atmosphere. It cannot be denied that kids still love the idea of dressing up in costumes and going door-to door to collect their "loot".

Another major reasons that has led to fading away of the tradition and customs of Halloween, is the concern of the parents in letting their kids moving

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from door to door and collecting gifts and sweets from strangers. In some communities, there is a strict supervision to ensure that no problems take place. These dangers alarm the authorities as well as the parents. Health issues have also been raised regarding the kids eating unwrapped and unsafe sweets. Due to this, the charity fund scheme run by UNICEF for Halloween was cut back in 2006.

As a result of these concerns, the traditional style of celebrating Halloween has faded in certain parts of the world. Today, it is mainly confined to the smaller and safer neighbourhoods. In the cities, it has been replaced by theme costume parties organized by individuals and business organizations.

However, still today there are some families who have kept the traditions and customs of Halloween alive. They still enjoy cladding themselves and kids with costumes, going door to door trunk-or-treating, and enjoying a block Halloween party.

## Chapter 6: Party Ideas & Planning For Halloween

The advent of Autumn brings with it several holidays and festivals. It is that time of the year, when you can get closer with your near and dear ones. It's a time for social gatherings, organizing events, merry making, eating and having fun. There cannot be a better way to start this season of festivals than by throwing a Halloween party. If you are a Halloween enthusiasts then make this year special by throwing a party at your place. A Halloween party has to be special, based on some exciting theme that gives you a feel of the festive occasion. Here are some exciting party ideas and planning for Halloween festival:

### **6.1 Organizing an exciting „Jack O' Lantern" lane Halloween event:**

This is a cost effective and hassle free event that you can organize in your neighbourhood. Ask your neighbours to participate in this event and display

13 Jack O' Lanterns at the front of their property, in an evenly spaced line. Plan out the event and distribute flyers one month before, talk to your neighbours about it and convince them to contribute in the event. You can try to get some discount from the local pumpkin shop or the grocery store to ensure that your neighbours get some discount. The lit up pumpkin lanterns in your neighbourhood on the Halloween eve will make a spectacular event.

### **6.2 Party supplies & table tips for Halloween:**

When you are throwing a Halloween party at your home, you may want to create a creepy atmosphere. There are several tips to make your Halloween party more eerie. You can get the bloody vinyl tablecloth, spider table cloth or some other spooky

laced ones to create an effect with them. Special Halloween table ware and punch bowls are also available for the party. To create special effects for Halloween you can get the creepy candles, spooky centrepieces, and other complimentary decorations. You can keep the remaining stuff after the Halloween party is over to use it for the party net year.

### **6.3 Try exciting recipes for Halloween:**

There are several mouth-watering Halloween recipes that you can prepare for your guests when you throw a party. You can make a wide variety of delicacies using pumpkin. You can also get a recipe book or take some classes before Halloween to learn about the methods of preparing the lip smacking holiday specials. There are many popular confectionaries that offer special seasonal classes on how to make sweets for Halloween.

### **6.4 Celebrating the thirteen days of Halloween:**

The "Thirteen Days of Halloween" is a tradition that heralds the start of the haunting season and this jump starts our Halloween mind-set. Some people believe in celebrating Halloween with a group of thirteen enthusiasts, who gather in the backyard, and lit up the jack o lanterns with candles at midnight.

### **6.5 Preparing the party invitations for Halloween:**

The party invitation cards form an essential element of the Halloween party. You must plan everything beforehand and mail the invitations to guests. Several types of Halloween invitation cards

are available in the market, you can also create your own style of Halloween invitations cards. Remember to include the theme, date and time, and host name.

### **6.6 Celebrating the eve of black month:**

Some friends can get together and celebrate the eve of the black month before October sets in. This is an interesting way to celebrate Halloween and its origins. A person picks up his friends one by one from their houses and got the house of the last one who usually has a party organized in his/ her back yard. A skull and pumpkin is kept as the centrepiece, to celebrate the origin of this festival and to celebrate the holiday of death.

### **6.7 Exciting tips for organizing a pumpkin carving party:**

You can throw a pumpkin carving party where the guests are requested to carve their pumpkins and then there is dining and merriment. Some of the exciting tips are:

- ✓ Send out invitations beforehand and know who are coming
- ✓ Supply pumpkins or ask guests to bring a pumpkin along
- ✓ Supply carving tools to the guests
- ✓ Keep plenty of tables and chairs
- ✓ Keep lots of trash bags and cans for use.
- ✓ Decorate your house with Halloween stuff.
- ✓ Keep background music playing and movies too
- ✓ Order some delicacies or prepare them at home for the guests.



**6.8 Organize A Halloween Film-fest Party:**

The eve of Halloween can be celebrated by calling some friends at home and watching some good classic horror movies. Let all guests be comfortable and play some good collection of moves that they would like to watch.

**6.9 Organize a group block party for Halloween:**

If you live in sub urban area then Halloween is a good time of the year when you can actually meet and get close to the neighbours. Throw a clock party and invite people to come and make merry. But, this requires much planning. Invitations for the party should be sent out in time. Decorations have to done at the house, and you should set up drink and food booths for the guests.

**6.10: Organizing costume parties for kids and adults:**

Halloween is an interesting time of the year when you can clad yourself in exciting and gorgeous costumes. It's the time to open that old box and take out the Halloween costumes kept along with then other stuff.

