

Carve Out Halloween Fun

Tips For Pumpkin Carving

(NAPSA)—Squishing pumpkin goop through your fingers is just one fun part of carving jack-o-lanterns. Here are tips from the experts at PC Jack-O-Lantern for creating what may be your best pumpkin ever.

- Select a ripe pumpkin with no bruises, cuts or nicks. These blemishes can reduce a pumpkin's life.

- Decide whether to cut a hole in the top or bottom of the pumpkin. Cutting the bottom makes seed removal easier and helps the pumpkin keep its shape. If removing the top, angle the lid so it has a ledge—preventing it from falling inside. Carve a notch in the lid, rather than making it a circle so it's easier to replace.

- To clean the inside of your pumpkin use an old soup ladle, ice cream scoop or a specially designed pumpkin scoop.

- Before carving, draw an outline on paper or try a pre-designed pattern, like PC Jack-O-Lantern's pumpkin carving software. PC Jack-O-Lantern is excellent for younger children with limited drawing abilities; they can select from menus of eyes, noses, and mouths to design their jack-o-lantern. The program also provides pre-designed patterns from Pumpkin Masters® for advanced carvers.

- Tape the hand-drawn or professionally-designed pattern to your pumpkin and punch the design through the paper into the pumpkin with a poker device.

- Carve by connecting the dots that you made with the poker. Use a serrated knife or a special pumpkin-carving saw like those included in the PC Jack-O-Lantern kit. A sawing motion con-



trols the direction of the tool.

- Remember safety. Adults should always supervise children using knives or carving saws. Point sharp tools away from you and keep your free hand away from the direction of the knife/saw.

- Applying petroleum jelly to the cut edges helps your pumpkin last longer by sealing in moisture and slowing dehydration. If it shrivels, submerge the pumpkin in cold water for an hour.

- Cutting a chimney avoids scorch marks from lighted candles. Let the candle burn for a few moments to find the right spot for the chimney, check for the black spot, and cut a small hole there.

- For a unique pumpkin try these fun ideas:

- Use glow-in-the-dark makeup or fake blood to accentuate your carving.

- Insert a bowl with dry ice and warm water in your pumpkin to create a smoke filled jack-o-lantern.

- Add color by using straight pins to hold colored wax paper in place over cutouts.

- Float objects in your design with toothpicks to suspend cutouts in mid-air.

Visit www.pcjackolantern.com for more pumpkin carving tips and ideas.