



Johnson's Pumpkin Carving Tips



- When choosing a pumpkin, avoid ones with soft spots and ones with green speckles ... look for a smooth, light-colored pumpkin
- Pumpkins with a dark orange color are usually tougher to cut but usually last longer
- A pumpkin that is 'heavy' for its size is good ... that means it is fresh
- Taller pumpkins are good because you don't want the design too close to the top or bottom
- If your pumpkin is very dirty, it is best to wash it off before starting
- Cut edges off the pattern then use masking tape to secure it onto the pumpkin
- It's best to tape the top and bottom first, then the sides, then work your way around the pattern
- Feel free to make slits or folds in the pattern so it will lie flat on the pumpkin's surface
- CHILDREN—use poker from kit to transfer the pattern onto the pumpkin ... push in very lightly ... just enough to break the pumpkin's skin
- ADULTS—may transfer the pattern onto the pumpkin with an X-ACTO knife
- Use a water base marker to highlight the pattern cuts then wipe off with a paper towel or sponge
- Also use water base markers to make your own design
- If trying your own pattern, when satisfied with the design, use an X-ACTO knife to trace and wipe off marker with a paper towel or sponge
- If you have a lot of pumpkins to do ... trace all the patterns a few days ahead and then carve the pumpkins all at one time
- Use a water base marker to mark the cut for the lid ... being careful to not make the lid too big
- Use a serrated letter opener to take off the pumpkin top ... works well for large straight areas on the design, too
- Cut lid at an angle so it won't fall through the pumpkin

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- Put a 'tooth' on the lid for easy repositioning
- To use a low watt bulb instead of a candle ... cut out the bottom of the pumpkin instead
- Use rubber (or food handlers) gloves to protect your hands
- Wear short sleeves ... apron is optional
- Serrated letter opener works well to get seeds out
- Use a paper towel to help remove the last of the seeds and strings
- Finish cleaning out your pumpkin with a scoop
- Use base of the saw, not the tip ... hold it like a pencil and use it like a sewing machine
- Don't turn corners with the saws ... take blade out and reinsert to continue cutting
- Don't bend the saw blade
- Always start by cutting out small areas of the pattern first ... then work from the bottom up
- Use a nut picker to push small cut outs through to center of pumpkin
- Use toothpicks to reattach pieces broken off of the pumpkin
- Large areas to be removed can be removed in sections
- To make a small hole ... use the kit tool
- To make a medium hole ... use a screwdriver
- To make a large hole ... use an apple corer
- For eyelashes, just scrape the skin of the pumpkin ... light will shine through
- Put a chimney in the lid to let the heat out ... locate the chimney wherever the soot collects at the inside of the lid ... an apple corer is perfect for this
- Sprinkle cinnamon on the underside of your lid for a special fragrance when your pumpkin is lit
- To get more light through the design, use the letter opener to cut away ... at an angle ...some of the pulp from inside the pumpkin
- For a party, carve a simple pattern design in small pumpkins (like triangles) ... cut the bottoms out and then place on top of Christmas lights that have been strung along the driveway
- Save pumpkin seeds for roasting (recipe in pattern book)
- Transport pumpkin in a cardboard box to prevent it from rolling around in the car
- To keep your pumpkin fresh longer, apply Vaseline to the cut areas
- Don't let your pumpkin freeze ... it will turn to mush
- Keep pumpkin out of the sun ... store by day in the refrigerator if possible