

# What's happening at half term?

Edinburgh schools will enjoy a week off for half term from Monday 16 to Monday 23 October 2023.

For those of you staying in Edinburgh there are many things to do to entertain children of all ages, and in an effort to help planning that here are just a few suggestions.

One thing to remember is that ScotRail have abolished their peak fares for six months from 2 October. This makes travel for adults cheaper and also their Kids for a Quid tickets, which allow up to four children to travel for £1 return each with a fare paying adult, will now be valid for travel all day, any day.



Scotrail train in Waverley Station

At Edinburgh Leisure join their Soft Play this month and get December free. Available until 31 October. More details below.



Holiday camps run during half term with a range of sports and activities, such as tennis at Craiglockhart and Multi-Activity camps also available at the Royal Commonwealth Pool and Meadowbank. There are also gym bootcamps for 15 year-olds. Booking essential.

[Details here](#) and more [details of Holiday Sports camps here.](#)

# Palace of Holyroodhouse

**Make a Mask sessions will also run every day Monday, 16 October – Saturday, 28 October (excluding Tuesdays and Wednesdays), 11:00–15:00**

On 21 October there will be a **Family Activity Day: All About the Abbey** from 10.00 until 3.00pm

On a special activity day this half term, families visiting The King's official residence in Scotland can explore the story of Holyrood Abbey, which stretches back almost 900 years. They can discover the origins of the Abbey; what life was like for the canons that lived and worked there; and the architecture that remains.

After learning about its fascinating history, children can make their own miniature abbey to take home during arts and crafts sessions. Short talks throughout the day will explore the surprising stories, myths and legends that connect past royal residents with the ruins of Holyrood Abbey, one of the most important buildings in Scottish history.

Every day throughout half term, families can take part in Make a Mask activity sessions. After discovering the stories behind the friendly and fearsome faces that are carved into the walls of the Abbey ruins, children can make their own paper mask to take home for Halloween.

There are similar events running at Windsor Castle and at Buckingham Palace.





**Family Activity Day PHOTO Royal Collection Trust / © His Majesty King Charles III 2023**



**Palace of Holyroodhouse PHOTO Royal Collection Trust / © His Majesty King Charles III 2023**

# At the National Museum of Scotland

## **Beyond the Little Black Dress**

Until 29 October 2023

Special Exhibition Gallery, Level 3

Ticketed (concessions available)

From design classics to cutting-edge catwalk creations, this exhibition deconstructs the little black dress and examines the radical power of the colour black in fashion. The exhibition will chart a century of fashion in a series of themed, immersive displays. Iconic early pieces by Yves Saint Laurent, Dior and Jean Muir will be juxtaposed with recent looks by ground-breaking contemporary designers and brands like Gareth Pugh, Simone Rocha and Off-White.

Find out more [nms.ac.uk/Beyond-the-Little-Black-Dress](https://nms.ac.uk/Beyond-the-Little-Black-Dress)

## **Cultural Connections**

16 – 21 October 2023

11.00am to 4.00pm

Around the museum

Free, drop in

Some workshops are paid, bookable

Join us this half term to share in a mixture of music, song, dance, storytelling and art connecting to Africa and the Caribbean.

Find out more [nms.ac.uk/cultural-connections](https://nms.ac.uk/cultural-connections)

# At the National Museum of Flight

Half Term Bricks includes Lego building activities on 14, 15, 21 and 22 October.

Inspired by the current [Brick History display](#), each day the museum will have a different build theme. Choose to make

something inspired by the theme or build your own creation.

For something a bit more energetic, take part in the speed build challenge and see if you can make it to the top of the champions' board.

[FREE with museum admission.](#)

## **Dobbies Holiday Club**

Tailored for Dobbies' Little Seedlings Club members aged 4-10, this interactive workshop is filled with fun activities to help children appreciate their natural environment.

Under the guidance of Dobbies' horticultural experts, young gardening witches and wizards-in-training will embark on a journey through time. They will uncover ways in which ancient cultures used plants for their mystical properties. For example, the ancient Greeks and Romans believed that Rosemary could enhance memory retention and the ancient Egyptians thought Verbena could ward off evil spells.

Children in Edinburgh will explore the fascinating world of medicinal plants, such as the Evening Primrose and Dandelion, uncover the secrets of their potent healing qualities, and dare to venture into the realm of the most poisonous plants, like the Deadly Nightshade and White Snakeroot.

[Details here.](#)







## **Pick your own pumpkins and a little bit of Halloween**

There are various places around town to do this, where the pumpkins have been nurtured to great sizes and shapes for you to carve and make your own in time for Halloween.

A family run farm **Newmill at Dolphinton West Linton** offers a great day out for pumpkin pickers – read more below

**Craigies Farm** has once again opened its [pick-your-own](#) pumpkin patch and new for this year the farm will also host two [Halloween-themed events](#) out in the fields too.

From Saturday 14 October, families can ‘creep’ it real at the **Conifox Pumpkin Patch** where they’ll get to pick their own pumpkin to take home and carve. Adults and children alike will

love the themed photo backdrops available around the park, where they can take cute photos to keep as mementos for years to come.

And there are even prizes up for grabs – kids can find all the enchanted creatures around the Adventure Park, collecting the special letters and spelling out a secret password to win a yummy surprise.

Pumpkin Festival at **Kilduff Farm** East Lothian 13 to 29 October. Tickets for the 2023 pumpkin festival are on sale at this link [Buy Pumpkin Picking tickets here](#).

The Pumpkin Festival is packed with family fun for all ages. There is pumpkin picking, a bale maze, festival games and lots of autumnal photo opportunities. Food on offer is from Drift and Wee Green Events with tasty treats and the Wee Red Barn will be back with lots of autumnal goodies to take home, including their own farm produce.

**Balgone Estate** near North Berwick go big on pumpkins.

“At Balgone, it isn’t just picking the perfect pumpkin. We want everyone to experience the countryside and Halloween to its fullest, be it with family or friends. Back in 2023 with over 50,000 pumpkins across 10 acres, it will be hard not to find a cracker in Scotland’s largest pumpkins patch. Joining the patch is our 2km Haunted trail, back bigger and better this year.” [Find out more here](#).

[Curiously Creepy Pumpkin Patch](#) marks the start of the events programme at **Dalkeith Country Park** on Saturday 14 October. Wheelbarrows, fire-pits and marshmallows await eager pumpkin pickers who can select the perfect pumpkin from the patch before descending underground to discover the rarely opened undercroft of The Orangerie – curiously creepy and waiting to be explored.

Restoration Yard will host workshops for children to enjoy.



Halloween workshops include spooky cookie decorating, creepy crafting, decoration painting, scary storytelling and curiously adorable crochet workshops. Parents can indulge in some well-deserved 'me-time' in The Kitchen or The Store, while little ones enjoy the workshops.

Also joining The Park's exciting Halloween Happenings will be Adventure Cinema, bringing an eclectic mix of classics, musicals, big blockbusters and family films to enjoy under the sun and stars. Fawkes Festival will close The Park's Halloween Happenings on Saturday 28 October. The extravaganza will feature fairground rides, fabulous food and drink and fireworks display set in-front of Dalkeith Palace.

Dalkeith Country Park's Halloween programme begins on Friday 13 October with events, activities and workshops running throughout the school holidays until Sunday 29 October.

[Curiously Creepy Pumpkin Patch](#)