

HOW TO CARVE YOUR PUMPKIN

No matter how simple or complex the design, each jack-o'-lantern starts out the same way. Follow these steps to carve a beauty.



1 CUT A HOLE

Mark a circle using a paper plate as a guide. Cut with a miniature saw or a serrated knife. Angle the edge slightly to make a ledge for the lid when the pumpkin is empty. Remove pulp from the lid bottom.

2 SCOOP OUT INSIDE

Use a big spoon or ice cream scoop to remove all seeds and stringy pulp. Save seeds for drying or roasting if you like. Use a putty knife or scraper to shave down flesh from interior walls for easier carving.

3 APPLY TEMPLATE

Position the template on the pumpkin and hold it in place with painter's tape. Use pushpins or a mini awl to transfer the outlines through the paper.

4 CARVE IT

Work slowly, following the dotted outlines of the design. Use the mini saw to maneuver around curves and into tight angles.



LIGHT 'EM UP!

Although traditional votive candles will do the trick, here are some safer, longer-lasting light sources.

GLOW STICKS They vary in size and light intensity. A few small ones give your gourd a soft blush; bigger, brighter sticks will make it shine.

BATTERY-OPERATED CANDLES look most like traditional candles, and they're not a fire hazard.

HOLIDAY LIGHTS Stuff a strand inside. Or, for a quick display, wrap an intact pumpkin with a light string.

LED LIGHT KITS specifically for Halloween. Some mimic a flickering candle or change colors for interesting effects. Push lights designed for closets and hallways work, too.