**Halloween**

**Americans are expected to spend $6.9 billion on Halloween costumes, candy, and decorations this year, an average of $74.34 per person, according to the National Retail Federation. That's down from a peak of $8 billion in 2012, but more than double what consumers spent on Halloween a decade ago*. (Los Angeles Times, as it appeared in The Week magazine, October 23, 2015)***

**Americans spend some $5 billion to $7 billion a year on Halloween. *(American Profile magazine, October 10, 2010)***

**The National Retail Federation says Americans will spend $310 million on pet costumes this year. While that’s only a small part of the total $6.9 billion consumers will shell out for candy, costumes and décor, the category is popular and growing, say retailers and pet owners. *(Suzanne S. Brown, in The Denver Post, October 24, 2013)***

**Americans will spend $2.6 billion on Halloween costumes this year. The most popular outfits evoke Miley Cyrus during her notorious VMA performance, the characters of reality show hit Duck Dynasty, and Breaking Bad’s Walter White. *(The Wall Street Journal, as it appeared in The Week magazine, November 1, 2013)***

**Ancient Celtic people hid themselves in ghoulish disguises on October 31, so that any malicious spirits they encountered wouldn’t recognize them as human. *(American Profile magazine)***

**6.4 billion kernels of candy corn will be produced by Brach’s for this Halloween. Sunday is National Candy Corn Day. *(Brach’s confections, as it appeared in the Rocky Mountain News, October 26, 2005)***

**From a Celtic festival celebrated 2,000 years ago, Halloween has evolved into a fixture of American culture that encompasses spooky folk traditions – from early Scottish and Irish immigrants to German, African, Haitian, English and Dutch beliefs and customs. *(American Profile magazine)***

**$48.48: the amount, per person, Americans will spend on Halloween costumes this year, according to a survey by The National Retail Federation. That would be $3.29 billion in all, up from $43.57 billion and $3.12 billion in 2004. *(Rocky Mountain News, October 27, 2005)***

**What will the hip kids be wearing this Halloween? According to a National Retail Federation poll of children and parents, here are 2005's top costumes:  
\* Princess - 11.8%  
\* Witch - 5.2%  
\* Spiderman - 4.5%  
\* Monster - 4.1%  
\* Darth Vader - 3.9%  
\* Superhero - 3.9%  
\* Star Wars Character - 2.5%  
\* Batman - 2.4%  
\* Ninja - 2.3%  
\* Clown - 2.3% *(Rocky Mountain News, October 18, 2005)***

**The top Halloween costumes last year were witches and vampires for adults, and princesses and Spider-Man for kids. *(American Profile magazine, October 10, 2010)***

**It may be only the beginning of October, but Halloween decorations have been in stores for weeks already. Last year, Americans spent nearly $6 billion on the holiday, including an average of $23 each on costumes and $20 on candy. *(Kiplinger’s Personal Finance, as it appeared in The Week magazine, October 7, 2011)***

**Bela Lugosi only made $3,500 from the movie Dracula, but acquired a role for life. He was buried in his vampire costume. *(Ripley’s Believe It or Not!: Book of Chance, p. 18)***

**It’s the eve of All Saints, when we carve pumpkins, dress up in costumes and go door-to-door in search of treats. The holiday has certainly evolved from its Celtic origins of about 2,000 years ago, when it indicated the end of the summer harvest and the onset of a long, cold winter. Today’s celebration is less about weather than about crazy parties, scary costumes and lots of candy. *(Maria Cote, in Rocky Mountain News)***

**Fun holiday facts: 80 percent of Americans decorate their homes for Halloween. Magician Harry Houdini died in Detroit of gangrene and peritonitis resulting from a ruptured appendix on Halloween in 1926. The original Halloween film directed by John Carpenter in 1978 cost just $320,000 to make. It ended up making over $50 million worldwide. People have believed for centuries that light keeps away ghosts and ghouls. Making a pumpkin lantern with a candle inside may keep you safe from all the spooky spirits flying around on Halloween. *(***[***www.bbc.co.uk***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)***, as it appeared in the Rocky Mountain News, October 31, 2005)***

