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## **Frosting Perfection: Insider's Guide**

Frosting is not just for taste, but also as a way of expressing your inner creativity.

Each decoration should be unique and signify the importance of the particular event. Professional bakers use frosting to not only to enhance their creation but also to represent it.

Decorating a cake requires multiple steps. In fact, depending on the level of skill of the baker, it can be an incredibly lengthy process.

If a cake is not leveled properly, the overall appearance of the cake will never be as attractive or garner as much attention as it deserves.

This guide offers information on various techniques, as well as different methods that can be used to achieve the same results for those wish to experiment with various techniques.

In addition this guide is separated into two main sections, one focused on beginners and one for more advanced users.

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Since it is a resource book, the techniques are in no particular order. Therefore whenever you need information or want to look up a specific technique, simply scroll through the book until you find the topic you are looking for.

To your frosting success!

## **Frosting For Beginners**

To begin decorating, you will need to ensure that you have all of the decorating tools needed.

Tips (otherwise called tubes) are an integral part of decorating cakes. Tips are simple metal cones, which you squeeze icing or a medium through to form different shapes and designs.

The size and shape of the opening on a decorating tube determines the type of decorations the tip will produce.

There are 7 basic decorating tip groups: round, star, leaf, drop flower, rose, basketweave and specialized.

A new decorator should have at least one or two tips from the first five tip groups.

Then, as you become more proficient in your decorating you will want to expand your collection with tips from other groups.

## **GETTING STARTED: PART ONE**

Here we walk you through the process of trimming and splitting a cake into layers, icing it, and then finishing it with a few simple decorating techniques.

**Don't worry; you won't need a pastry bag or tips, just a little patience.**

We recommend that you equip yourself with a few tools that can make all the difference in the finished appearance of the cake and minimize your frustration:

a long serrated knife for trimming and cutting  
a 10-inch flexible icing spatula  
cardboard rounds, and, ideally, a rotating cake stand.

For an alternative to the rotating cake stand, improvise by setting a dinner plate upside down on top of an upside-down cake pan.

The cake won't spin freely, as it does on a rotating cake stand, but this arrangement does elevate the cake and gives you an edge to grip and spin.

## **LEVELING AND SPLITTING THE CAKE**

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A cake can be cut into layers, or cakes baked separately can be layered together.

Either way, level cakes are much easier to ice than mounded ones that must be supplemented with an overabundance of icing.

Use a long serrated knife to level an uneven cake and/or to cut it into layers. When the cake has cooled completely, set it on a cardboard round that is cut about 1/8 inch larger than the cake.

Place the cake close to the edge of the counter for more clearance when cutting.

First, determine the cake's lowest point. Steady the cake by gently pressing an outstretched hand on its surface.

Holding the knife parallel to the work surface and using a steady sawing motion, begin cutting at the same level as the cake's lowest point, slicing off the mound. Remove the trimmed area.

If you are cutting the cake into layers, measure the height of the cake (that has been leveled, if necessary) and cut a small incision into the side with a paring knife to mark the desired thickness of your



layers. Repeat every 3 or 4 inches around the circumference of the cake.

With a serrated knife held parallel to the work surface, cut superficially into the cake.

Then, with an outstretched palm gently pressed on the surface, slowly spin the cake away from you while pulling the knife toward you. The goal is to connect the incisions and score the cake, not slice it, to create a clearly defined midpoint.

Following the midpoint-marking cut deeper and deeper in the same manner.

Gradually move the knife closer to the cake's center with each rotation. When the knife progresses past the cake's center, the cut is complete. Carefully slide the knife out then remove the cake from the cardboard round.

## **ICING THE CAKE**

When filling and icing a cake with a buttercream frosting, the challenge is to prevent crumbs from catching in the icing.

To help frosting spread more smoothly, get rid of loose

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crumbs with a pastry brush.



Cold icing is difficult to spread and pulls on the surface of the cake, so if you've made the icing ahead and chilled it, give it ample time to warm and soften.

Also, placing the cake's sturdy bottom crust face-up on the top layer minimizes crumbs and provides distinct, clean edges that are easy to ice.

Spreading a thin coating of frosting on the sides helps seal in any crumbs, allowing for a smoother overall look.



Finally, applying a base coat, or "crumb coat," of icing seals in loose crumbs so that they do not mar the cake's appearance.

To anchor the cake, spread a dab of frosting in the center of a cardboard round cut slightly larger than the cake. Center the upper layer of a split cake crust-side up or one cake of separately baked layers bottom-side up on the cardboard round.

Spread a dab of frosting on the center of the cake stand, then set the cardboard round with the cake on the stand.

Place a large blob in the center of the cake and spread it to the edges with an icing spatula. Imagine that you are pushing the filling into place rather than scraping

it on as if it were peanut butter on a slice of toast.

Don't worry if crumbs are visible in the icing; since the filling will be sandwiched between layers, these crumbs will not be noticeable.



To level the icing and remove any excess, hold the spatula at a 45 degree angle to the cake and, if using a rotating cake stand, turn the cake.

