



BOO! 2022

How to...

WOW!

The largest pumpkin on record was grown in Italy in 2021 and weighed more than 2,700 pounds.



Decorate pumpkins

These creative jack-o'-lantern ideas don't require any carving.

Carving a pumpkin is a popular way to celebrate Halloween, but you can also enjoy decorating one without carving it. You can get even more creative with your pumpkins when you use paint, paper, markers, and natural items, said Jodi Levine, a professional crafter who creates *The Week Junior's* crafts. She shares her favorite tips here.

Choose an awesome pumpkin

Classic round pumpkins are reliably fun to decorate, but Levine also recommends considering pumpkins that have unusual shapes. If you have a tall pumpkin, you could paint it white and add a face to create a spooky ghost. If you come across a "snake squash," you could paint it to look like a snake, which could be creepy to put by your front door.

Raid your craft bin

When you go through the art supplies you have at home, you may be inspired to decorate your pumpkin a certain way. If you have leftover googly eyes from another craft, you could paste a bunch onto one pumpkin. Buttons, craft paper, pom-poms, glitter—if you mix them together you could create an imaginary creature like a fairy. Old party streamers could be used to wrap a pumpkin, creating a colorful mummy. Head outside and look

for fallen leaves, acorns, and pinecones. You could glue them to your pumpkin in a pattern. "Think of a pumpkin as a blank slate that you can decorate in any way you choose," said Levine.

Consider extra supplies

To paint a pumpkin, you'll want to use acrylic paint, which can be purchased online or at a craft store. Acrylic paint will stick to a pumpkin better than other types of craft paint and hold its color, said Levine. You could also consider covering a pumpkin in black chalkboard paint and then making chalk drawings on it. Adhesive glue dots work well for gluing items such as paper, fabric, and leaves on a pumpkin.

Create a group

If you have a few pumpkins, you can paint them each a solid color. Then draw Halloween shapes, such as a moon, a witch's hat, and a cat, on construction paper. Cut them out and glue them onto each pumpkin. If you have a leftover spider web covering that you used outdoors on bushes or trees, you could wrap pumpkins in the covering and then add plastic spiders on top of each one. Or stack two or three pumpkins on top of one another to create a person, then decorate it as a goblin or witch. Glue on fake eyeballs or plastic teeth to make a spooky face.



Glue on some glitter.

4 tips for picking a perfect pumpkin

These expert ideas will help you choose and keep a pumpkin that stays fresh until Halloween.

Inspect the outside.

A fresh pumpkin should feel solid to the touch. Pumpkins that have soft or sunken spots may already be starting to decay. Try to avoid pumpkins that have cracks on the skin, too.



Assess the stem.

The pumpkin's stem is a good indicator of freshness. Look for a pumpkin that has a firm and bright green stem. A dry, shriveled stem could mean the pumpkin was picked a while ago.



Check for color.

If you choose a traditional orange pumpkin, look for one that's a deep shade of orange. The color should be mostly the same all over the vegetable, which shows it was picked at peak ripeness.



Carry it with care.

After selecting your pumpkin, hold your pumpkin at its base with your arms. Avoid carrying your pumpkin by its stem. If the stem breaks off, the pumpkin will soon start to decay.

