



# 2008 MEDIA KIT

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**GET READY FOR SPINE-CHILLING FUN  
WITH NEW KITS FROM PUMPKIN MASTERS**

**OCALA, FL (July 2008)** – With fall around the corner, Pumpkin Masters® - creator of the world's first pumpkin carving kit - presents their new offerings for 2008 that are sure to make fright night a howling good time!

- **Halloween Hardware** (SRP \$3.99): Featuring carving tools with screwdriver-inspired, heavy-duty handles, Pumpkin Masters Halloween Hardware is the perfect addition to a carver's toolbox.
- **Deluxe Kids Fright Lights** (SRP \$4.99): This kit includes 30 colored pegs with six interchangeable shapes that will give jack-o'-lanterns a festive glow.
- **Dig Those Decades** (SRP \$2.99): Take a step back in time with eight new retro designs of Pumpkin Masters' Dig Those Decades pattern carving book! The collection features a disco dancer, peace sign, and bewitching lava lamps.
- **Trick-or-Greet Pumpkin Light** (SRP \$4.99): Keep trick-or-treaters on their toes this Halloween with Pumpkin Masters Trick-or-Greet Pumpkin Light! This battery-powered light activates spooky sound effects when it senses trick-or-treaters nearby.
- **Pumpkin Tealight** (SRP \$1.99): Looking for a mess-free and safe way to illuminate a pumpkin creation? Pumpkin Masters offers a convenient, battery-operated light that is safer than the traditional candle and flickers like the real thing. Set the light inside the bottom of a carved pumpkin to create a "boo-tiful" ambience for all to enjoy!
- **Family Carving Kit** (SRP \$7.99): With updated tools and patterns for every experience level, the Family Carving Kit allows the whole family to participate in the fun.

"Whether it's carving pumpkins to welcome treat-seeking visitors on Halloween night, or holding a pumpkin-carving party with family and friends, children and adults look forward to this tradition every fall," says Gene Granata, pumpkin carving expert and founder of Masterpiecepumpkins.com. "Pumpkin Masters makes carving easier and safer, with its collection of carving patterns and handy tools."

The new kits will hit store shelves this September at major retailer and grocery stores nationwide. A staple in everyone's carving toolbox, the Pumpkin Masters Original Pumpkin Carving Kit continues to be the best-selling carving kit in America. For more information and helpful carving tips, visit [www.pumpkinmasters.com](http://www.pumpkinmasters.com).

Pumpkin Masters is owned, created and distributed by Signature Brands, America's leading innovator of specialty and holiday food decorating tools and accessories.

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## **The American Pumpkin Carving Tradition**

Halloween is synonymous with costumes, trick-or-treating and pumpkins. While modern day jack-o'-lanterns originate from various religious beliefs and traditions, today they are most commonly used by Americans to decorate their homes for Halloween. Since its introduction in 1986, Pumpkin Masters® has changed the way America decorates for this popular holiday. Pumpkin Masters carving kits make it easy for anyone to create decorative pumpkin designs.

The tradition of carving imaginative pumpkins started over 50 years ago in Racine, Wisconsin, when Paul Bardeen developed a safer, easier method of carving artistic pumpkins for his children. Using small saws and drill bits, the family began creating intricate and exotic jack-o'-lanterns unlike any others. These masterfully-carved pumpkins delighted friends and neighbors.

Eventually, local media coverage started to generate widespread interest and Paul Bardeen held demonstrations at schools and community centers. After Paul Bardeen passed away in 1983, the Bardeen family wanted to share his carving techniques with families nationwide. Fulfilling this dream, the family introduced the nation's first pumpkin carving kit complete with specially-designed carving tools and patterns.

To generate awareness for the new pumpkin carving kits, the Bardeen family began carving celebrity portraits and logos for television shows. By the mid-1990s, Pumpkin Masters had established itself as the No.1 brand in Halloween merchandise. With their assortment of patented carving and sculpting tools, unique pattern designs, lighting products and much more, Pumpkin Masters helps to foster creativity in pumpkin carvers. Pumpkin Masters carving kits, tools and Halloween accessories are now available at most retail super-stores, drug stores and grocery stores across the country.

Each year, Pumpkin Masters hosts its Annual Pumpkin Carving Contest, inspiring amateur carvers to get inventive by designing their own patterns. Participants have the chance to win more than \$15,000 in cash prizes in one of six categories ranging from faces to animals. To top it all off, Pumpkin Masters awards the grand prize winner with \$1,500. This fun-filled contest is a testament to the immense popularity of sculpting artistic pumpkins for Halloween! Further information on the annual contest and free patterns are available at [PumpkinMasters.com](http://PumpkinMasters.com).

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## **Tips and Tricks for a Pumpkin Masterpiece**

Carve terror-ific pumpkin creations this Halloween season with these easy instructions and creative tips from expert pumpkin carver Gene Granata and Pumpkin Masters.