If you're not using a rotating stand, hold the spatula at the same angle, and, starting at the edge farthest away from you, gently drag the spatula toward you. It will take a few sweeps to level the icing.

Using a second cardboard round, slide the top cake layer crust-side up on top of the frosted bottom layer,

making sure that the layers are aligned.

Press the cake firmly into place.

A thin base coat of icing helps seal in crumbs. To coat the top, place a blob of icing in the center of the cake and spread it out to the edges, letting any excess hang over the edge. Don't worry if it is imperfect.

Scoop up a large dab of icing on the spatula's tip: Holding the spatula perpendicular to the cake spread the icing on the side of the cake with short side-to-side strokes.

Repeat until the entire side is covered with a thin coating.

Refrigerate the cake until the icing sets, about 10 minutes.

Apply a final thick coat of icing to the top and the sides, following the steps above, making sure that the coat is even and smooth.

When icing the sides, apply a coat thick enough to cover and conceal the cardboard round. Dipping the spatula into hot water will help create a smooth coat.

As you ice the top and sides, a ridge will form along the edge where they meet.

After you've finished icing, hold the spatula at an angle, and, with a very light hand, starting at the farthest edge of the cake, smooth the ridge toward the center. Rotate the cake and repeat until the ridge no longer exists.

### **SOME FINISHING TOUCHES**

With a perfectly coated cake, you've got a base on which to apply some finishing touches to give the cake a polished look.

### **My Personal Favorites**

I have been asked for my frosting recipes quite often and I finally decided to include them only in this eBook.

If you have any questions about them please do not hesitate to ask.

### **Cream Cheese Buttercream Icing**

Maximum recipe for a 5 Qt. mixing bowl

5 1/2 lbs. of powdered sugar

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3/4 C +2T warm water  
1 T Butavan  
12 oz. warm cream cheese  
1 1/4 lb. of solid Crisco  
1 1/2 t. salt

Mix with the paddle beater by hand until slightly moistened and then place on the mixer.

The air can be worked out of the icing by starting the motor on the mixer on slow and lifting the bowl of icing up and down several times until the air is worked out. Additional water may be added for a softer icing. Finish beating until smooth.

Transfer into storage containers being careful to not put lumps of unmixed icing stuck to the sides of the bowl into the containers.

For additional flavor add flavorings to your icing. The orange in the chocolate buttercream is wonderful. These flavors are strong and very tasty - they don't add any color to your icing.

I found this recipe in a book called "Out of the Sugar Rut" and made a couple of adaptations to make it taste and work better.

**Cream Cheese frosting #2**

2 packages (8 oz. each) cream cheese, softened  
2 Tbsp. butter  
2 Tbsp. vanilla  
1/3 cup honey  
2 egg whites, beaten stiff  
1 package of instant sugar free vanilla/chocolate/etc  
pudding

In medium bowl, with electric mixer at medium speed,  
beat the cream cheese with the butter and vanilla until  
creamy. Add honey. Beat 3 minutes more.

Add instant pudding and beat until dissolved. Fold in  
beaten egg whites and mix thoroughly.

Spread thickly over top of cake. You can make basic  
borders and decorations with this icing.



## Layer Cake Decoration

Nothing says "Happy Birthday" like a layered cake!

These can be simply two cakes sandwiched together with frosting, or they can be "torted" into multiple layers for a dramatic and delicious effect.

### **To create multiple layers, you will need:**

- ✓ A long serrated knife
- ✓ Plastic wrap
- ✓ Simple syrup--plain or flavored
- ✓ Pastry brush
- ✓ Cardboard cake circles

Cardboard cake circles are available at baking supply stores and craft stores, or you can make your own: Simply cut a circle slightly smaller than the diameter of your cake pan.

Trimming the tops and bottoms off of your cake rounds cuts the "crust" off and allows you to moisten the cake layers with sugar syrup.

This adds sweetness and flavor, and helps keep the cake from drying out. (Most cakes benefit from simple syrup, and soaking syrups are a must for sponge cakes.)

### **Trimming**

To trim the cake, place it on a flat cutting board. (If you have a cake turntable, use it.)

Keep the palm of your non-working hand resting on the domed top of the cake.

With your knife hand, lightly score the edge of the cake where you'll be making your cut. Rotate the cake so you can score it around the entire diameter.

### **Now, begin to cut:**

Keep your knife level!

- \* Use a gently back-and-forth sawing motion
- \* Once you've made one back-and-forth cut, rotate the cake about 45 degrees, and repeat
- \* Cut and rotate until you've worked your way around the entire cake. You should be able to cut

through the whole layer with another steady back-and-forth cut

Remove the cake scraps (they're great for snacking) and repeat with the bottom side of the cake. Because it's flat, you probably won't need to make as deep of a cut--you just want to slice off the top layer of "skin."



### **Slicing**

Depending upon your recipe, the size of the pan, and how full the pans were, you need to decide whether you can realistically split your cake into two or three levels.