**Why Halloween has failed to catch on: The French flirtation with Halloween is over, said Claire Gatinois in Paris' Le Monde. For a while, back in the late 1990s, it looked as if the Anglo-Saxon holiday would become a Gallic tradition. French parents not only dressed their children in little ghoul outfits and took them trick-or-treating, but many even donned costumes themselves and wore them in bars, just like in New York or London. This year, though, while some kids were still soliciting on the streets, there was nary a grown-up spook to be seen. Are we seeing a backlash against the Americanization of our culture? Not really. Instead, analysts point to the influence of the Catholic Church. Beginning in 1999, French priests became vocal in their criticism of the "devaluation of All-Saints Day," a holy day just after Halloween. Catholics instead turned back to their own religiously sanctioned dress-up day: Mardi Gras, the carnival day of excess that comes before the self-denial of Lent. Costume retailers say February business has been increasing steadily in the past few years, as French adults go all out to celebrate the carnival. "French consumers have made their choice." Halloween is just for the kids. (*The Week magazine, November 16, 2007)***

**It is a holiday of magic and mystery, and one, through a peculiar blending of culture and custom, that is uniquely American. *(Lesley Bannatyne, in Halloween: An American Holiday, an American History)***

**Gabby: “I’m ruined. We’re in the supermarket with a cart full of cheap Halloween candy and there’s the most popular girl in school! This humiliation will be permanently seared into my memory. Psychologically, you can’t escape such trauma!” Grandma: “Come on, Gabby, it’s time to check out and leave.” Gabby: “You can check out anytime you like but you can never leave!” *(Steve Breen, in Grand Avenue comic strip)***

**The jack-o’-lantern evolved from a medieval Irish tradition of using carved-out, candlelit turnips as lanterns. The turnips were placed on gateposts to ward off evil spirits. Irish immigrants in America began using the more easily carved native pumpkin for their jack-o’-lanterns. *(American Profile magazine)***

**We continue to adjust to each other, an adjustment that started 19 years ago and will never stop because we each continue to grow and change. We will always be different. I think of anniversaries as a time for roses and dinner; she prefers Mexican food and a movie. For Halloween she thinks apples are a good treat; I say, since when did Halloween have anything to do with nutrition? Don't mistake it for a solid marriage. There is no such thing. Marriage is more like an airplane than a rock. You have to commit the thing to flight, and then it creaks and groans, and keeping it airborne depends entirely on attitude. Working at it, though, I know how hard it has been, or how worthwhile. *(Michael Grant, in San Diego Union)***

**Although Halloween always has had spooky, otherworldly connections, Bannatyne *(Lesley Bannatyne, in Halloween: An American Holiday, an American History)* says it wasn’t until the 1978 movie Halloween that the holiday became associated with violence and horror. Considered a horror film classic, Halloween was filmed in 21 days on a budget of $320,000 and became the highest-grossing independent movie of its time. *(American Profile magazine)***

**Patient: “Can you give me something for my abdominal pain?” Doctor: “Well, we don't know what's causing the pain -- and we don't want to mask the symptoms.” Patient: “Couldn't we just mask them until Halloween?” *(Chris Browne, in Raising Duncan comic strip)***

**Trick or Treat**

**59% of Americans plan to participate in some type of Halloween activity this year, according to the national Macerich Shopping in America poll.**

**56% of them plan to wear costumes.**

**49% of those planning to wear character costumes chose Spider-Man, making Spidey the most popular choice.**

**10% chose Shrek, who came in second. (*Rocky Mountain News, October 11, 2004)***

**More than 93 percent of children go trick-or-treating every year. Eighty-four percent of kids ranked candy and gum as the top items they hope to receive when they go trick-or-treating. Ninety percent of parents admit to sneaking goodies from their kids’ Halloween trick-or-treat bags. Bite-size chocolate candies are the most popular type of candy (76 percent). Eighty percent of adults plan to hand out candy to trick-or-treaters. Plastic pumpkins with handles remain the trick-or-treating container of choice, followed by plastic bags and pillowcases. *(National Confectioners Association, as it appeared in the Rocky Mountain News, October 31, 2005)***

