



## INTRODUCTION AND PARTY INVITATIONS

Does your child have a birthday around the bewitching evening of Halloween? This is a fantastic holiday to build a ghoulishly fun party for all of your child's friends. Invite all of the ghouls, ghosts, and witches over to unite for a party fit to scare up fun for everyone!

Create a Gravestone Invitation. Use grey heavy cardstock and cut out a small gravestone shape. On one side of the invitations, write the names of your invited guests and on the other side write your party details. Place the gravestone onto a small piece of green Astroturf® material resembling grass and use craft glue to attach.

Alternatively, purchase black cardstock and cut out enough paper to fold over and make a card. On the front of your card, take a glue stick and place glue all over the front. Place spider web netting right onto the glue and puff it up a bit. Tie an orange ribbon at the bottom and place a plastic spider web or bug into the spider web. Inside the card, write your party details on the inside with white chalk.

Both of these invitations can either be hand-delivered or sent via mail in an oversized, lined envelope.

*Tip: Ask your guests to dress up in their Halloween costumes and be sure to take pictures of them dressed up with the birthday child when they arrive at the party.*

## DECORATIONS

Use tin cans to create lanterns to light a path to your front doorway if your party will be at night.

Paint clean tin cans with a color and sponge a holiday decoration on the cans after they have dried.

Fill your cans with water and freeze. Use a small hammer and nails to make a pattern or design on the cans. (The frozen water keeps the can intact during this step.)

Set a tea light inside and a Halloween glow is cast.



## Party Theme Planning From **BIRTHDAYS**

**Spooky Spiders!** Using paint brushes, paint two coats of black paint onto styrofoam balls. After the balls have dried, place black pipe cleaners into different areas of the styrofoam ball. You can cut them short or leave them long. Use construction paper and/or googly eyes to create spider faces. Hang these from your ceiling or nestle them into a golden cauldron.

*Craft Tip: Mix regular white glue into the acrylic, washable paint so that it adheres well to the styrofoam.*

Place **Golden Cauldrons and Pumpkins** around your party area and atop your party table. Take regular black plastic cauldrons and pumpkins and paint these with golden acrylic paint. Let them dry and fill with black and orange confetti and festive Halloween goodies.

Use black and orange construction paper to create ghosts, pumpkins, bats, spiders, and other spooky creatures to hang from the ceiling, place on the walls, and anywhere else in the party area.

Make half ghosts that peek out around corners.

For paper pumpkins, use orange paper for the body, brown for the stem, green for the leaves, and black for the cutouts to make the face.

If you are using black construction paper for the bats and black cats, use chalk rather than gel pens.

If you want to make the bats and ghosts *fly*, punch a small hole at the top of the creations, thread a fishing line through the hole, and hang over vents or near a door that is opening and closing frequently so that they *fly*.

Blow up balloons, place material, such as a small white sheet, over the balloon, tie the neck with a string, and use a black marker for a ghostly face. Suspend the ghosts using fishing line from the neck of the ghost. Make sure to use lots of orange and black balloons to create a festive Halloween environment.

**Cardboard Boxes:** Make a graveyard out of your front yard by using old cardboard appliance boxes. Cut them down to tombstone size, spray paint them black, and then use white paint to outline the headstone. Using a small paint brush, paint different, spooky, funny, and anything goes epithets on the tombs. Place them in the front yard, weighing them down with a brick.

**Spider Web:** A spider web will go a long way in decorating any corner area of your home and/or front porch. They often come with some plastic spiders as well for further decorations.

**Candles:** Orange and black candles illuminating your home would also be an additional decoration. The small votive candles can often be purchased in bulk as well.



## Party Theme Planning From **BIRTHDAYS**

Use orange and black colors for your party table. Mix and match the colors for your cups, napkins, plates, and tableware. Place some Golden Cauldrons and Pumpkins in the center of your table filled with black, orange, and lime green confetti and large black and orange swirled lollipops for a party treat. Scatter gummy worms, insects, and spiders around the table for confetti!

A small bale of hay with some Indian corn would also add a festive autumnal touch to your party table as a centerpiece.

### GAMES AND ACTIVITIES

**Candy Corn Guessing Game.** Fill a large jar with candy corn and have everyone take a guess at how many there are inside the jar when they first enter the party.

**Make little ghosts** using Tootsie Roll® Pops®, small squares of old white sheets, some colorful string, and a black marker for the eyes.

#### Pumpkin Carving

Provide butcher paper and black markers and have the kids draw the faces that they want on their pumpkins.

Clean out the pumpkins, scooping out all of those yummy pumpkin seeds. Have salt and a few spices on hand to spice them up. As everyone carves, toast the seeds for a special treat.

Finally, the kids can supervise the adults carving the pumpkins to their specifications! Give out prizes for the scariest, funniest, and silliest pumpkins.