Err on the side of caution--it's better to have a few thick layers than to try to patch together broken halves of cake.

Set the trimmed cake on a cake circle. (If your recipe is really rich and dense, it helps to sprinkle granulated sugar on the cardboard before setting the

cake on it; this will help keep your cake from sticking to the cake circle.)

Keeping your knife level, score the cake's edge, like above. Continue with the back-and-forth sawing as you rotate the cake, until your knife cuts clear through the layer.

Slip your hand under the cut layer, and gently transfer the cake to a sheet of plastic wrap.

Cover both layers until you're ready to frost the cake.

Repeat with remaining cake round.

### **The Crumb Coat**

Applying a "crumb coat" is the best way to achieve professional-looking results, especially if you want a smooth-sided cake.

This is essentially a thin layer of frosting that will help seal in the crumbs so that your final coat of frosting will be easy to apply and crumb-free.

Have handy your cake circles, simple syrup, frosting, and a damp sponge or cloth for wiping away stray crumbs.

Set your least-perfect cake layer on a cake circle, and apply simple syrup with a pastry brush.

Add a healthy dollop of frosting, and spread it across the surface, almost to the edge--the weight of additional layers will spread it out further. Top with another layer of cake; if you have a cracked or broken layer, sandwich it in here.

As you add layers, bend down so the cake's at eye level: make sure the layers are stacked flush.

Apply simple syrup and frosting at each step.

When you reach your final layer, apply syrup and frosting, spreading it to the edge of the cake. Add a dollop of frosting to the side of the cake, and spread it thinly to cover as much territory as you can.

### **Sharp Edges**

When the sides of the cake are completely masked, use your spatula or knife to make a final, steady pass around the sides of the cake.

The frosting will have pushed up to form a rim above the top layer of the cake.

Holding your spatula away from you at the far edge of the cake, pull it towards yourself; you want the flat blade to skim the edge of the cake so excess frosting is smoothed onto the top surface, toward the center.

Rotate the cake, continuing the swooping and gliding motion until the sides and top of the cake are smooth. Don't worry if there's cake showing through the frosting; you'll cover that on the second go-round.

Chill the cake in your fridge or freezer until firm.

### **Swoops and Swirls**

Apply the final coat of frosting following the same steps as above, but be a little more generous in the application.

Once you've covered the tops and sides of the cake, you can either keep it smooth and modern-looking, or make it fluffy and home-style. Use the back of a spoon or the tip of your spatula to make swirls and peaks, adding a little more frosting if necessary.

Finish your cake with candles, sprinkles, flowers, chocolate shavings, or any other decorations you wish.

## **Icing the Cake**

### **Using a Spatula**

The trick to keeping crumbs out of your icing is gliding your spatula on the icing—never allow it to touch the surface of the cake. Place a large amount of thin consistency icing on the center of the cake top. Spread across the top, pushing toward edges.

Place a large amount of thin consistency icing on the center of the cake top. Spread across the top, pushing toward edges.

Cover the sides with icing. Smooth sides first by holding the spatula upright with the edge against the side, slowly spinning the turntable without lifting the spatula from the cake's surface. Return excess icing to the bowl and repeat until sides are smooth.



Smooth the top using the edge of the spatula. Sweep the edge of the spatula from the rim of the cake to its center. Then lift it off and remove excess icing. Rotate the cake slightly and repeat the procedure, starting from a new point on the rim until you have covered the entire top surface.



Smooth the center of the cake by levelling the icing with the edge of your spatula. For easier smoothing, it may help to dip the spatula into hot water, wipe dry and glide it across the entire surface.

Set the cake aside and allow the icing to crust over for at least 15 minutes before decorating. At this point you may also lay Wilton Non-Stick Parchment Paper on the iced cake top and gently smooth with the palm of your hand.

### **Using a Decorating Tip (Wilton Cake Icer #789)**

Icing the Cake with a Tip #11. Trim a 16 inch Featherweight bag to fit tip 789. Fill bag half full with icing. Hold bag at 45° angle and lightly press tip against cake. Squeeze a ribbon of icing in a continuous



spiral motion to cover cake top, with last ribbon forcing icing over edge of cake top



To ice the sides, squeeze icing as you turn the cake slowly. Repeat the process until the entire cake side is covered.



Smooth the sides and top with a spatula, same as above.



## Frosting Recipe Collection

### ButterCream Icing



I classify frosting into six types: buttercream, cooked, whipped cream, royal icing, ganaches, and glazes.

#### Buttercream

The traditional icing used for all store-bought cakes. Rich and creamy, it's made up of eggs, sugar and lots of butter.

This mixture can also be used for decorations. It should be kept cool ahead of time because it can melt. Buttercream tastes best at room temperature.

**Tip:** It's really not possible to overbeat this type of frosting.

We have included a recipe as well as a link to a video that will show you exactly how to make buttercream icing.

