

Halloween is in a couple of days and most everybody has youngsters around.

Let's work together to make it a safe Halloween. Did you grow pumpkins in your garden or haul them home from your local farmers market or grocery? Pumpkins will fool you on how much they weigh. Gardening Tip #1 Remember, always lift with your legs.

Make sure your children use a safety pumpkin knife to begin carving or watch you carve from a safe distance.

Gardening Tip #2 Never allow your young child to run with a sharp object.

To begin carving, cut a 4 to 5 inch diameter circle around the stem. Make sure to angle the knife handle away from the stem, so when you replace the cap it won't fall inside. Remove the cap and scoop out all of the pumpkin guts. Draw a face on your pumpkin with a pencil or washable marker. Carefully cut out sections to make your own special Jack O Lantern.

After you finish carving your pumpkin, clean and dry the seeds. Toast the pumpkin seeds for an interesting snack.

Roasted Pumpkin Seeds

1 cup pumpkin seeds, cleaned

1 tablespoon butter or margarine, melted

1/4 teaspoon salt

1. Heat oven to 350°F.
2. Combine pumpkin seeds, butter and salt in medium bowl.
3. Place mixture onto ungreased 15 x 10 x 1-inch pan.
4. Bake for 30 minutes, stir every 10 minutes, until seeds are dry and begin to brown.

Makes 4 (1/4-cup) servings.

Alternate Flavor: Garlic Roasted Pumpkin Seeds; Omit salt. Prepare as directed above except use 1/4 teaspoon garlic salt. Bake as directed above.

Gardening Tip #3 You can place a light source in your Jack O Lantern on Halloween. It's best to use a tea light candle in a protective cup. Use a battery powered light. If you use an electric light, make sure the cord is located so that it won't trip anyone when they are walking up to the door. The new light source on the block is using a glow stick.

Make sure the pathway to your front door is well lit. If you have outdoor lighting, make sure all of the lights are working properly.

Gardening Tip # 4 Make sure your child has good visibility when wearing a mask. Painting their faces is fun and just as effective. Use the mask when they are in the safety of your home.

Have a safe and Happy Halloween.

Don't forget to save some pumpkin seeds to plant next year!

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