

Put A New Twist on Halloween: A Guide for Planning a Trunk or Treat Event

“TRUNK OR TREAT” EVENTS ARE FUN WAYS TO BRING FAMILIES IN THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER TO CELEBRATE HALLOWEEN.

In these events, people park their cars in parking lots and decorate the trunks. Children “trick or treat” by going from car trunk to car trunk rather than going door to door at houses. Use this guide to help you plan a Trunk or Treat event in your area.



What are the benefits of Trunk or Treating?

- It's safer than traditional trick or treating.
- Children are less likely to receive candy from strangers.
- For those who don't live in a neighborhood, it provides an easy, quick place to enjoy Halloween.
- It's an opportunity for families to spend quality time together.
- It's a chance to educate people about your organization or distribute educational information.

Step One: Start Planning

Ironing out the details in advance will help ensure the success of your event. Follow these suggestions.

- Gather the support of volunteers to help out. They can help prepare for the event, facilitate activities, ensure everything runs smoothly at the event, and assist with clean-up.
- Pick a location, most likely the parking lot at your facility. If there is not adequate space available, consider another location, such as the parking lot of the local library or a neighborhood center. Be sure the location will cause minimal disruption to others.
- See if you need permits. Are there regulations regarding the number of people who can attend?
- Decide on a date if you don't plan to hold it on Halloween.
- Set a specific time. Be sure to allow time for trunks to be decorated prior to Trunk or Treating.
- Arrange for floodlights if lighting is not already available, as well as a sufficient amount of trash and recycle bins.
- Choose Halloween-themed music to add to the festivities.
- Purchase items to be handed out to Trunk or Treatingers in addition to treats, such as [Pencils](#), [Halloween Bags](#), [Bracelets](#), [Stickers](#), and [Balloons](#). Set up a trunk or booth to distribute these items.
- Consider having a competition for “Best Trunk” and determine what the prize will be.

- Plan for extra activities to take place. They could include:

- Bobbing for apples
- Halloween Bingo
- Bean bag toss
- Costume contest
- Ring Toss (participants could throw rings around stems of pumpkins)
- Duck, Duck, Ghost



Step Two: Establish Guidelines

Ensure a safe environment for everyone. Keep the following in mind and make sure all participants are aware of the rules.

- Make it clear that the event is for families and that children must be accompanied by an adult. Do not allow alcohol, and make sure that all music and activities are kid friendly. Consider those who may have peanut or other allergies, and ask participants to not bring foods or candy containing nuts.
- Encourage adults to decorate the trunks of their vehicles and to dress up in costume as well. Suggest that they choose a specific theme, such as a storybook title, storybook characters, a TV show or movie, or board game. Remind them to avoid scary themes in their decorations.
- Require each vehicle owner to bring at least one bag of candy to distribute.

Step Three: Get the Word Out

Start advertising for the event at the beginning of October.

- Determine ways to notify those in your community. (Be sure to include a contact phone number in case of questions.) Try advertising:

- In local newspapers
- Through social media
- On the radio
- Through local organizations and schools
- By posting fliers in the area or passing them out in school or church
- On a marquee in front of your organization



Step Four: Have Fun!