**BUTTERCREAM RECIPE:**

Ingredients:

- \* 1/2 cup solid vegetable shortening
- \* 1/2 cup butter or margarine\*
- \* 1 teaspoon Clear Vanilla
- \* 4 cups sifted confectioners' sugar (apprx 1 lb.)
- \* 2 tablespoons milk\*\*

Cream butter and shortening with electric mixer.

Add vanilla.

Gradually add sugar, one cup at a time, beating well on medium speed.

Scrape sides and bottom of bowl often.

When all sugar has been mixed in, icing will appear dry.

Add milk and beat at medium speed until light and fluffy.

Keep icing covered with a damp cloth until ready to use. For best results, keep icing bowl in refrigerator when not in use. Refrigerated in an airtight container, this icing can be stored 2 weeks. Rewhip before using.

**YIELD: 3 cups**

\*\*Add 2 tablespoons light corn syrup per recipe to thin for icing cake.

### **Frosting for German Chocolate Cake**

This is a yummy frosting to top a German chocolate cake with. It is a traditional recipe with coconut and walnuts.

**Original recipe yield:**

2 cups

PREP TIME        10 Min

COOK TIME        20 Min

READY IN            30 Min



### **INGREDIENTS**

- \* 1 cup half-and-half
- \* 1/2 cup butter
- \* 1 cup white sugar
- \* 3 egg yolks
- \* 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- \* 1 cup flaked coconut
- \* 1/2 cup chopped walnuts

### **DIRECTIONS**

In a medium saucepan, combine the half and half, butter, sugar, yolks and cornstarch. Bring to a boil over medium heat. Remove from the heat and stir in the coconut and walnuts. Cool to room temperature before frosting cake.

## **Old Fashioned Chocolate Icing**

### **INGREDIENTS**

- \* 4 tablespoons butter
- \* 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- \* 2 tablespoons milk
- \* 1 1/2 cups confectioners' sugar
- \* 1 tablespoon unsweetened cocoa powder
- \* 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

### **DIRECTIONS**

In a saucepan, melt butter and brown sugar over medium heat. Stir until sugar is dissolved, then add milk. Bring to a boil and remove from heat.

Sift together cocoa and confectioners sugar. Blend into butter mixture and add vanilla. If consistency is too stiff, add more milk.

Spread Quickly over cooled cake, as frosting will set up very fast.



## **Creating Flowers and Leaves**

### **Swirl Flower:**

The Swirl Flower is a very common design used on cakes.

I usually pipe them on the top of the cake, alternating colors as I go. They also look pretty piped on the top of a cake, placed at 12 noon, and then 3, 6 and 9 o'clock, with one in between each.

Round Tips: #s 2D and 3

**Icing:** medium consistency for the flower and thin consistency for the center

Insert a coupler base in your Reusable or Disposable Pastry Bag and lock round Tip 2D onto it with your coupler ring. If you wish to use this large tip with a coupler, you'll have to cut an opening on a 12 inch Featherweight bag for the large coupler tip. If you do, however, you can only use this bag with the large coupler and large tips.

Fill bag half full with medium consistency Buttercream Icing. (Can be Tinted)

Make a parchment cone and insert round tip 3. Color a small amount of thin consistency icing in a contrasting color; fill parchment bag.

Hold the bag straight up with the end of drop flower tip 2D just touching the surface.

Turn hand holding bag keeping flat of knuckle at 9:00 (3:00). As you squeeze out the icing, slowly return your hand to 12:00. Stop squeezing and lift tip away. Make a dot in the center of the flower with round tip

You can make a variety of flower centers using round tip 3.

**Positions:**

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Bag: 90° angle (straight up)

Tip: for flower: lightly touching surface and for  
center: slightly above flower

Hand: - for flower: full twist counter clockwise  
(clockwise)

Flat knuckle at 9:00 (3:00); ends at 12:00

**Sequence:**

Lightly touch surface and turn wrist a full twist.

Squeeze out flower as you return your wrist to natural  
position.

Stop squeezing, lift tip away.

Add tip 3 dot to center.

## Creating Perfect Roses

I really prefer using the tip 127 roses on most of my cakes. The tip 104 roses are so small and I really like the almost life size of the 127 roses. I try to work with two or three shades of one color.

The darkest shade for the center of the flower and the first three petals.

The medium shade for the next four or five petals and the lightest shade for the last 5 to 7 petals. This gives the roses some depth in color and they have much more life to them than just one color roses.

When you've applied all the flowers you want, add a leaf or two to each one. Leaves make the cake look finished.

Using a bag of green icing, affix a leaf tip and make small leaves with one of the pointy sides of the tip facing down. As you finish the leaf, lift up so the tip sticks up. This makes it look more realistic.

When mixing the green icing for leaves and stems, add a little corn syrup - about 1 teaspoon for every 1/2 cup of buttercream. This will ensure that the tip of the leaf comes to a nice point without breaking off. This

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same trick works for icing to be used in writing. The icing will flow more smoothly.

Note: You will need to hold the bag at a 90o angle, with the tip almost touching the surface.

