

Super trick-or-treat send-off

Go kooky, not spooky,
and healthy, not
harried, with these
fun-in-a-flash tips

Good-for-them goodies

Before the kids make a beeline for the sugary loot, fill their tummies with healthy food they'll actually eat. Try tot-size treats, like PB&J sandwiches, on a cake plate or pumpkin-orange foods, like carrots and cheese dip.

To do: For fun Halloween containers, use pinking shears to trim paper cups to about two inches tall. Cut polka dots from craft foam and affix to cups with glue stick. Bend pipe cleaners into wacky shapes and staple ends to cup. Fill with their favorite veggies.

Cheese Dip
1 box (8 oz.) Velveeta
cheese, cubed
½ cup mild salsa
1 Tbs. bacon bits
Place ingredients in
microwave-safe bowl.
Cook in microwave on
high power 2 min.,
stirring after 1 min.

Batty bracelets

Choose style over sugar for take-home treats when you pick out these sporty bat cuffs (\$4.95 a dozen from Oriental Trading Company; go to oriental.com).

Tabletop trick: Use the cuffs as napkin holders to get more boo for your buck.

Connect with dots

Indulge your child's wild side with creepy-crawly critters—at the dinner table! Prop the spiders, made from soft, fuzzy pipe cleaners, on plates, and scatter the table with a web of construction paper confetti (trace any round object). For great gifts that keep growing, give mini mum plants (usually three for \$10) in terra-cotta pots (found in garden stores) hand-painted by the kids.

Style tip: Go ahead and give your kids black permanent markers (we like Sharpies) and an invitation to go wild while decorating the rims of white plates. Don't worry—their artwork will scrub off with a nylon sponge.

Super simple spider how-to

Coil one pipe cleaner around your finger to make the spider's body. Bend the pipe cleaners into M shapes to form the legs. Hold the legs together at the center, and twist a pipe cleaner around the group to secure. Slip on the coiled body and twist again to fasten.

Grab-'n'-go dogs

This window box turned party platter (look for simple unfinished wood window boxes at your local craft store) makes grab-and-go dogs into a movable feast. Simply pop hot dogs on buns, and then tuck them snugly into these Halloween-inspired goody bags (available at your local party store). Garnish the window box with black tulle for a finished look.

Simply gourdeous

Bring another face to the table with a happy-go-lucky gourd on an egg cup. All you need to make this charmer is a permanent marker. We like toothy jack-o'-lanterns with triangle noses and half-moon eyes, but any motif will do.

Photos: HBB. Glasses: Lenox; call 800-635-3669.
Chair: Home Decorator's Collection; call 800-240-6047.