**Top pet costumes for 2013: 1. Pumpkin. 2. Devil. 3. Hot dog. 4. Bee. 5 Cat. 6. Witch. 7. Bow tie. 8. Pirate. 9. Dog. 10. Ghost. *(National Retail Federation, as it appeared in The Denver Post, October 24, 2013)***

Americans are expected to spend $370 million on Halloween costumes for their pets this year -- $70 million more than last year. An estimated 15 percent of the population will buy outfits for their pets. *(Time.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, October 19, 2012)*

**The name for the Halloween pumpkin comes from an old story that the Irish brought with them to America. The story is about a stingy old man named Jack. He was so stingy that when he died, he could not get into heaven. He was left in darkness. So Jack put a glowing piece of coal in a hollowed-out turnip. And he traveled with his “jack-o-lantern” as he looked for a resting place. *(Betty Debnam, in Rocky Mountain News)***

**It’s the great pumpkin shortage, Charlie Brown. A cool, damp summer in the Midwest and New England has decimated the U.S. pumpkin crop, leading to higher prices and shortages across the U.S. as Halloween approaches. *(USA Today, as it appeared in The Week magazine, October 2, 2009)***

**$51: The average amount shoppers plan to spend on Halloween activities this year, up 3.6 percent from 2004. *(Macerich Co., as it appeared in the Rocky Mountain News, December 26, 2005)***

**Americans spend, on average, about $65 per person to celebrate Halloween, with $23 going toward costumes, $20 for candy, $18 for decorations, and $4 for greeting cards. *(USA Today, as it appeared in The Week magazine, November 9, 2007)***

**Americans spend twice as much on what as they do on cookies? According to the Nielsen Marketing Group, Americans spent an estimated $3.4 billion last year buying cookies. So to answer the question, we have to find something on which we spent $6.8 billion last year. And that would be . . . Halloween. That’s how much we shelled out last year for costumes, pumpkin-carving kits, spooky decorations and all that candy. FYI, our cookie and Halloween outlay put together don’t match the $13 billion we spent renting videotapes last year. *(Rocky Mountain News)***

**The story of Halloween goes back over 2000 years to the ancient Celts. Druidic priests regarded the day as the end of the year. Not only was it their day for celebrating the year's harvest, but October 31 itself was also the day of Samhain, a festival for honoring the dead. In order to appease the wandering spirits they believed roamed at night, the Celtic priests made fires in which they burned sacrifices, made charms, and cast spells. Portions of the Celtic holiday of the dead eventually passed into Christian culture after the Romans conquered the Celts and tried to bring the Celts into the “Christian fold.” It eventually became apparent to the church leaders that the Celts, in spite of their conformation to some aspects of Christian culture, were stubbornly sticking with elements of their old religion. So, in the 7th century A.D., the church moved its All Saints' Day, a holiday for honoring early Christian martyrs, from a day in May to November 1, thus associating it with the old Druid death rituals of October 31. By the 10th century A.D., the Catholic Church had added a new holiday, All Souls’ Day. This day was set aside to honor all of the dead, not just the early Christian Saints. Celebration of Halloween came to America with early Irish and Scottish immigrants. By then, though, it had already started to lose its mysterious overtones and was becoming merely a harvest celebration: a night of bobbing for apples, eating popcorn, and telling ghost stories around a bonfire. It was already changing into the holiday for children with which we in the 20th century are so familiar. *(Judy Mackenzie & David Milster, in LakeCrestPark Messenger)***

**Trick-or-treating as we know it today became popular between 1920 and 1950. *(American Profile magazine)***

**Trick-or-treating for UNICEP began in 1950 in one Pennsylvania school and now is a national campaign that has raised nearly $160 million to provide clean water, food, medicine and other assistance for children worldwide. *(American Profile magazine, October 10, 2010)***

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