## **OTHER SHAPES**

### **Creating Stars**

Squeeze the bag to form a star, then stop the pressure, and pull the tip away. You may increase or decrease pressure, to change the size of the star. These are mainly used as borders around the edge of a cake.

### **Shells**

You will need to hold the bag at a 45o angle, with the tip slightly touching the surface, and the end of the bag pointing toward you. Squeeze with heavy pressure until the icing builds and fans out into a full base.

Then, you must lift the tip slightly and relax the pressure as you pull the tip down and toward you to make a tail. Next, stop the pressure completely and pull the tip away. Always work towards your body when you are making shells.

## **Ropes**

You will need to hold the bag at a 45o angle to the surface. Move the tip in a gentle sideways "S" curve as you squeeze the bag with a steady, even pressure.

Stop the pressure and pull the tip away. Now, tuck the tip under the bottom curve of the "S" shape and squeeze the bag with steady pressure as you pull down. Next, lift the tip, moving up and over the tail of the "S", as you continue to squeeze and form a hook.

Keep the spacing as even as possible, and the "S" curves uniform in thickness, length, and overall size.

Don't forget to tuck the tip into the bottom curve of the previous "S" before you begin squeezing to ensure the clean, continuous look of a rope.

## **OTHER FINISHING TOUCHES**

From fresh flowers to sugar-frosted fruits, garnishes add a whole new dimension to your cakes. They can be used for added color, a contrasting texture, or to indicate the flavor of the cake or filling.

You can dress up a plain angel food cake, a simply frosted layer cake, or a more elaborate torte with these techniques.

## **Flowers**

Fresh edible flowers make gorgeous and easy decorations. You can start with a frosted cake or a plain cake lightly dusted with confectioners' sugar: pile on the flowers such as sweet violets, lavender, honeysuckle, rose petals, borage, bachelor's buttons, johnny-jump ups, and calendulas.

For visual interest, you can add a dollop of whipped cream in the cake's center or slightly off-center so that some of your flowers are raised up off the surface of the cake; arrange the flowers like you would a floral arrangement.

- Dusting the flowers with superfine sugar adds an elegant, sparkly effect. (Candied violets and candied rose petals are available at cake decorating supply stores and some supermarkets.)
- Be sure when using flowers as a decoration that they are clean, all the parts you are using are non-toxic, and that they are pesticide-free.



**Note On Edible Flowers:**

Not all flowers are edible. Those that are must usually be purchased from specialty produce markets or supermarkets that carry gourmet produce.

They can be stored, tightly wrapped, in the refrigerator up to a week. Flowers that have been sprayed with pesticides (such as those found at florists') should never be eaten.

**Fruit**

Fresh berries are a colorful, flavorful addition to almost any dessert plate. They can be piled on top of your cake, whether plain, sugared, or glazed with a shiny syrup.

Whole strawberries placed around the outside of a chocolate cake add a touch of color, especially if they're livened up with a few fresh mint leaves.

Kiwi slices, grapes, orange sections, and strawberries can be arranged on the top of a cake and glazed with a sugar syrup or thinned melted jelly.

Fresh sliced figs with dollops of whipped cream arranged decoratively on the top of a cake are an artful touch.

### **Cake Stenciling**

For a more dramatic look, a design, lace paper doily or simple shapes can be placed on a frosted cake or cupcakes before dusting to make beautiful designs where the stencil cut-outs are.

Perfect ingredients for dusting can be: sifted confectioner's sugar or cocoa powder, flavored or tinted sugar, finely chopped nuts, or ground cinnamon, mixed with sugar.

There are store bought stencils or you can make your own.

For the sugar, dust the stencil right before serving because it will gradually dissolve. There is non-dissolving sugar available.

1. Freeze the cake for 15 minutes before stencilling so the stencil will not stick to the cake
2. Center a stencil on top of a cake.
2. Put several spoonfuls of confectioner's sugar, cocoa powder or cinnamon in a small, fine mesh sieve.
3. Hold it over the baked good, and lightly tap it with a spoon while moving it.
4. When done, carefully remove the stencil, doily or toothpicks so as not to spill extra on the cake, and voila !

A beautifully dusted design =)

Another great way to dust a cake is to use a stencil and dust with both confectioners' sugar and cocoa powder. Make two stencils, one for where you want to see the cocoa powder and one where you want to see the confectioner's sugar, making sure neither overlap.



Place the stencil on top of the cake and dust with confectioner's sugar (the lighter color, first). Carefully remove the stencil.

Be very careful not to disturb the cocoa powder, and place the second stencil on top of the cake again, this time making sure that the openings are on the parts of the cake that have not been dusted with confectioner's sugar.

Dust with cocoa powder, carefully remove the stencil.

When you remove the second one, you'll get a very graphic two-toned design.

## **Cake Decoration: Writing**

To add your own personal touch, you might consider writing a message on a cake. It's pretty easy to master if you take your time and follow the directions below.

### **Basics Freehand:**

Place your cake straight with the table so you won't write down hill. Your eyes see the table lines and if the cake is not sitting straight with the table (usually placed so you write downward) you may write downhill.

