



Tips for a Safe Halloween

National Irish Safety Organisation

www.niso.ie

Halloween is an enjoyable time for the younger generation and perhaps the not so young. We all want to ensure that everyone stays healthy and safe during this festive occasion. Here are some tips to help keep everyone safe so we can enjoy the next festive occasion!

Preparing for Halloween at home

Prepare for halloween and think safety before and during the festivities.

- Test make-up on a small area before applying. Remove before going to bed to prevent possible irritation to the skin or eyes.
- Costumes should be made of non flammable materials.
- Make sure that adults carve the pumpkins in a safe manner. Children should not have access to sharp knives. Instead of carving, consider the use of markers or paint on the pumpkin or purchase a 'pretend' pumpkin.
- Never leave lighted pumpkins or candles unattended. Consider pumpkins with lights or battery operated flameless candles instead.

Trick or Treat

Children love to trick or treat. To keep them safe, note the following points:

- Keep accessories to a minimum and ensure that those used are short, soft and flexible.
- Costumes should be as bright as possible or incorporate reflective bands or tapes to costumes and bags. Use a torch for maximum visibility.
- Ensure warm clothing is worn under the costume
- Never trick or treat alone. Ensure you are in groups and / or with a trusted adult.
- Parent should be aware of where their children are trick or treating.

- Only eat treats which are packaged. Avoid unwrapped treats made by strangers.
- Check all treats received for hazards such as choking, tampering or simply out of date treats.
- Always walk and never run out of houses or onto roadways.
- Walk on the pavements and only use established crossing points. If pavements do not exist, walk on the edge of the road facing traffic to stay safe [using reflective bands and torches].
- Stay close to your home. Don't allow your child to enter unfamiliar neighbourhoods.
- Masks and costumes should be well fitted to avoid trips and falls through blocked vision or trailing costumes.
- Do not enter homes unless accompanied by a trusted adult. Do not visit unlit houses and never accept lifts from strangers.
- Never walk near candles or bonfires.
- A child usually receives more treats than performing tricks so ration the load for a healthier halloween. Consider donating excess treats to a charity.

Preparing for Callers to your door / Guests

Preparations in advance of trick or treaters calling to your home should include:

- Clear Up: Ensure anything that a trick or treater could fall over is removed. Clear wet leaves or other debris from the driveway or outside your home.
- Turn on the lights: Make sure that there is good visibility for callers.
- Control Pets: Your pet might be frightened by increased activity around your house or be spooked by bonfires, fireworks or bangers.
- Consider healthy alternatives to sugar treats.

Drivers

Remind drivers to watch out for trick or treaters and to drive safely.

- Watch for children on the road or crossing the road especially between parked cars.
- If you are using your car at Halloween ensure that you have backed your car into the driveway / parking space to ensure greater visibility when leaving.
- Expect the unexpected. Always assume children are likely to cross the road at any time.

Bonfires and Fireworks

Each year, emergency departments are filled with children who receive horrific and painful injuries as a result of the misuse of fireworks and bonfires.

- Explain the dangers of fireworks and bonfires to children and teenagers.
- If you see flammable material such as tyres, pallets or old furniture being hoarded in advance of Halloween, contact your local authority or council. Keep dangerous substances such as oil, petrol and diesel away from fires or fireworks.
- Do not host or facilitate bonfires or firework displays on or near your home or property.

- Contact your local authority or council if you see a bonfire being built close to buildings, trees, overhead cables, underground services or car parking areas .
- Stay a safe distance from bonfires and fireworks – wind can carry sparks long distances and can cause permanent injuries and scars.
- Businesses, parents, and householders – Do not provide any materials for bonfires.
- Do not buy, use or supply fireworks.
- Respect the work of the Gardaí, Emergency Services, local authority / council staff.
- Keep pets indoors on Halloween night

Incorporating these safety tips will ensure a safe halloween for everyone.