

HALLOWEEN HINTS

A Few Sewing Tricks Create Halloween Costumes That Are A Treat

(NAPSA)—From Pumpkin Bend, Ark., to Tombstone, Ariz., nearly 41 million trick-or-treaters, ages 5 to 14, will spend approximately \$1.5 billion on costumes this year.

According to The National Retail Federation, the Halloween market alone generates nearly \$6.9 billion in sales a year.

But why become just another dollar sign or trendy character of the moment this Halloween? Dust the cobwebs off your sewing machine and get creative with your kids; you could save a lot of money—and have a lot of fun.

“You don’t have to be an expert seamstress or begin planning months in advance. Skill level isn’t an issue, so you can throw caution to the wind and just have fun with each costume,” says Nancy L. Jewell, publicity director for the Swedish-made Husqvarna Viking Sewing machines.

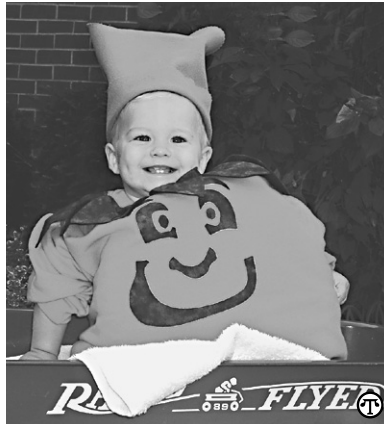
The best part of making a costume with your kids may be letting their imagination expand beyond what they see in a store. Plus, making the costume heightens the anticipation of the big day and can be a great way to spend quality time together.

Here are a few tips from Husqvarna Viking to get you started:

- Gather ideas with your kids based on their favorite things. Visit your local fabric and craft store for inspiration. Then narrow down their ideas to fit your budget and time.

- Basic shapes that are simple to sew can be the basis for plenty of costumes. Sewing today is no longer about pulling your fabric through a machine.

Computerized sewing machines



You can sew great costumes in little or no time without spending a ghoulish amount of money.

such as the Husqvarna Viking Platinum 730 make sewing smooth and effortless. A simple cape can transform a child into a vampire, pirate or king or queen. Tunics transform into scarecrows, robots, witches or fairies. Full skirts gathered at the waist turn into ballerinas, princesses and even '50s-era bobby soxers.

- Keep warmth in mind and get creative with old sweatsuits. Sew black dots on a white sweat-suit to create a cow. An oversized orange sweatshirt can create a pumpkin for an infant. Apply fusible web to your hand-drawn jack o'lantern face and press in place. Or scan your drawing into a sewing software program, such as Autodigitizing and point and click to automatically make a pumpkin face to embroider.

Today's embroidery and sewing machines, like the Husqvarna Viking Platinum Plus, make creating as simple as a touch. Why,

you can carve your pumpkins while your machine embroiders the digitized jack o'lantern face all by itself. Detailed directions on how to use an old sweatshirt to make a pumpkin can be found at www.husqvarnaviking.com.

- Accessorize your costumes by using old gift wrap rolls and balloons to make barbells. Cut up and stuff panty hose for tails or insect legs. Use puffy foam or felt stitched to a knit cap for ears or around the brim of a cap for teeth. And dollar store bobbles are perfect for tiaras and princesses' outfits.

- Safety is always a factor during Halloween. When purchasing fabric to construct a costume, look for the Flame Resistant label. Although this does not mean these items won't catch fire, it does indicate they will resist burning and should extinguish quickly. All costumes should have adequate hook and loop tape closures or elastic secured around the hood or headpiece to keep it from slipping over a child's eyes.

Use Nitelite “Glow in the Dark” thread by Superior Threads, which actually glows in the dark for eight hours, to embellish a trick-or-treat bag. And sew a decorative sleeve for a flashlight, so kids won't balk at carrying it.

Armed with your bag of sewing tricks and a glue gun, you can create great costumes in little to no time and without spending a ghoulish amount of money.

To discover more quick costume and Trick or Treat fun, check out www.husqvarnaviking.com or <http://sewing.about.com/cs/halloween> or www.childfun.com.