Not too much icing in the bag. Use the 'rule' small tip openings, small amount of icing in your bag.

Use thinner icing in small writing tips. You can thin with Karo syrup or piping gel, for elasticity.

This is easier, plus fancy too; write white 1st, then go trace on top with colored icing, same tip.

To center your writing on your cake you can BLOCK IT: Do the CENTER letter 1st, then write to your right, then to the left for the 1st letters of the word. (Be

sure to remember to count spaces as if they were words too).

You can write with piping gel. It comes out thicker from the tube, than does icing, so use smaller tips. Also avail. in tubes.

The reason icing letters don't stick and sometimes loosen, is when icing is too stiff and the cake is moved - cardboard bends, making icing break.

Solution? Thin down your icing. It was too thick.

You could lay a string above where you want to write, for guidelines, even add a small spatula mark.

If you do goof it, add a few "motion" lines, dots, or zigzags on the letters to camouflage.

If you smooth the cake with a paper towel, it is easier to "fix" when you must scrape off writing.

Even when doing "cursive" or script writing, you can still do one letter at a time as if you are printing. It is much easier to stay straight.

## **Advanced Frosting Techniques**

### **Leveling The Cake**

Poured glazes, like ganache or fondant, require a smooth starting surface--otherwise you'll end up with crumbs in the glaze or a lumpy-looking cake.

Prepare the cake by covering the top with a very thin layer of marzipan or buttercream frosting before glazing.

### **Poured Finishes: Prepping the Cake**

For marzipan, spread a thin layer of jam (or frosting, if you used some to fill the cake) to help the marzipan stick to the cake.



Roll out marzipan like you would a pie crust, using confectioners' sugar instead of flour to prevent sticking.

Use a dry pastry brush to dust away excess.

Transfer to the top surface of the cake and use scissors to trim to fit.



For a buttercream layer, use a recipe that uses mostly butter, not shortening: you will need to chill the cake in order to create a firm surface before pouring on the glaze.

Frost the whole cake, taking care to make it smooth and level--but don't worry about perfection or about crumbs in the coating, as you'll be covering it up with the fondant or ganache.

Chill until firm to the touch.



### **Glazing the Cake**

When you're ready to glaze, place the cake on a cooling rack set over a rimmed baking sheet. (The cake should be resting on a cardboard circle for easy maneuvering.)

Cake circles are available at baking supply stores and craft stores, or you can make your own. Simply cut a circle slightly smaller than the diameter of your cake pan.

You can also elevate the cake by resting it on an inverted dish or other makeshift stand; the idea is to make it easy to cover the cake with glaze without making a big mess. The baking sheet catches the excess and allows you to pour it back into a bowl for reuse.

The ganache or glaze should be warm enough to flow easily, but not hot--otherwise, it will melt the buttercream or lose its shiny finish. It should be about 90-100 degrees F (32-40 degrees C).

**Tip:** Use a glass measuring cup or small pitcher for easy pouring.

Start pouring at the center of the cake, moving to the sides; try to cover the entire cake in one shot.

You can use a small offset spatula to spread the glaze, but be very careful: don't spread too vigorously--you will lose the smooth surface and might gouge into the walls of the cake.

You're just trying to help the glaze flow.

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If you don't glaze the whole cake in one pour, you may re-use the glaze on the baking sheet. Reheat if necessary and proceed as above. Let coating set before decorating.

### **Fondant Overview**

Fondant is mouth-watering and melts in your mouth in no time at all. Fondant is a creamy white sugar, a thick mass used in different forms for the purpose of decorating cakes and cookies. There are different types of fondants such as rolled fondant and poured fondant.

In this section, you will view different types of cakes decorated with varied types of fondants.

Several fondants contain candies and fondants are available in plenty of varieties (white and brown chocolate, modeling paste) in the market. You can also make some of them at home.

Fondants are sometimes flavored with candy oils or with different chocolate powders.

### **Different types of Fondants**

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## Rolled Fondant - Sugar Paste

Rolled fondant or Sugar paste is used to cover different shaped cakes. It is not only used for decorating wedding cakes but is also used to give a distinct look to cakes for other occasions as well.

It gives a smooth and elegant look to all the cakes.

Rolled fondants that are available in the market are very similar to gumpaste and are different from the homemade varieties.

Rolled fondant dries up very easily, so remember to keep it covered or tightly wrapped in clingwrap while not in use. Ensure that you have the cake preparation complete prior to rolling out the sugar paste for covering the cake.

Due to its dough-like nature, fondants are used to cover the different layers and tiers of the wedding cake. Let us discover how to cover a cake with a rolled fondant.

## **Rolled Finishes**

Rolled fondant and modeling chocolate--plastic chocolate--also require a bit of finesse, but result in

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a smooth, matte finish on your cakes. They're a little more forgiving than glazes, allowing you to move flowers or other decorations without leaving a mark.

Prepare the cake by spreading a thin layer of jam or buttercream on the top so the fondant will stick.

