

The Trick-or-Treat Ask

How to Turn Halloween Generosity
into a Simple, Joyful Gift



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On Halloween night, millions of people open their doors and give.

People give freely, happily, and without hesitation. The ask is clear. The exchange is joyful. And everyone knows their role.

You're about to send one of the easiest fundraising emails of the year.

This email works because everyone's already in a giving mood—porch lights on, candy bowls full, and hearts open. This is a friendly, low-pressure email you can send on **Halloween** that taps into the generosity already in the air.

The Formula

1. **Set the Scene** – Start with the sound, sight, or feeling of Halloween night.
2. **Make the Pivot** – Gently connect the idea of giving candy to giving real-world help.
3. **Offer a Treat** – Name one clear, concrete thing the donor can make possible.
4. **Close Warmly** – End with friendliness and gratitude, not pressure.

Copy-and-Paste Example Email

Subject line: *Before the doorbell rings...*

Body:

Tonight, you'll open your door again and again to smiling faces in costumes. Every "trick-or-treat!" is really a tiny moment of generosity—you give something small, and someone walks away a little happier.

Before the first knock on your door tonight, would you give one more treat?

\$25 feeds a child who might otherwise go to bed hungry.

It's the sweetest kind of gift—the kind that fills more than a candy bag.

[Give a Treat Tonight]

Thank you for sharing your generosity this Halloween.
No costume needed to make someone smile tonight.

Your kindness is the sweetest treat of all,
—[Your First Name]

(Optional: add your short signature line, e.g., “Executive Director, Hope House” or “From all of us at Animal Haven.”)

Offer Examples You Can Swap In

Keep it concrete and immediate.

- “\$15 fills one child’s backpack with food for the weekend.”
- “\$25 buys warm socks and gloves for a neighbor sleeping outside.”
- “\$35 gives one senior a ride to their medical appointment.”
- “\$50 keeps the lights on in the shelter for one night.”

Need Help Coming Up with a “Treat Offer”?

Use this simple little formula: **Verb-a-Noun**.

It helps you name one clear action the donor can do—fast, vivid, and real.

Examples:

- Feed a child.
- Warm a neighbor.
- Fill a backpack.
- Light a room.
- Rescue a pet.
- Deliver a meal.
- Drive a senior.

Then add your dollar amount:

“\$25 feeds a child for the night.”

“\$50 lights one room in the shelter.”

If your sentence doesn’t start with a strong verb, it’s probably too vague.

Halloween proves people *like* to give when the ask feels natural, familiar, and a little fun. Your job is to create that same feeling—clear, expected, and joyful.

Keep the tone friendly, warm, and human.

Halloween gives you permission to be a little playful—donors will respond to the fun.

Low-Stress Reminder: Just Send It

Don't overthink this one.

This isn't a full campaign—it's one short, timely email that meets donors in a generous mood. You don't need a long story, fancy design, or perfect wordsmithing.

Just a warm tone, one clear offer, and a friendly ask.

If you hit "send," you've already won. Because every email you *actually send* raises more than the one you don't.

Bonus: The Trick-or-Treat Email Library

Use these ready-made lines to swap into your own email.

They're short, timely, and help you keep the Halloween spirit alive while asking clearly and kindly.

Subject Lines

- Before the doorbell rings...
- One more treat tonight?
- The sweetest yes you'll give today.
- Give one more treat tonight (no costume needed).
- Trick or treat... for good.
- A little kindness before the candy runs out.
- This gift is sweeter than candy.
- One more knock at your heart tonight.
- Keep the porch light on—someone's still waiting.
- A Halloween treat that lasts longer than candy.

Opening Lines

- “Tonight, the world turns generous. Every porch light says, ‘You’re welcome here.’”
- “You’ll open your door again and again tonight—why not open your heart one more time?”
- “All across your neighborhood, people are giving something small that makes someone light up.”
- “It’s amazing what happens when giving becomes fun.”
- “Halloween is really about generosity—it’s the one night a year when everyone’s a giver.”

Offer Transitions

- “While you’re handing out treats, would you give one more tonight?”
- “Before the candy runs out, would you share a little sweetness with someone in need?”
- “Your kindness could be the best treat someone gets tonight.”
- “No tricks—just a simple chance to do something good.”

Sign-Off Ideas

- *Happy Halloween,*
—[Your Name]
- *Thanks for keeping the spirit of giving alive tonight,*
—[Your Name]
- *Your kindness is the sweetest treat of all,*
—[Your Name]
- *Here’s to full candy bowls and full hearts,*
—[Your Name]

At the Nonprofit Storytelling Conference

Fundraising doesn’t have to be frightening—no ghosts, ghouls, or awkward asks required. We’ll help you take the fear out of asking and replace it with confidence, clarity, and connection—so every donor moment feels a little more human and a lot less scary.

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