

# Apple Dolls/Shrunken Heads

Believed to be traced back to the Iroquois or Seneca people, the tradition of making apple dolls has a long history in North America and was once a common sight around Halloween during Colonial and Victorian times. Although, they lost the popularity during the early half of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, they gained a resurgence of interest in 1975 when actor Vincent Price, the Master of Macabre, introduced his “Shrunken Head Apple Sculpture Kit”. However, today many are unaware of this seasonal craft.

## How to make Apple Dolls/Shrunken Heads

Choose a big firm apple, such as a granny smith.

Peel the apple.

With a sharp knife (this may require an adult’s help!), form the nose, eyes, and mouth, making sure to make the features large, as they will shrink as the apple dries (you can also draw out the features first).

Soak the carved apple in 2 tablespoons of salt and 2 cups lemon juice for about ½ hour (so it doesn’t turn brown).

To dry, you can stake them on a skewer and place them in a warm dry spot to dry out (this may take several weeks for the apple to dry completely) OR you can place them on a parchment-lined cookie sheet and place them in the oven at 175 for 12 to 24 hours (will need to keep an eye on them so they don’t get cooked). A dehydrator also works well.

When the head is almost dry, add peppercorns, cloves, or beads for eyes. You can also use some creativity to make hair or a body to go along with it to make it more like a doll.

Insert a stick or branch into the bottom of the head and place in the ground or in a vase. Heads can also be arranged in a bowl or tied to a tree. Use your imagination and display your creations this Halloween!