(Many people dislike the sweetness of fondant and peel off the fondant layer before eating the cake, so it's nice to have a buttercream layer for flavor as well.)

A marble slab is ideal for rolling out fondant or plastic chocolate. Otherwise, make sure you have a clean, dry work surface.

Dust the counter with sifted confectioners' sugar (for dark chocolate, use sifted unsweetened cocoa powder) and roll out the fondant or chocolate to between 1/4 and 1/8 inch thick. Thinner is better, but it's also more difficult to achieve.

Brush off excess sugar and carefully transfer the fondant to the cake; before you lower it onto the sticky surface, make sure it's large enough to drape over the entire cake.

Starting in the center, gently smooth the coating toward the sides, pushing out any air bubbles, and smooth the fondant down the sides of the cake.

Use a sharp paring knife to trim the excess. If the bottom edge is ragged, you can decorate the bottom of the cake with a rope of fondant or piped icing.

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## **Frosting Recipes: Advanced Collection**

### **Rolled Fondant Recipe**

Makes a perfectly smooth coating for cakes. Roll it out to 1/4 inch thickness for best results.

Glucose and glycerin can be found at most cake decorating supply stores. You may color it with three drops of whatever food coloring you desire.



### **Original recipe yield:**

1 - 10 x 4 inch high cake (enough to cover)

PREP TIME            30 Min

COOK TIME           5 Min

READY IN            35 Min

### **INGREDIENTS**

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- \* 1 (.25 ounce) package unflavored gelatin
- \* 1/4 cup cold water
- \* 1/2 cup glucose syrup
- \* 1 tablespoon glycerin
- \* 2 tablespoons shortening
- \* 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 8 cups sifted confectioners' sugar

#### **DIRECTIONS**

Combine gelatin and cold water; let stand until thick.

Place gelatin mixture in top of double boiler and heat until dissolved.

Add glucose and glycerin, mix well. Stir in shortening and just before completely melted, remove from heat and stir in vanilla. Mixture should cool until lukewarm.

Place 4 cups confectioners' sugar in a large bowl. Make a well in the center and using a wooden spoon, stir in the lukewarm gelatin mixture.

Mix in sugar and add more a little at a time, until stickiness disappears. Knead in remaining sugar.

Knead until the fondant is smooth, pliable and does not stick to your hands. If fondant is too soft, add more sugar; if too stiff, add water (a drop at a time).

Use fondant immediately or store in airtight container in fridge.

When ready to use, bring to room temperature and knead again until soft.

### **Rolled Buttercream Fondant**

#### **INGREDIENTS**

- \* 1 cup light corn syrup
- \* 1 cup shortening
- \* 1/2 teaspoon salt
- \* 1 teaspoon clear vanilla extract
- \* 2 pounds confectioners' sugar

#### **DIRECTIONS**

In a large bowl, stir together the shortening and corn syrup. Mix in the salt and vanilla flavoring, and then gradually mix in the confectioners' sugar until it is stiff dough.

If you are using a stand mixer, use the dough hook attachment. Otherwise, knead by hand. If the dough is sticky, knead in more confectioners' sugar until it is smooth. Store in an airtight container at room temperature or in the refrigerator.

To use, roll out on a clean surface that has been dusted with confectioners' sugar until it is 1/8 inch thick or thinner if you can.

Drape over frosted and chilled cakes and smooth the sides down, or cut into strips to make bows and other decorations.



### **Quick Pour Fondant Icing**

#### **INGREDIENTS**

- \* 6 cups confectioners' sugar, sifted

- \* 1/2 cup water
- \* 2 tablespoons light corn syrup
- \* 1 teaspoon almond extract

### **DIRECTIONS**

In a saucepan, combine confectioners' sugar, water and corn syrup. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly, until it reaches a temperature of 92 degrees F (33 degrees C.) Mixture should be thin enough to pour, but thick enough to coat cake.

To cover cake: Frost cake smoothly with buttercream and place on a cooling rack with a cookie sheet underneath. Pour fondant over iced cake, flowing from center and moving out in a circular motion. Touch up sides with a spatula.

### **Decorating Cakes: Advanced Décor**

Working with chocolate can be intimidating, but ruffles and curls are easy to make--no tempering necessary.

### **Chocolate**

Chocolate curls, ruffles and leaves are impressive and decadent-seeming decorations. Chocolate curls can be made with a vegetable peeler by simply shaving off

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pieces the chocolate several times before shaving. Repeat this step of a chocolate block. (Try to buy part of a chocolate block from the bulk foods section or specialty store; regular chocolate bars are too thin for curls.) To get small flakes and curls, make sure the chocolate block is cold. For larger curls the surface of the chocolate should be slightly warm: rub the heel of your hand briskly over the surface of if the curls are brittle and start breaking.

For large curls and ruffles, spread melted chocolate in a thin layer over a marble slab or the back of a clean baking sheet.

Let the chocolate cool until set but not completely hard, and then scrape using a knife, spoon, or spatula (a clean 4-inch putty knife from a hardware store works well) depending on the size and the shape of the curl/ruffle you want. Experiment!

