



## **Pumpkins Power Tools: Simply and Beautifully Made Jack-O- Lanterns and Autumn Pumpkin Luminarias**

If you are like me and absolutely love the season of Fall and love to decorate, then this Healthy Home Workshop is for you!

Yep, just like you, I always make it priority to beautifully appoint my front porch for the Fall season with all sizes of lanterns, hay bales, freshly gathered bowe branches, and plenty of beautifully colored gourds.

This year I'm adding yet another new touch, because I learned a really cool decorator's tip that I can't wait to use to deck my porch, patio, walk ways and garden areas with; simply and beautifully made "power tool" jack-o-lanterns and luminarias.

I have the inside scoop on how professional decorators and home stylists make elegant and high-end jack-o-lanterns and luminescent luminarias out of the common pumpkin and with only a few basic power tools. And, these suckers won't set you back - if you have the power tools necessary, then all you really need to buy, or pick, are the pumpkins.

Sure thing folks, you're in for a super autumn score here!

So this year, please forget about those plastic pumpkin carving kits sold in the grocery store - don't buy

them. Instead, go out to the garage, find your power tools, and safety glasses and select a safe flat area where you and your family can get going with power tool pumpkin carving. Oh, and one really cool bit about using power tools to carve pumpkins is that you can take advantage of all the odd shaped pumpkins - because the taller and more randomly shaped, the more beautiful the luminaria - and you can carve before or after you gut the pumpkin.

Really, if you want to knock the socks off of your visitors or simply bring an added touch of autumn whimsy to your front porch -whether that is scary Halloween whimsy or just some autumnal whimsy - power tools are what you need. They will take your traditional jack-o-lantern to a stellar-jack; totally out shining store bought lanterns - hands down. So start thinking about the beautiful metal and glass jack-o-lanterns and the stylish lanterns that you can buy - and use those as inspiration to make a plan for your perfect pumpkin lantern.

Personally, I love the simple metal lanterns that are dotted with tiny holes so that the flame within radiates out in a hundred different luminous areas. I plan on using the same idea and design to power tool a few oblong pumpkins this season - oh yes, for lanterns, like I mentioned above, all the crazy shaped pumpkins work, they don't have to be perfectly round.

I've learned that the best tools to use are the simple hand held power screwdrivers or drills. The more heads and bits you have for them, the easier it becomes to make diverse and beautiful designs.

A super easy beginner lantern you can make is the dotted kind. All you need to do is make small symmetric or randomly placed dots on the pumpkin, and, using small drill bits, drill through your template of dots. Then separate the top from the body, carve the inside, insert a candle, and voila - you have a super beautiful shining lantern!

For even more "wow" factor, I'm also going to drill tiny holes into a couple pumpkins that spell out holiday appropriate lines - such as "BOO", or something homey like "LOVE", "TREAT", or "WELCOME". I have even thought about using "FALL IS HERE", "BLESSINGS", "HARVEST", and wacky lines like "BEWARE" and "ZOMBIE" to make the boys laugh.

Oh, and very important, let your kids help decide what to spell out and let them actually work on their spelling that way! See, all of these Healthy Home Workshops can really get all of us, and the kiddos, thinking, learning, and doing!

So let's do this...

**Here's what it takes:**

- Pumpkins
- Power tools
- Drill bits
- Time - don't rush this one, have fun!
- Safety goggles
- Sharp knife to remove any stubborn insides
- Large metal spoon to hollow the inside
- Garbage can to make cleanup easy
- Bowl for the insides
- Cookie sheet for sorting seeds

Find your safe, flat, and clean area and get your supplies ready. The person using the power tools should wear protective safety glasses. The best tools to have on hand are drills, power screwdrivers and power saws, mini ones of course. If you have a small power saw, that will be great for separating the top portion of the pumpkin from the body.

All you really need to do is conceptualize what you want your jack-o-lantern or luminaria to look like, use a fine sharpie to dot it out on your pumpkin, this creates your template, and go to town. Once you start making the dots and holes with the power tools, you will see how easy it is and how lovely the design takes shape right away.

Naturally, just like when you traditionally carve a pumpkin, you'll have to hollow it out and get as much extra "stuff" out so that it doesn't rot right away. Make sure to collect the goodness from the insides to cook with and be sure to sort out the seeds for roasting and other toasting.

Pumpkins are so beautiful and so delicious and there are plenty of super nutrients in both the flesh and the seeds - so don't let any go to waste and make sure to read this month's article on all sorts of delicious ways to toast and flavor pumpkin seeds.

All right friends, get to power tool carving and have a blast while you're at it! Make sure to carve at least three or more power tool lanterns so that you can make groupings on your porch or patio. Of course, just like with the normal types of jack-o-lanterns and luminarias, always take caution while carving and always remember to put out the flame before leaving your home or heading in for the night - especially if you live in a dry and forested environment - careful with the sparks and flames.

At any rate - this project is super cool and I can't wait for you to try it out and get your autumn outdoor ambience raised to a new bar this season!

Enjoy!