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CIR's Corner

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Hello everyone! "CIR's Corner" is my monthly article about international exchange and cultures around the world. I will introduce a variety of interesting international topics.

This Month's Topic: Halloween Costumes

Halloween is on October 31. From pumpkin carving to haunted houses, there are many ways to enjoy Halloween. However, the most fun thing about Halloween might be dressing up. As soon as fall rolls around, shops selling Halloween costumes pop up all over. You can't go trick-or-treating or attend a Halloween party without a costume, so people of all ages buy them. This month, I will tell you all about Halloween costumes.

History of Halloween Costumes



Halloween costumes from 100 years ago. They looked scarier.

Halloween goes all the way back to the Gaels, who lived in present-day Ireland and Scotland. They celebrated a harvest festival called *Samhain*, and believed that during this time, the separation between the living world and the spirit world weakened. Therefore, they believed that the spirits of deceased relatives would return home, and supernatural beings called *aos sí* would wander freely. In order to protect themselves from malicious *aos sí*, the Gaels wore scary costumes. They also

visited their neighbors in their costumes to collect offerings of food and drinks to appease the *aos sí*. When Irish and Scottish immigrants came to North America, they brought their customs with them; dressing up and asking for food became the "trick-or-treating" custom North Americans practice today.

Popular Costumes

There are more than just scary Halloween costumes; they can also be cool, cute, and funny. Back in the day, costumes were mostly handmade ghosts and witches, but with the influence of movies and TV, people began wearing costumes of princesses, superheroes, and other popular characters of the time. In addition, the horror movie boom of the 1970s turned gory costumes that had never been seen before into a Halloween staple.





In the '90s, sexy costumes became popular with young women. Nowadays, you can find "sexy versions" of characters that should have zero sex appeal, such as Toad from the Mario games and SpongeBob SquarePants.

In addition, political costumes have become popular in recent years, and masks of candidates sell particularly well right before presidential elections. Spirit Halloween, a Halloween costume retailer, has analyzed sales data for candidate masks and found that the top-selling candidate mask has accurately predicted the winner of every presidential election since 1996.



SpongeBob's friend, Patrick

Couple, Group, and Family Costumes

Dressing up with your partner, friends, or family can make Halloween even more fun! For example, some popular couple and group costumes are Mario and Luigi, Power Rangers, Ninja Turtles, and the Addams Family.

In 2016, I hosted a Halloween party for my friends. Pokémon GO had just come out that summer, so a few of my friends dressed up as Pokémon trainers, and I dressed up as a sexy Pikachu. *Suicide Squad* had also just come out in theaters, so there were two couples who came dressed as the Joker and Harley Quinn.

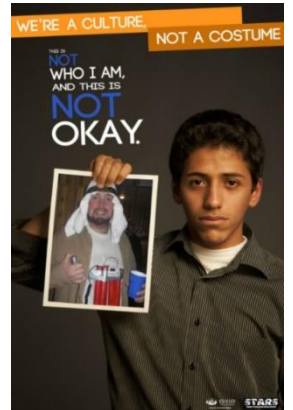


2016 was the year of Pokémon GO and *Suicide Squad* costumes.

Things to Avoid When Choosing a Costume

One of the most appealing things about Halloween costumes is the chance to become

someone else for one night. However, that doesn't mean that anything goes. When choosing a costume, anything that insults or makes fun of other cultures, races, genders, or disabilities should be avoided. It's also important to avoid "cultural appropriation." For example, it is inappropriate to wear another country's or culture's traditional clothing as a Halloween costume. Even if you have no ill will, it is disrespectful. In 2011, students from Ohio University started the viral "We're a culture, not a costume" poster campaign to raise awareness of cultural appropriation on Halloween.



2026 Ebetsu World Fest

We are making a Haunted House again this year, so come check it out! 🎃

2026

Ebetsu World Fest

Sunday, October 11

1:00 - 3:30 PM

Nopporo Kominkan **FREE**

(Nopporo-cho 13-6)

HAUNTED HOUSE

Spooky Spooky Spooky

Stage Performances

Music
Double Dutch
Dance
Country Introductions
and more!

International Exchange Corner

25 経別「世界市民」の集い

Game Corner

Tea Ceremony

Kimono Experience

Exhibition

World Food Sale

Thai Curry, Tacos
Quiche, Churros
and more!

*Scheduled events are subject to change.

Organized by the Ebetsu Intercultural Exchange Committee
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