

## Halloween



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The leaves are starting to fall off the trees, the evenings are getting shorter and winter is coming. We want to stay inside where it's warm, unless of course, you are going trick-or-treating on 31st October. This month we will look at this special day, which is not only popular in the USA. Read on to find out more ...

Everyone knows that *Halloween* is about pumpkins, costumes and trick-or-treating, but do you know where these traditions come from? Or even why we 'celebrate' *Halloween*?

*Halloween* seems to be a combination of two traditions, one pagan and one Christian. The Celtic pagans celebrated Samhain to welcome the winter - the 'darker half' of the year. They believed that on this day the spirits could pass easily between this world and the otherworld - the realm of the dead, the home of the deities. While they welcomed the spirits of their loved ones, they wore costumes and masks to protect themselves from evil spirits.

In the Catholic calendar, the 1st November is *All Saints' Day*, or *All Hallows' Day*, as it was known. The day before was known as *All Hallows' Eve*, which became *Hallowe'en*. It was the Irish immigrants who brought *Halloween* customs to the USA from 1830.

If you want to find out **more about *Halloween***, just click on:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Halloween>

and on:

<http://www.history.com/topics/halloween>

Let's look at some *Halloween* customs, wacky *Halloween* rituals and other activities linked to *Halloween*.

**Trick-or-treating:** This tradition comes from the custom of poor people going from door to door, begging for food, 'soul cakes', in return for offering prayers for the souls of loved ones in purgatory in the Middle Ages. Today, children dress up and knock on doors to ask for a treat or threaten a - usually harmless - trick. They are usually given sweets.

**Jack-o'-lanterns:** These lanterns were originally carved from turnips in memory of the souls in purgatory and to ward off evil spirits. As pumpkins were more plentiful than turnips in the USA, these were used instead.

Why not have a pumpkin carving competition? Click below for **tips on carving pumpkins**:

[http://www.pumpkin carving 101.com/pumpkin\\_carving\\_basic.html](http://www.pumpkin carving 101.com/pumpkin_carving_basic.html)

**Games:** Bobbing for apples, pumpkin carving ... How many *Halloween* games and activities can you name? Click here for **some ideas, both traditional and new**:

<http://www.pumpkinnook.com/hween/games.htm>

**Romantic traditions:** Try our quiz to find out more about *Halloween* traditions. Just click here:

<http://xportal.langenscheidt.de/club/0009>

**Scary films:** *Halloween* is the perfect time to watch a good horror film. How many scary films can you name? Can you add any to our list? Which ones have you already seen?

- Silence of the Lambs (1991)
- The Shining (1980)
- Alien (1979)
- Texas Chainsaw Massacre (1974)
- Paranormal Activity (2007)
- Nightmare on Elm Street (1984)
- The Exorcist (1973)
- Poltergeist (1982)
- Friday the 13th (1980)
- Beetle Juice (1988)
- Night of the Living Dead (1990)
- The Blair Witch Project (1999)
- ...

**Recipes:** Click here to find easy recipes and tips for scary food for your *Halloween* party:

<http://www.halloween-online.com/recipes/index.html>

Your guests will enjoy an entertaining and spooky evening ...

Don't forget to print this page out and put it into your *Special Day file*:

<http://www.klett-sprachen.de/special-day-file/n-1/16>