Halloween treats for kids

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Peabody's Spooky Kitchen has 14 free Halloween treats kids can make: 8 with no cooking, like banana ghosts and graveyard dirt cups, and 6 where a grown-up does the oven, stove or toaster, like mummy pizzas and roasted pumpkin seeds. Each has picture steps read aloud, allergy swaps, and the hot and sharp steps marked for a grown-up.

14 easy Halloween treats kids can make

- Treat: Apple Monster Mouths · Ages: 5 to 10 · Kind: Snacks, no-cook · Time: 15 min · A grown-up does: the sharp knife
- Treat: Banana Ghosts · Ages: 5 to 9 · Kind: Snacks, no-cook · Time: 10 min · A grown-up does: nothing (a grown-up nearby)
- Treat: Candy Corn Fruit Cups · Ages: 5 to 9 · Kind: Snacks, no-cook · Time: 10 min · A grown-up does: nothing (a grown-up nearby)
- Treat: Clementine Pumpkins · Ages: 5 to 9 · Kind: Snacks, no-cook · Time: 10 min · A grown-up does: the sharp knife
- Treat: Dirt Cups · Ages: 5 to 10 · Kind: Snacks, no-cook · Time: 15 min · A grown-up does: nothing (a grown-up nearby)
- Treat: Ghost Toast · Ages: 5 to 9 · Kind: Breakfast · Time: 10 min · A grown-up does: the toaster
- Treat: Jack-o'-Lantern Quesadillas · Ages: 7 to 12 · Kind: Lunch · Time: 20 min · A grown-up does: the sharp knife, the stove
- Treat: Mummy Dogs · Ages: 6 to 11 · Kind: Lunch · Time: 30 min · A grown-up does: the oven
- Treat: Mummy Pizza · Ages: 5 to 11 · Kind: Lunch · Time: 20 min · A grown-up does: the oven
- Treat: Pumpkin Muffins · Ages: 7 to 12 · Kind: Baking · Time: 40 min · A grown-up does: the oven
- Treat: Roasted Pumpkin Seeds · Ages: 5 to 11 · Kind: Snacks · Time: 50 min · A grown-up does: the sharp knife, the oven
- Treat: Spider Crackers · Ages: 5 to 9 · Kind: Snacks, no-cook · Time: 15 min · A grown-up does: nothing (a grown-up nearby)
- Treat: Witch's Broomsticks · Ages: 5 to 9 · Kind: Snacks, no-cook · Time: 10 min · A grown-up does: nothing (a grown-up nearby)
- Treat: Witch's Brew Punch · Ages: 5 to 10 · Kind: Drinks, no-cook · Time: 15 min + 2 h freezer · A grown-up does: the sharp knife

No-cook Halloween snacks for little ones

apple monster mouths, banana ghosts, candy corn fruit cups, clementine pumpkins, dirt cups, spider crackers, witch's broomsticks and witch's brew punch need no oven and no stove, so a kindergartner can do nearly every step: peel, snap, spread, stack, sprinkle and count. The few cuts with a sharp knife (halving grapes, coring an apple, little celery stems) are a grown-up's.

Halloween party food ideas

A party table for a handful of kids, made mostly by the kids themselves:

- A drink: witch's brew punch with frozen grape eyeballs. Freeze the grape halves the night before.
- Something savory: mummy pizzas or mummy dogs (a grown-up at the oven), or no-cook spider crackers and witch's broomsticks.
- Something fruity: banana ghosts, clementine pumpkins and candy corn fruit cups.
- Something sweet: graveyard dirt cups, which keep in the fridge for a few hours, or pumpkin muffins, baked the day before.

Make the crunchy ones last: pretzels and crackers go soft once they touch a spread, and cut bananas and apples turn brown in the air. In the Kitchen, the Spooky Kitchen's "Plan a Halloween party" button lets a child pick three treats and how many are coming, then writes one shopping list and a party menu to print.

