

Short Assignment 2: Column

Hosting a fabulously spooky Halloween party is a lot of fun, but it can take *a lot of work*. It's best to plan ahead and keep things organized

1. Place the Food where You Want People to Be.
It seems obvious, but people *will* gravitate to all the delicious snacks you set out. It's important to keep food in an open area where people won't feel crowded or intimidated by a lack of space.
2. Take Notice in the Little Things.
Guests appreciate hosts that go the extra mile. Take care in your choice and placement of decorations. I like to stretch faux spider webs over all my paintings to get an old-timey haunted mansion look. Add your own details by placing a mini pumpkin on top of your paper towel holder or adding a rubber eyeball in your soap containers.
3. Don't be Afraid to Move Things Around.
If your couch is taking up all the empty space in your living room – move it to the wall. It probably needs to be vacuumed anyway! Having open space for your guests to mingle should be one of your top priorities. Remember, you want guests to feel comfortable sitting or moving around, so don't throw that leather futon out quite yet.
4. Invest in Your Aroma.
Start lighting those pumpkin candles a day or two before your party – and let them burn all day long. Place them in spots you know your guests will notice their scent too, like entrances, bathrooms, and kitchen areas. Some of my favorite fall candles are Albisa's [Cuban Bread](#) and Threshold's [Macintosh and Pumpkin](#).
5. Incorporate Halloween Humor.
I love adding bits of humor into my parties. Whether it's a [themed toilet paper roll](#) or a "find the toenail" sign by the chip bowl, make sure you have a little something to keep your guests on their toes.
6. Create a signature drink.
Having something that is *unique to your party* will leave guests talking about the event all year long. I've had friends say they come to my soiree for my twisted cider alone. If your drink is boo-zy, I suggest making a non-alcoholic version to go alongside it!
7. Don't Do all the Entertaining Yourself.
If you feel pressured at all times to keep your guests happy, you'll never get to enjoy all your hard work. Set out a couple of games. If you're indoors, [trivia posters](#) and a deck of cards works better than you think. If you have outdoor space, cornhole, bobbing for apples, and [pumpkin painting](#) are sure to please any crowd.

8. Keep Guests in the Know

No one wants to show up to a party in Hollywood-ready costume and makeup just to find out that the theme is “1920’s Murder Mystery”. Let guests know important information *ahead* of time, so that they can adequately plan. If guests are welcomed to bring their children, let them know. If it’s a night for a babysitter, make that clear.

9. Curate a Spooky Playlist.

Every good party needs music, so start creating a playlist ahead of time. Don’t forget classics like Michael Jackson’s *Thriller* and Bobby Pickett’s *Monster Mash*.

10. Create Lasting Memories.

I love to leave a disposable camera or two around so my guests can take pictures on. Sure, everyone has smartphones nowadays, but there’s something special about taking a picture and waiting a week or two to see it. You might be surprised by what you see! Upload the pictures and share with your friends or simply hand out the physical copies. Either way, your guests will be glad to have a token of the night.

11. Host a Costume Contest

Let everyone release their competitive spirit and show off their creativity with a costume contest! Laying out a red carpet is always a fun way to make your guests feel special – and of course include a special prize.

12. Enjoy Your Party

Don’t forget to slow down, relax, and appreciate the fruits of your labor. Sure, you want your guests to talk about your party all year long, but it’s important that you enjoy it too, because when your friends leave, they’ll be asking you about hosting “Friendsgiving”.