#### Candy Corn Catch

Divide guests into groups of 3 teams, 4-5 per team. Tie a plastic pumpkin around one team member's waist (use a guest). Give the remaining team members a basket of candy corn. Play Halloween music 251658240 . When the music begins, yell "Go!" Each team tries to toss the most candy corn into their pumpkin from a certain distance. Stop and start the music to give team members a chance to change turns. When the song is over, count the candy corns and the team with the most wins!

#### Play Pin the Wart on the Witch.

**String donuts** on a clothesline, blindfold the kids and/or tie their hands behind their backs, and enjoy eating the donuts off the line.

#### The Hanging Tree. You will need:



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## Party Theme Planning From **BIRTHDAYS**

13 Apples (12 red and one green) plus a few extras  
String  
Blindfold  
Tree branch

Tie each of the apples to a tree so they can swing freely. To keep observant kids from memorizing where the green apple is just loosely tie the strings together.

To Play:

Take a child and tell him to close his eyes and make a wish. As he does, blindfold him. Once blindfolded, spin him around and say this rhyme with the group:

13 Apples hanging from a tree

12 dark red and one bright green

Blindfolded, spun around, and then set free

Is that green one meant for me?

Release the apples and point the child in the right direction. They will stumble about and pick an apple. If they get the green one their wish will come true! Before the next child goes, replace the apple and move the green one. If you want you can place a tag with a number on each apple, then each number will correspond to small gift or prize.

Play **Pass the Pumpkin**. Have the kids sit in a circle and pass small pumpkins and gourds to music. When the music stops, whoever isn't holding a pumpkin is out!

**Mummy Fun**. Break up the kids into two teams, provide several rolls of toilet paper to both teams, and choose one person to mummify. The team to wrap the mummy in toilet paper the fastest wins!

**Build a Scarecrow**. Divide the kids into two teams and provide old clothes, pillowcases, newspapers, and markers. Give them 20 minutes to build their scarecrow.

If this Halloween birthday party is for a tween, have a video camera on hand and give the kids the chance to make their own **Blair Witch Halloween film**. Give them 5 minutes to shoot the film on a Halloween topic.

Have a **Halloween Candy Hunt**.

Sit in a circle in the dark with only flashlights. Begin the tale of a **scary story** and go around the circle with each kid adding the next portion of the story until the end of the circle has been reached.



## PARTY MENU

### Serve Rats Baked in Blood

For the Rats:

1-1/2 lbs. lean ground beef  
 1/2 cup uncooked long grain white rice  
 1/2 medium onion, finely chopped  
 1 egg, beaten  
 2 tsp. salt  
 Uncooked spaghetti, broken into quarters  
 Thinly sliced raw carrots  
 Black peppercorns, cooked black beans

For the blood:

1 can crushed or ground tomatoes  
 1-1/2 cups water  
 1 tbsp. sugar  
 1 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce  
 1 tsp. salt  
 1/4 tsp. black pepper

In a mixing bowl, combine the ground beef, rice, onion, egg and 1 tsp. of the salt. Mix well.

Make the rats. Using a measuring cup, scoop out 1/4 cup of the ground beef mixture. Form it, by hand, into a firmly packed teardrop shape — pointy on one end, rounded on the other. This is your basic rat. Place it into a 3 quart shallow baking dish and gently pinch in the neck area. Poke a piece of uncooked spaghetti into the larger rounded end as a tail. Repeat with the remaining ground beef mixture.

When all the rats are neatly placed in the baking dish, stir together the tomatoes, water, sugar, Worcestershire sauce, remaining 1 tsp. of salt and 1/4 tsp. pepper. Pour over the rats. Cover the dish with foil wrap and bake at 350°F degrees for 45 minutes. Uncover and continue to bake for another 45 to 50 minutes, basting occasionally with sauce, or until the rice is tender and the rats are fully cooked.

Gently remove rats, one at a time, from the sauce and place gently on a serving platter. Into each rat, insert two carrot slices as ears, peppercorns for eyes, and a few more broken strands of uncooked spaghetti for whiskers. Spoon sauce around the rats and serve!



### Witches Finger Cookie Recipe

1 cup butter, softened  
 1 egg  
 1 tsp. almond extract  
 1 tsp. vanilla extract  
 2-2/3 cups flour  
 1 tsp. salt  
 3/4 cup whole almonds, blanched  
 2 squares of melting chocolate, or chocolate bark

Combine the sugar, egg, butter, almond extract, and vanilla in a bowl. Mix in the flour, and salt. Cover and refrigerate the dough for about 30 minutes, or until it's firm.

When you're ready to shape the cookies, take out one small portion of the dough at a time. Shape the cookies into fingers by rolling and working with your hands. Score the top of the cookie with a knife or spatula to make it look like the wrinkles in your knuckle. Press an imprint into the tip of the cookie with your finger to make a spot for the almond fingernail. Press an almond into the tip of each finger to look like a fingernail.

Place on a cooking sheet lightly coated with no-stick cooking spray and bake at 325°F for 20 to 25 minutes, or until the cookies are a very light golden brown. Let the cookies cool on a drying rack.

