

# COVID-19: Tips for a Safe Halloween

Halloween is a great opportunity to have some laughs and catch up with family and friends. But Halloween needs to be different this year. Due to ongoing transmission of COVID-19, you should not go to parties, gather in large groups or attend a haunted house. Celebrate outdoors. Here are some tips on how to enjoy Halloween while preventing the spread of COVID-19.

## No matter how you celebrate, always practice the four key actions to help prevent COVID-19 transmission

**Stay home if sick:** Celebrate at home, especially if you or your children aren't feeling well, tested positive for COVID-19, have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 or were recently in a state or country with a high level of COVID-19.

**Physical distancing:** Stay at least 6 feet from others. Do not attend large gatherings, especially indoors.

**Wear a face covering:** Protect those around you. You can have COVID-19 and not know it. Everyone needs to wear a face covering, even ghosts and goblins!

**Practice healthy hand hygiene:** Wash your hands often with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands and cover your coughs and sneezes. Make sure your hands and treats are clean before diving in.

## Safer Halloween activities in the time of COVID-19

- **Pumpkin-carving.** This is a great activity to do alone or with others in your household.
- **Decorate your home.** Jazz up your home or walk around the neighborhood and see who has the spookiest decorations.
- **Virtual parties.** Have a video costume contest. See who has the funniest or scariest costume.
- **Scavenger hunt.** Have your kids hunt for sweets at home or in a nearby park.
- **Watch a scary movie.** Go to a drive-in or have a fright-fest at home with your family or other housemates.
- **Pumpkin spice it up.** Grab a pumpkin spice latte, cookie or bagel. 'Tis the season!



## Tips on dressing up

- **Halloween masks are not face coverings.** Masks that are sold as part of Halloween costumes (such as monster or alien masks) generally have holes for breathing that make them ineffective at stopping COVID-19 transmission. **You still need to wear a face covering over any costume mask.** Do **not** wear a face covering under your costume mask as it may make it hard to breathe.
- **Get creative.** Think about a costume that includes a face covering – be a doctor, nurse, cowboy, masked bandit or a 2020 New Yorker! Or buy or make a face covering with a mustache, mouth or other image on it that's part of your costume.





## Trick or treating

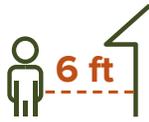
Trick or treating involves interacting with many people at a short distance. But there are ways to be safer. If you decide to go, it is critical to take these precautions:

- **Go prepared.** Bring and use hand sanitizer often. Make sure everyone over the age of 2 wears a face covering and bring extras in case you drop yours or it gets slimed.



- **Stay outdoors.** Trick or treat outdoors rather than inside apartment buildings.

- **Back up.** Step 6 feet back after knocking on the door or ringing the bell.



- **Giving treats.** The best option is to leave a bin outside the door with candy or set up a station outside to hand out treats. If you hand out treats from the door, post a sign on the door asking people to step back 6 feet. Make sure your hands are clean and wear a face covering. Do not allow people to put their hands in a bag or bowl that you are holding.

- **Candy crush.** Once you get home, wipe down wrappers or, better yet, let your stash sit for a couple of days untouched. As always, inspect candy to make sure it has not been tampered with, limit the amount of candy you and your kids eat, and brush your teeth after eating sweets.



## If you're going to meet up with other people

- **Know your own risk:** If you are an older adult or have a health condition that increases your risk of severe COVID-19, consider staying home and enjoying Halloween from afar.
- **Know others' risk:** Meet up with people who you know are careful about using a face covering and keeping at least 6 feet of distance from others.
- **Keep it small:** The more people that gather close together, the higher the risk of COVID-19 transmission.
- **Outdoors is safer:** Bundle up and celebrate outdoors in a large outdoor space.
- **Bring your own (BYO):** Sharing a beverage or passing food around can spread COVID-19.



## ACTIVITIES YOU DEFINITELY SHOULD NOT DO

- **Apple bobbing competition:** Keep your spit to yourself.
- **Axe throwing contest:** Pandemic or not, never a good idea.
- **Dressing up as a bank robber and going to the bank:** Just don't.