### **Pumpkin Picking**

- Choose carving patterns before heading to the pumpkin patch and bring them with you to find pumpkins that match the pattern shapes.
- Pumpkin Masters patterns work best with pumpkins that are 12” to 15” in height – the size of a basketball. For more intricate designs, consider choosing a bigger pumpkin and enlarging the pattern to more easily carve small details.
- For children, select a lightweight pumpkin with smoother skin. They might not last as long after carving, but are much easier to carve.
- Want your pumpkin masterpiece to stand out? Choose pumpkins with character: odd shapes, colors, curly stems, lumpy/bumpy surfaces, etc. These differences can provide a unique appearance that makes long-lasting impressions!

### **The Right Carving Gear**

- The Pumpkin Masters Scrapper Scoop™ makes gutting a pumpkin safe and easy. The flat edge of this patented tool allows carvers to scrape and smooth the inside of pumpkin walls.
- Pumpkin Masters’ pounce wheel can be used to seamlessly transfer patterns onto a pumpkin. For children, pick up a Pumpkin Masters Kid’s Carving Kit with fun patterns and kid-safe carving tools. For another safe alternative to carving, try Kid’s Fright Lights or Pumpkin Painting kit.

### **Pumpkin Prep**

- Cut an opening in the bottom of the pumpkin, to allow the creation to be set over a light source.
- The pumpkin wall should be scraped to about one inch thick; it is easier to carve intricate designs in thinner walls.

### **Transferring Patterns**

- Attach the pattern flat against the pumpkin surface using tape. Poke holes along the pattern outline using the poking tool, or for more complicated designs, use tracing/transfer paper and a pen to draw the design onto the surface.
- If a “poked” pattern is unclear when you remove the design, rub flour over the dots to make them more visible, or use a pen to connect the dots.
- After transferring the design, do not throw it away! It can be handy to refer to while carving.

### **Carving Tricks**

- Place the pumpkin in a large bowl (i.e. salad or mixing bowl) for better control.
- Start carving from the center of the design, and work outward. Saw up and down briskly, and along the pattern lines slowly.
- Leave carved pieces in the pumpkin so that it is sturdier for sawing the remainder of your design. When all carving is finished, then remove the pieces by pushing them from the inside outwards.
- If carved pieces are too stubborn to remove, do not force it. Use the saw to revisit each cut (especially corners) and remove when pieces move freely.
- Use a safe, battery-operated light instead of a candle. Since they do not generate heat, your pumpkin masterpiece will last longer.

### **Preserving a Pumpkin Creation**

- When not on display, seal the pumpkin completely in plastic wrap and place in refrigerator. This will protect against dryness and mold.
- Revive a shriveled pumpkin by soaking in cool water for several hours. Remove from water, drain and gently pat dry. You can repeat this cycle several times to extend the life of the carving!
- To ensure that it will look its best on Halloween or for an event, carve your jack-o’-lantern one to two days prior to the big day.

#### **Hungry? Why not eat some pumpkin?**

Raw pumpkin makes a crunchy and healthy snack! Simply remove the skin and cut into bite-sized pieces to enjoy a low-calorie snack that is low in fat, loaded with natural vitamins, and even has protein. And since pumpkins are 90% water, you can eat as much as you like!

#### **2008 Design Trends**

- People & pet faces
- Shadow projection
- Superheroes & cartoon characters
- Wedding & anniversary designs
- Scenic designs & famous landmarks
- Safe lighting with battery-operated lights

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## **Pumpkin Carving Expert Gene Granata**

With more than 20 years of experience creating intricate jack-o'-lanterns, Gene Granata holds the unusual title of being an expert pumpkin carver. After Granata ran out of existing patterns to work with, he began crafting artistic designs of his own. Today, he designs and carves more than 200 pumpkins every Halloween season.

Granata sharpened his carving skills at a young age using Pumpkin Masters carving kits and patterns. After sharing some of these original designs with friends, Granata began receiving annual requests to carve customized pumpkins for family, friends, friends of friends and everyone in between. They insisted on paying Granata for his time and talents, and thus his seasonal Halloween business called Masterpiece Pumpkins was formed. People order his pumpkin creations for everything from fall weddings—featuring the bride and groom's monogram and elegant fall themes—to portrait pumpkins of TV talk show hosts.

Granata is in such high demand each fall that he now takes a fall sabbatical from his day job as an information technology consultant in Orange County, Calif., to devote all of his energy to carving pumpkins. He says, "I started calling it a 'business' to justify all of the time I was spending on it!" Although he is busiest in late summer through fall, his pumpkin "season" now spans the entire year.

Nationally recognized as an authority on pumpkin carving, he participates at the annual Boo at the L.A. Zoo event. His pumpkins have appeared on The Ellen DeGeneres Show, Fox Sports and more. In addition, he's been interviewed for Woman's World, Orange Coast and Squeeze OC magazines, among others.