

Halloween sweet ideas

From the sweeties.net wiki

Halloween, on 31 October, is the eve of All Hallows' Day. Its customs are often linked to the Gaelic festival of Samhain, which marked the end of the harvest, and Irish and Scottish emigrants carried many of them to North America in the 19th century.

Soul cakes and guising

Going door to door for treats has old roots in Britain and Ireland. At Allhallowtide, groups of poor people, often children, went souling: collecting soul cakes in return for praying for the dead. Shakespeare mentions souling in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, in 1593, and souling has been suggested as the origin of trick or treating.

In Scotland and Ireland, children went guising, disguised in costume, from door to door for food or coins. It was recorded in Scotland at Halloween in 1895, when masked visitors carrying lanterns made from hollowed out turnips were rewarded with cakes, fruit and money.

The sweets of the night

- **Toffee apples.** In the UK they are eaten at Halloween in Scotland and Northern Ireland, and on Bonfire Night in England, Scotland and Wales: see [toffee apples](#)
- **Bonfire toffee.** Treacle toffee is linked with both Halloween and Bonfire Night: see [Bonfire Night sweets](#)
- **Candy corn.** In America, candy corn became a Halloween staple around the 1950s, when people began handing out individually wrapped sweets to trick or treaters: see [candy corn](#)
- **Apples and nuts.** Old Halloween games in Britain and Ireland used them, from apple bobbing to nut roasting.

A spooky pick and mix

For a Halloween bowl, shapes do the work: teeth, snakes and worms. We sell [SW010](#), [SW005](#) and [SW016](#) by the 100 g, and each card opens up to show the full ingredients and allergens for the sweets we actually stock.

The poisoned sweets myth

Warnings still circulate about strangers hiding poison or razor blades in sweets. The stories are urban legends that began in the United States, and no case of a stranger killing a child this way has ever been

proven. The sociologist Joel Best studied newspaper reports from 1958 to 1983: he found fewer than 90 possible cases of tampering, none of them random attempts to harm children, and five child deaths first blamed on strangers all proved to have other causes. Far more common on Halloween, he found, were children hurt in road accidents.

Real safety points

- **Allergens.** Loose and home made treats may not come with allergen information, so check before a child with an allergy eats them: see [pick and mix and allergies](#)
- **Small children.** Hard sweets can be a choking risk for young children: see [hard sweets and young children](#)
- **The roads.** In Joel Best's study, children hurt in road accidents on Halloween far outnumbered any real tampering, so take care crossing roads.

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