



## Halloween Safety Tips

Written On October 26, 2009 By [Bob Kraft](#)

As Halloween approaches, I'm updating my Halloween Safety Tips article. Most of this is just common sense, but at Halloween, some of us seem to lose our a bit of our common sense and we do foolish (as well as ghoulish) things.

Halloween can be a very enjoyable time for kids and adults if "trick-or-treating" is done sensibly. However, parents and children should always remember basic rules of safety and be aware that there are some people who tend to go too far with pranks and mischief. Don't let those people ruin your fun. Trick-or-treating is for kids, so keep these guidelines in mind.

- A responsible adult or teenager should be with the kids.
- Kids should go out in groups Try to limit the groups to four or five members if possible, and know who is in each group.
- If a child thinks he or she is too old to be accompanied by an adult or teenager, he or she is probably too old to be trick-or-treating.
- Organized parties are one possible alternative to trick-or-treating for older kids (younger children may enjoy this activity, also.)

## **COSTUMES**

Halloween costumes come in many shapes, sizes and styles. Discuss what type you or your child will be wearing, then whether you buy it or make it you should incorporate safety into it. Here are some aspects to think about:

- Is it too binding, or does it allow freedom of movement?
- Is the footwear too big? This could cause tripping, stumbling, ankle twisting, etc. Your regular street shoes would be best.
- Some costumes have capes, hoods, and/or attachments which could snag, trip or otherwise cause problems.
- Anything that is part of the costume, such as swords etc., should be made from flexible material and have a definite appearance of being imitations that are not capable of harm.
- Rather than using a mask that could block vision, use face paints, or makeup.
- Costumes should be made of white or light colored materials or have some type of reflective tape, patches, or strips attached. Fire resistant materials are recommended. Many sidewalks and porches will have candle-filled jack-o-lanterns, and these can be a fire hazard to a loose costume.
- Put emergency identification (name, address, phone number) within Halloween attire or on a bracelet.
- Take extra effort to eliminate tripping hazards on your porch and walkway. Check around your property for flower pots, low tree limbs, support wires, or garden hoses that may prove hazardous to young children rushing from house to house.

## TIPS FOR KIDS

- At least one person in each group should carry a flashlight, and preferably each member should carry one. If you carry a flashlight, use it.
- Never eat anything until after you are home and the treats have been examined.
- Carry trick-or-treating bags or containers that have handles. This allows free movement of arms.
- Stay in your own neighborhood and only go to houses that have porch lights turned on.
- Walk, don't run.
- Stay on sidewalks and don't cut through yards.
- Try to avoid dark areas and stay in lighted areas.
- Keep your distance from strangers.
- Don't go into a stranger's house.
- Don't cross streets except at intersections, and remember that drivers may have a hard time seeing kids in costumes. Look both ways before crossing streets.

## TIPS FOR ADULTS

- Cut and wash fruit before eating. Throw away anything unwrapped. Check wrappers of commercial treats for signs of tampering. Notify police if harmful items are found.
- Encourage your kids to eat before going trick-or-treating to help them avoid the temptation of snacking on their treats before you check them.
- Do not invite trick-or-treaters into your residence.

- Do not leave your home unattended on Halloween night.
- Do leave your porch light on as a signal to children that it is O.K. to trick-or-treat at your residence.
- Keep your pets inside on Halloween night.
- Know the route your children intend to take and impress on them the importance of following it.
- Report suspicious activities such as mischief, bullies or trouble makers to the police.
- Use only battery powered lanterns or chemical lightsticks in place of candles in your decorations and costumes.

**Have a fun and safe Halloween!**