Use melting chocolate to go around the outside of the almond nail, giving a ghoulish appearance. Just melt the chocolate, put it in an icing piping bag, and cut a very small hole in the tip. Then pipe around the nail.

If you use red melting chocolate the look will be even more dramatic. You can also make small drops of chocolate blood, or chocolate cuts on the cookies if you really want to gross out your guests.

**Blood & Guts Pasta.** Use elbow-shaped green pasta, sauce, and stuffed Spanish olives. Make up the pasta and cut the olives in half to make the eyeballs and place on top of the *blood & guts*.

**Bat Wings.** Use one dozen chicken wings and create a marinade using 1 cup soy sauce, 1/3 cup honey, and 1 tsp. ginger. Marinate overnight and grill or BBQ.

**Chocolate Spiders.** Melt some chocolate chips in the microwave. Add dry chow mein noodles to the melted chocolate and mix together. Spoon onto greaseproof paper as little blobs and add two M&M's® Minis® for eyes. Place in the fridge to cool.

**Ghosts in the Graveyard Cake.** Make a batch of instant pudding and spread it into a pan. Sprinkle with Oreo® cookie crumbs, and decorate Pepperidge Farm® Milano®



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cookies with icing to look like tombstones. Stick them into the pudding. Place dollops of whipped cream into the graveyard for the ghosts. Add M&M's® Minis® for their eyes.

Dip pretzel rods into chocolate and roll in orange and black sprinkles for a special **Halloween Wand!**

**Kellogg's® Rice Krispies Treats® Pumpkins.** Add orange food coloring to the Kellogg's® Rice Krispies Treats® and make a batch. When cool, roll into balls and decorate faces on them. Use shoelace licorice for a mouth, green gumdrop for the stem, M&M's® Minis® for the eyes, and a *red hot* for the nose.

**Edible Swamp.** Make a bowl of gelatin. Before it sets, add in gummy worms, bugs, and fish for a **swampy treat.**

**Jack-O-Lanterns.** Toast English muffins, and add orange food coloring to cream cheese to make a festive pumpkin spread. Spread the cream cheese on the English muffins and have the kids use raisins to make pumpkin faces on them.

Pumpkin, witch, bat, and ghost cookie cutters make great inspiration for a thematic party menu:

**Gelatin.** Make a batch of gelatin using orange and lime flavors.

**Scary Sugar Cookies.** Use these same cookie cutters to make a batch of sugar cookies. Have the kids decorate these Halloween characters.

**Spooky Sandwiches.** Fill the sandwiches with blackberry jam and cream cheese. Add chocolate chips for eyes.

During the party, turn your regular snack into ghoulish treats by simply renaming them:



- Baked Skeleton Bones (Pretzel Sticks)
- Bat Brains (Popcorn)
- Bloated Ants (Raisins)
- Boiled Lady Bugs (Red Jelly Beans)
- Braised Beetles (Milk Duds®)
- Candied Spider Eggs (Gum Drops)
- Cheesy Owl Eyes (Puffed Cheese Balls)
- Chocolate-Dipped Houseflies (Chocolate-Covered Raisins)
- Compressed Cobwebs (Chex® Brand or Similar Cereal)
- Crumbled Bat Wings (Blue Corn Chips)
- Deep Fried Fingernails (Bugles® Brand Snacks)
- Dehydrated Dragon's Wings (Doritos®)
- Dirty Shoelaces (Black Shoestring Licorice)
- Dried Seaweed (Chow Mein Noodles)



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Earthworm Knots (Miniature Pretzel Twists)  
 Flattened Slugs (Corn Chips)  
 Freeze Dried Drops of Blood (Red Hot Candies)  
 Ghost Guts (Mini Marshmallows)  
 Goblin's Belly Button Lint Balls (M&M's®, Any Style)  
 Plops of Pigeon Poop (Yogurt Covered Raisins)  
 Rat Claws (Shelled Sunflower Seeds)  
 Roasted Snack Eyes (Peanuts)  
 Shredded Lizard Gizzards (Coconut)  
 Splintered Turkey Bones (Shoestring Potato Chips)  
 Toasted Cat's Eyes (Blanched Almonds)  
 Vulture Toenails (Candy Corn)  
 Witches' Warts (Chocolate Chips)

### PARTY FAVORS

When the kids depart, give everyone a **Monster Hand**. Take clear plastic gloves and place a gumdrop in the tips of the fingers, and fill the rest of the glove with popcorn. Tie off with an orange and black ribbon. Creepy!

Alternatively, cut out orange and black crepe paper and wrap empty toilet paper rolls with the paper. Make sure to let the ends overlap with the paper so the ends can be tied with alternating orange and black ribbon. Fasten the crepe paper around the toilet paper roll with a small piece of tape. Fill the roll with small candies, plastic spider rings, Dracula teeth, etc. Tie the other end with an orange or black ribbon.

Make sure to send a ghoulish thank you note that includes a picture of the kids dressed up in their costumes with the birthday child.



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