

Make an Exploding Pumpkin

Learn all about cause and effect as your child experiments with an exploding pumpkin in this engaging fall activity! Get the whole family involved with this simple science experiment that is a fun and exciting way to combine Halloween and science. In this activity, kids will take pumpkin carving one step further by adding a couple household products to make an exploding pumpkin. Though designed with kindergarteners through third graders in mind, children of all ages—and even adults!—will have fun carving their own pumpkin designs and then experimenting with adding different colors, glitter, or amounts of baking soda and vinegar and watching the results.

What You Need:

- One small pumpkin
- Pumpkin carving equipment (e.g., knife, spoon, etc.)
- Black permanent marker
- Baking soda
- Vinegar
- Food coloring



What You Do:

1. Design a basic pumpkin face for your pumpkin (for younger kids you can provide them with an outline or some basic shapes to trace with support).
2. Carve your face onto the pumpkin (older kids can carve with support, and younger kids can help scoop out the pumpkin guts).
3. Help your child measure five tablespoons of baking powder and add it to the bottom of their pumpkin.
4. Choose a color and place 2–4 drops of food coloring on top of the baking powder.
5. Fill a small measuring cup ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup works well) with vinegar and instruct your child to pour it on top of the baking powder.
6. Watch as your pumpkin explodes!

Extensions: Use the same directions above and have your child experiment with different colors, adding glitter, more or less vinegar and baking soda, or by using a hollowed out pumpkin to see how their explosion changes. Encourage your child to record their findings by drawing pictures or writing a sentence. Your scientist will love this fun Halloween science activity!