As you might have noticed, Americans do not have strict traditions or customs. They often choose what traditions to follow or can start their own traditions following the theme of the season. Fall season is associated with celebrating harvest, Halloween, and Thanksgiving. Children and adults love this season because of all the fun activities.

Fall season starts with decorating houses, yards, shops, and streets with fall colors (red, orange, brown, and yellow), pumpkins, and scarecrows. You will see a lot of decorations for sale at the stores. Some people will go to pumpkin patches, farmers’ markets, or apple orchards to get pumpkins, pick some apples, play outside games, and enjoy some apple cider with doughnuts.  Schools often have field trips to pumpkin patches and apple orchards. Leaves are raked and children use the piles for jumping, burrowing, and games.

There are also special drinks and treats during the fall season. You will be able to find pumpkin spice latte and chai, hot apple cider at coffee shops;  pumpkin muffins, breads, cookies, scones at bakeries and cafes;  squash soup, sweet potato dishes and salads at restaurants.

Families often will make caramel apples with their children:

[http://allrecipes.com/recipe/21130/caramel-apples/](http://allrecipes.com/recipe/21130/caramel-apples/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)

October 31st is Halloween, a holiday originated from the Celtic New Year and and All Saints’ celebration. This is in part a celebration connected with evil spirits and the dead. Witches on broomsticks, black cats, ghosts, goblins, and skeletons have all become symbols of Halloween. You can see many spooky decorations around this time of year.

On Halloween, dozens of children dressed in costumes knock on their neighbors’ doors and yell, “Trick or Treat” when the door opens. Pirates, princesses, ghosts, and cartoon characters all hold bags open to catch the candies that the neighbors drop in. Schools might have Halloween parties. The students can wear their costumes and have some treats in their classroom. Your child’s teacher will let you know about the party.

Carving pumpkins is one of the fall favorites for the whole family. You can find some ideas on how to decorate your pumpkin here:

[http://www.pumpkinlady.com/](http://www.pumpkinlady.com/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)

Thanksgiving is a time to gather with family and friends to enjoy a traditional meal and give thanks for blessings in one’s life. The American Thanksgiving began as a harvest feast and festival almost four hundred years ago. In 1942, the fourth Thursday of November became a federal holiday with a four-day vacation from school or work. Many civic groups and charitable organizations serve traditional Thanksgiving meals for the less fortunate during this holiday.

Turkey, corn, pumpkins, squash, nuts, and cranberries are symbols of Thanksgiving feast. Many different dishes that include these ingredients are cooked to share with family and friends. They might include roasted turkey, corn casseroles, corn bread or rolls, cranberry sauce, and pumpkin pies.

Thanksgiving is a time of being grateful and appreciative of all the wonderful things we have. It might be a wonderful opportunity to give a card of thanks to your neighbors, colleagues, teachers, and friends.

You can learn more about fall holidays here:

[https://americanenglish.state.gov/resources/celebrate-holidays-usa](https://americanenglish.state.gov/resources/celebrate-holidays-usa%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)

**Do your families and cultures have special fall festivals, traditions or celebrations? I would love to learn about them.**

 I wish you a wonderful fall season full of family fun, delicious foods, and outdoor activities.