

# Making Ripples

## Ideas for Pumpkin Season

by Amanda Bancroft

The crisp air combines with warm sunshine, the crunchy colorful leaves are partnered well with deep green moss on the rocks, and the days are filled with the delights of all things pumpkin (pumpkin lattes and deserts, pumpkin-colored sweaters, pumpkin-costumed children, pumpkins cozying up to buildings all around town, and so on). Here are some ideas for incorporating pumpkins into your life this season.

Uses for the pumpkin are varied and creative, and it helps that squash come in all sizes. People have used pumpkins for an anti-aging facial mask or body scrub, pumpkin floating candles, pumpkin fries, piñatas for a smashing fall birthday party, and many kinds of fall table decorations – especially as attractive serving bowls. How about a candy dish filled with candy corn or your favorite Halloween treat? Apparently a person has even discovered a way to charge their iPod with a pumpkin and a coat hanger! (Just kidding – that online tutorial ended with a revelation that it was satire. But how cool would that be?)

This year it seems that painting pumpkins is becoming just as popular as carving them, and it's far easier. Cartoon characters from recent movies are a popular choice for what to paint. Some people use masking tape to create patterns and designs left once they paint the whole pumpkin and peel off the tape. By melting old bits of crayons and even colorful candle wax from the bottoms of used candles, you can recycle them into a new fall decoration. Just use a blow dryer or small flame to let the bits of crayon or wax drip over the sides of the pumpkin. Mix and match colors for a rainbow effect! Autumn-scented candle wax, such as cinnamon, will make the pumpkin smell delicious, too. Candles are also secured in the top of the pumpkin after cutting off its stem, to allow the wax to drip down the sides and have a natural candle holder.

Kids can cover their big or small pumpkins with stickers. Transparent backgrounds on some stickers make it look like the image is directly on the surface of the squash. Use glitter pens to make spider webs, or apply glitter in a thin layer over large areas of the pumpkin to give it a “candied” effect.

After your pumpkin has served its purpose, recycle it into a wildlife feeder by filling the pumpkin with a seed mixture. Set it in your yard or deck, or hang it from a tree by poking sticks into holes in the side of the pumpkin and attaching rope. Be creative with the shape and style of your feeder – it can be anything you want it to be! Placement within view of a window allows the whole family to keep an eye on your pumpkin-feeder visitors.

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