**Adult costume party** - Planning an adult costume party is very easy. All you need for this are proper planning, invitations, gourmet food, drinks, decorations and good music. You can decide on the theme for your Halloween art. It can either be based on the „Vampires“ theme, or “the 50“s” or “Popular Monsters of Hollywood”. You can also

organize a contest and give out a prize to the best dressed up person. This can make the part more fun.

**Costume party for the kids** - If you are a planning a Halloween party for the children, then it is better that you do it in the afternoon. Throwing a Halloween party for children at night can make it a bit creepy. Planning beforehand is very essential so that everything falls in to place. You can use some of the themes from an adult costume party, just scale them down a bit to suit the little dots. You can also arrange to make them sit in the backyard and tell spooky stories to them, or have a scavenger hunt set in the back yard.

With a little planning, good amount of decoration and little creativity put into place, you can actually organize the best Halloween party of your life!

#### **6.11: Celebrating Friday, the 13<sup>th</sup> Party:**

Though this is not a Halloween party in real, it is a pre-Halloween party or the party enthusiasts. If you are feeling blue that Halloween is still some days away then host a Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> party. Invite your friends, gets some good spooky cds, and remember to have lots of food and rinks around. You can enjoy watching Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> - part one and two. Take a break after the 1<sup>st</sup> part is over and enjoy food and drink. Do some decorations in your house to give it a spooky feeling.

## **Chapter 7: Stay Safe In Halloween**

Halloween is a time for fun and merry making. Kids and adults, who are still young at their hearts, love to indulge into celebrating the traditions and customs of the festival. However, it must be celebrated safely; especially the children should be supervised to ensure that they are safe during this season. Here are some of the important safety tips for Halloween:

### **7.1 Halloween safety tips for the children and grownups:**

- ✓ Make safe costumes for your kids
- ✓ Ensure that the jack o lanterns that you display don't catch flame in any one's costume
- ✓ If your child carries a prop then ensure that it is not sharp
- ✓ Warn your kids from entering any dark house
- ✓ Treat your kid to a spooky dinner so that they don't gobble up all candies.
- ✓ Know the route that your child will take, or better accompany them
- ✓ Set a time for kids to return home.

### **7.2 Halloween safety Tips for parties and costumes:**

- ✓ Costume should be flame retardant
- ✓ It should be bright and very reflective
- ✓ If you put dry ice in bowl in party, ensure no body ingests them
- ✓ Remove all breakable things from the room where you are hosting a party.

### **7.3 Halloween safety tips for trunk-or-treating:**

- ✓ Plan this during daylight, if a child goes out at night them must be accompanied by a responsible adult.
- ✓ Know the route that your child will be taking for trunk-r treat
- ✓ Ensure that your child remembers the address

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of your home, and mobile numbers. Give some money to your kids so that they can call you if required. If possible, give them a mobile phone to contact you in emergency.

- ✓ Tell your kids to go to only the known houses
- ✓ Keep away from dark houses
- ✓ Tell your child to not eat any treat before showing them to you

#### **7.4 Halloween safety tips for pets:**

- ✓ Although your pet dog or cat may crave for some of the Halloween candy, remember that this may be harmful for them.
- ✓ If you are having indoor party then ensure that your pets are in some other room so that they are not disturbed.
- ✓ Don't let your pets outside on a Halloween eve as they may be scared on seeing the mask clad children.

## Chapter 8: Halloween Storage and Decorations Ideas

Come September and people get busy with preparing for Halloween. Some people wait for its arrival throughout the year. It is the time when you can open that old box containing Halloween stuff that is kept in dusts over the attic. Bring it down and we can decide what can be done with it?

Some of the exciting Halloween decorations that can be used to make this festival more enjoyable are:

- ✓ Halloween costumes are bright and fun to put on. Get some new Halloween dresses made beforehand that you can wear to the parties. Alternatively, take out the old costumes that are locked in the box. Fix them well so that it is good to use.
- ✓ Prepare a haunted fireplace for your friends to sit around it and listen to a good spooky story at the Halloween eve.
- ✓ Transform the walls using the Halloween Scene Setters so that they look creepy and perfect for the Halloween party.
- ✓ Decorate your house using Halloween Wall Facades and Halloween Door Trim & Facades
- ✓ Drape with the spooky effect Haunted Curtains that look elegant
- ✓ Why leave the bathroom door? You can also decorate your bathroom with the Halloween Bathroom Decor
- ✓ Try out the used commercial haunted attractions that have been available for years. Some of the really distressed, torn, ragged, and shredded appearing cloth can make give a truly deserted as well as a dilapidated look to your home during Halloween.
- ✓ Display the Halloween Scarecrows

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- ✓ Put those lighted pumpkin in the walkway so that whoever walks into your house gets greeted by the pumpkins. It looks really beautiful and also creates the perfect atmosphere for the Halloween party.
- ✓ Get the weird window covers to give your look a completely different look to your home during the vent of Halloween.

You can let your imagination go wild and use it to create your own unique home decorations. Think of all kind of creepy look that you can try on your home. You can also take some ideas from the movies and apply it for the event or party organized at your home. You can also select themes for your Halloween event based on the movies or special established themes of the vent.

### **8.1 What Is The Future Of Halloween?**

You cannot foretell what will happen in the next hundred years. But, of course we can see what will be the future of Halloween in the couple of years to come. Keeping in mind the popularity and growing trends of the festival, it can be safely concluded that we can expect more of the sophisticated Halloween parties, business organized events, costume contests and several types of Halloween products to increase in the stores. The concept and way of celebrating Halloween can be modernized but it cannot fade away. People who are truly enthusiastic about this festival will continue to keep the traditions and customs alive for several more years to come.