How to roast pumpkin seeds

1. A grown-up cuts a lid round the stem of your pumpkin.
2. Scoop the seeds and stringy goop out with a big spoon.
3. Pull the seeds out of the goop with your fingers. Squishy!
4. Rinse the seeds in a colander under cold water.
5. Pat them really dry with a clean towel.
6. A grown-up heats the oven to 325°F (160°C) and lines a tray with baking paper.
7. Toss 1 cup of pumpkin seeds with 2 teaspoons of oil and ½ teaspoon of salt in a bowl.
8. Spread them out flat on the tray in one layer.
9. A grown-up roasts them 20 to 30 minutes, stirring halfway, till golden.
10. A grown-up takes them out with mitts on. Cool for 10 minutes: they crisp up as they cool.
11. Crunch time! Count how many seeds came out of one pumpkin.

The roasted pumpkin seeds recipe has a picture for every step, read aloud, and the kitchen science of why dry seeds go crunchy. Carving first? The Pumpkin Patch has faces and stencils to carve, paint and print, and the seeds come out at its scooping step.

Halloween treats by age

- Ages 5 to 6 (kindergarten): the no-cook treats above, and ghost toast with a grown-up at the toaster.
- Ages 6 to 8 (1st and 2nd grade): mummy dogs and mummy pizzas: wrapping, laying bandages and dotting eyes, with a grown-up at the oven.
- Ages 7 to 11 (2nd to 5th grade): jack-o'-lantern quesadillas (the child draws the face, a grown-up cuts it) and pumpkin muffins, which are measuring practice with fractions.

Allergies and Halloween candy

Tap "Allergies?" on the Kitchen's front page and pick one, and each treat fills in a swap where there is one: sunflower seed butter for peanut butter, raisins for chocolate chips, oat yogurt for yogurt, gluten-free bread for bread, corn tortilla for tortilla, oil for butter, oat milk for milk, gluten-free crackers for round crackers, sunflower seed butter for cream cheese and gluten-free pretzel sticks for pretzel sticks. Candy and packet foods (gummy worms, candy eyes, candy corn, cookies, pudding, crescent dough, hot dogs) say "read the label" on every recipe, because what's in them changes by brand. For trick-or-treaters with food allergies, FARE's Teal Pumpkin Project suggests offering non-food treats too.

Safety in the Spooky Kitchen

Every step with a sharp knife, the oven, the stove or the toaster is a grown-up's, and Crumb, the Kitchen's tiny chef, says so out loud before it. For brothers and sisters under 4, each recipe carries the AAP choking notes for what's in it: grapes are cut in half the long way, hot dogs into thin strips (never round coins), and marshmallows, gummy or hard candy and pumpkin seeds are left off for them. Recipes with raw dough or batter say not to taste it until it's cooked.

Questions parents ask

What Halloween treats can a 5-year-old make?

The no-cook ones: banana ghosts, clementine pumpkins, spider crackers and graveyard dirt cups take 10 to 15 minutes, and a grown-up only steps in for a cut or two.

Are any of these healthy Halloween snacks?

The fruit ones are mostly fruit: banana ghosts, clementine pumpkins, candy corn fruit cups (pineapple, clementine and yogurt) and apple monster mouths. The candy on top is optional on most recipes and can be left off.

Can I make Halloween treats ahead for a party?

Freeze the grape eyeballs and bake the muffins the day before, and make the dirt cups a few hours ahead and keep them in the fridge. Assemble anything with pretzels, crackers, apples or bananas just before the party.

How do you get roasted pumpkin seeds crunchy?

Rinse off all the pulp, dry the seeds well with a towel, spread them in one layer and roast them low, at 325°F (160°C) for 20 to 30 minutes, stirring halfway. They crisp up more as they cool.

Are the recipes free?

Yes. The Kitchen is free, with no ads and no sign-up, and nothing your child picks or makes is sent anywhere.

More for the season: Halloween HQ, with everything Halloween at Peabody in one place, the Halloween stories shelf to read while the muffins bake, and all our easy recipes for kids.

Free at peabody.kids/holidays/halloween/treats