



<http://www.halloween-online.com/sfx/halloween-projects-fog-faq.html>

FOG MACHINE FAQ

Fog definitely has that foreboding look to it, things can slither around in the fog unseen adding the element of the unknown, and can add that extra scary touch to your Halloween Haunt or party. Below are some of the most commonly asked questions people want to know before buying a fog machine.

What would I use a fog machine for?

Fog is a great addition for Halloween yard haunts, graveyards, parties and more. In fact, it is often what sets one yard haunt apart from another. For your trick or treaters, it is very scary to have to walk through an area filled with sinister fog.

How much does a fog machine cost?

Fog machines can run anywhere from twenty or thirty dollars to several thousand dollars. They are available at most department stores, drug stores and even hardware stores during the Halloween season now. Some can be found for as low as \$19.99 making it possible to purchase two or three. First you'll need to decide on the use and placement of them in your haunt to figure out how many you'll need.

What size fog machine should I get and do I need more than one?

The answer to this question depends on several factors. What will it be used for? How much fog do you need to cover a particular area? How dense do you want the fog to be? Generally a small fog machine will do a good job for very small yard haunts and parties. You might end up buying various sizes for different jobs, such as two small or medium sized fog machines rather than one large one.

Last Halloween we used one large fog machine to haze the front of our property with general purpose fog, two small fog machines, both connected to fog chillers for our graveyard, and one medium fog machine for our backyard. This coming Halloween we'll be adding another small fog machine for the Vortex effect. Again, it depends on what you will be using it or them for.

How do fog machines make fog?

Fog machines generally use a very pure glycol and water based fog fluid that is pumped

by the machine into a temperature controlled heat exchanger that vaporizes the fluid into thick clouds of fog.

Can I build a fog machine?

We've seen plans on the Net for building fog machines, but we highly recommend against it. Doing so could be very dangerous.

Do fog machines make fog continuously?

While all fog machines need an initial warm up period, usually around five minutes, the basic difference between consumer and professional models is that consumer models usually cannot sustain a continuous output of fog. They will usually generate fog for a couple of minutes then need to pause for several minutes to reheat before they can make fog again. This is a continual cycle during it's operation. Professional models can generate fog continuously without the reheat cycle in between but they cost much more than consumer models.

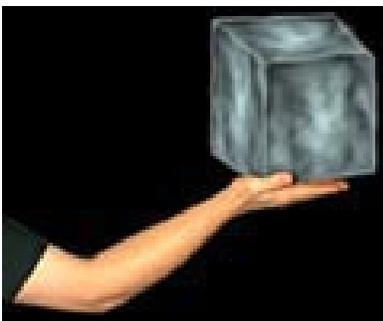
What is a Timer and do I need one?



All fog machines come with some type of activation device, usually in the form of a simply remote control connected to the fog machine via a long cable. To start making fog you hold down the button on the remote. When you let up on the button it will stop making fog or it will stop automatically when the fog machine needs to re-cycle. The problem with this type of remote is that it requires a user to operate it every time you want more fog.

A remote control with a built in timer/volume control eliminates the need for you to spend precious Halloween time manually operating a fog machine. They allow you to set the intervals at which the fog machine will come on, how long that interval will last and the volume of fog to produce. As an example, you could set the timer to activate the fog machine every five minutes, with a duration of 2 minutes and set to product 75 percent of the machines fog output capacity.

What is a cubic foot of fog?



What this means is that the manufacturer claims that their fog machine will produce X amount of cubic feet of fog per minute. But just because one fog machine claims to produce 5000 C.U. per minute doesn't mean that a different machine that claims only 1000 C.U. per minute doesn't actually produce more useable fog. Sound confusing? The problem is that there is no industry standard on what exactly a cubic foot of generated fog is, such as what density is the fog in

that cubic foot? The numbers shown in manufacturer descriptions are only useful as a very rough guideline. Your best bet is to talk with someone that already owns the fog machine you are considering and ask them.

How much fog fluid do these machines use?

This depends on the type of fog machine, the volume of fog you set it to produce, and the amount of time it is producing fog. Generally, the smaller machines will use about one quart of fog fluid every two hours if run continuously. Larger machines can use four times as much fluid if run in the same manner.

How much will wind effect the fog?

Wind is a fog machines enemy! The particles that make up the fog are very small, 1 to 2 microns in size, and even a light breeze will quickly disperse the fog as it shoots from the fog machine. Sometimes you can move your fog machine to different locations to help redirect the fog to where you want it. Don't try to aim the fog into the wind, its a losing battle.

Can I pipe the fog around to different locations?



Yes, fog can easily go through large Shop-Vac type hose for about 6 to 8 feet, but after that you'll need a small fan to help push the fog through the hose. Smooth hose works better than corrugated. You should never attach the hose directly to the fogger, an inch or so of space between the hose and fogger is safer and will give you better fog distribution. This works great when attached to a Fog Chiller as show to the right.

How do I make the fog stay low to the ground?



The fog produced by these machines comes out hot, and therefore rises. One of the easiest ways to cool down the temperature of the fog so that it doesn't rise in the air is to build a Fog Chiller.

I've found a source for less expensive fog fluid, can I substitute it for the manufacturers?

We highly recommend against this. First, you will probably void the machine's warranty and second you could damage some of the components of the fog machine, such as the heat exchanger and/or pump.

What about using scented and colored fluids?

We see little use for either of these, and they can damage heat exchanger, pump and other components of the fog machine. Be sure to contact the manufacturer of the fog machine for their recommendations before using any scented or colored fluids.

Do I need to clean the fog machine after use?

Yes, after using your fog machine, you need to clean it out thoroughly to prevent the tubing, pump and heat exchanger from becoming clogged. This is usually accomplished by running distilled water and vinegar through the fog machine for a couple of minutes. Only use the manufacturers cleaning instructions, or you'll probably void your warranty and could even damage the machine.

Do fog machines break down?

Yes, they are machines and like any machine it will fail at some point. Your goal should be to properly maintain your fog machine to extend the life of the machine and between failures. The first thing is to only use fog fluid that the manufacturer recommends. Next you should always clean the fog machine according to the manufacturers instructions. If a part such as the pump does break you should contact the manufacturer.