

# Add a modern twist to a fun Halloween tradition

Apples are synonymous with autumn. Apples ripen as the cool days of fall begin to arrive, and come Halloween, apples are a part of spooky celebrations that can be used for treats and games and as part of seasonal decorating.

Apple bobbing is one autumn tradition that involves the use of apples. Despite the popularity of apple bobbing around Halloween, some historians believe the tradition of bobbing for apples is rooted in love and romance and has little to do with trick-or-treating. According to History.com, apple bobbing began as a courting ritual. While the rules of the game varied, the idea was to attempt to bite into the apple named for the young man the woman desired. This method of courting eventually became less popular, but bobbing for apples was resurrected in the early 20th century when Americans who traced their roots to Ireland and England began playing the game at Halloween parties.

Apple bobbing has also been linked to Samhain, the precursor to modern day

Halloween. Celts believed apples could be used to determine if marriages would occur during a certain time of year. Young, unmarried people would attempt to bite into an apple floating in water or hanging from a string. The first to bite the apple would be the next to marry.

Although apple bobbing still occurs today, many eschew the tradition because of germs. The concept of sticking one's face into a communal bucket of water isn't appealing in a society that prioritizes sanitary behavior. Those who grew up bobbing for apples and want to continue the tradition in a more sanitary way can create individualized games. Instead of one large bucket, purchase smaller buckets and fill them with water. Place a couple of apples in each bucket and let participants race to see who can grab an apple first.

Another variation is to tie apples from strings and suspend them from a clothesline or a horizontal beam, as the ancient Celts

once did. Participants try to grab the apples using only their mouths.

Some might be surprised to learn that bobbing for apples is rooted in ancient customs that may have had something to do with marriage. While few would pair matrimony with bobbing for apples today, this fun tradition can still be enjoyed by Halloween revelers.



Apple bobbing once was used as a way to weed out potential marriage suitors. Since then, it has become a fun Halloween party game primarily for children.

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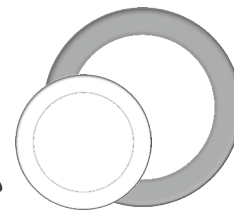
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## HALLOWEEN HISTORY

Halloween may seem like a relatively modern holiday, and while it may have become modernized, Halloween traditions actually can be traced back to ancient Celtic rituals. It's believed Halloween traces its origins to a Celtic festival for the dead known as Samhain. During the festival, people would dress up in costumes and leave treats on their front doorsteps to appease spirits that were believed to be roaming the Earth on this holiday. Many historians also feel that trick-or-treating can be linked to the European practice of "mumming" or "guysing," in which costume-wearing individuals would go door-to-door, performing dances and plays in exchange for treats.