### **Chocolate Leaves**

These chocolate confections can be piled high, artfully scattered, or precisely placed on a cake. To make chocolate leaves:

Carefully brush melted chocolate onto a non-toxic leaf such as a rose leaf

Cool until chocolate has fully hardened, and gently peel off the natural leaf from the chocolate one.

For advanced bakers, tempering the chocolate before painting the leaves will make them firmer and more stable.

Arrange chocolate leaves around chocolate roses:

### **Flowers and Figures**

Marzipan can be shaped into animals, fruits, vegetables, flowers--any fanciful shape. Because it can easily be colored with food coloring pastes, marzipan is a favorite for shaping carrots for carrot cakes and other whimsical garnishes.

Dry food coloring or luster dusts can be dusted on the finished shapes for extra shading and shine.

Rolled fondant can be cut into flower shapes or molded, although it is not as flexible as marzipan or plastic chocolate. Plastic chocolate--white and dark--makes beautiful roses and leaves, but is not easy to tint.

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Brush with lustre dust (available at cake decorating and specialty shops) for a subtle blush of color.

Gum paste and pastillage are other decorative sugar dough's used by professional cake decorators; while "edible," these decorations are best for admiring, not nibbling.

All decorative doughs should be kept tightly wrapped in plastic to avoid cracking and drying out.

### **Piping**

For piped frosting decorations, practice makes perfect! If you're new to cake decorating, buy a set of decorating tips from a craft store or supermarket and a can of smooth icing.

Use a flat dinner plate or a cookie sheet to practice piping "Happy Birthday" or your desired message.

(Script may be easier for beginners than printing.) Play around with star tips to create rosettes and decorative borders; use plain tips for scribing messages or piping pearls.

If this is something you enjoy, you may wish to move on to roses, daisies and other more challenging designs.

For string work, lacy Cornelli designs, and other very fine piping work, you will need a smaller opening than commercial decorating tips provide.

Pastry chefs make their own parchment paper cones for piping tempered chocolate and royal icing in hair-fine strands.

You can try fine piping by using a disposable plastic pastry bag and cutting the smallest opening you can.

### **Plastic Chocolate Recipe**

Original recipe yield:

2 pounds

PREP TIME        15 Min

READY IN         5 Hrs 15 Min

### **INGREDIENTS**

- \* 1 pound semisweet chocolate, chopped
- 3/4 cup light corn syrup



### **DIRECTIONS**

Melt chocolate in a large metal bowl over a pan of simmering water. Stir occasionally until smooth. Remove from heat, and stir in the corn syrup. The mixture will become sticky, but keep stirring until very well blended

Spoon onto a piece of plastic wrap, and wrap tightly. Let stand at room temperature until firm before using. Overnight is best. Use unsweetened cocoa powder on work surfaces to prevent sticking.

### **Royal Icing**

This smooth, hard-drying icing is perfect for making decorations that last. It is also useful as a "cement" to fasten decorations together. Royal icing is edible, but not recommended for icing cakes.

Traditionally Royal Icing is made with fresh egg whites and icing sugar. This mixture is then beaten until white in colour and peaks can be formed.

Now though, with today's health & hygiene regulations, most people use a dried albumin-based powder in place of the fresh egg whites. You can still use egg whites but we find it is more convenient using the powder, as there are no shells to crack open and yolks to get rid of.

It is important that royal icing is made in bowls made of glass or metal as plastic bowls are porous and allow for impurities to enter the icing mixture.

This icing is ready to use, any time or anywhere, because of its thick consistency.

If a thinner royal icing is required for example to use in flood work thin the icing using egg white or small amounts of water.

Pre-mix packets of royal icing is available, to use this variety you only need to add small amounts of water to the dry mix until the right working consistency is reached, it is not difficult to make your own royal icing, try one of the following recipes.

## **Royal Icing Recipes**

Original recipe yield:

2 cups

### **INGREDIENTS**

- \* 4 egg whites
- \* 4 cups sifted confectioners' sugar
- \* 1 teaspoon lemon extract

### **DIRECTIONS**

Beat egg whites in clean, large bowl with mixer at high speed until foamy (use only grade A clean, uncracked eggs). Gradually add sugar and lemon extract. Beat at high speed until thickened. NOTE: When dry, Royal Icing is very hard and resistant to damage that can occur during shipping/handling.

## **Royal Icing 2**

Original recipe yield:

3 cups

### **INGREDIENTS**

- \* 3 tablespoons meringue powder

- \* 4 cups sifted confectioners' sugar
- \* 6 tablespoons water

### **DIRECTIONS**

1. Beat all ingredients at low speed for 7 to 10 minutes, or until icing forms peaks. Tip: Keep icing covered with a wet kitchen towel at all times. Icing can dry out quickly.

### **Royal Icing 3**

Original recipe yield:

4 cups

PREP TIME        10 Min

READY IN         10 Min

### **INGREDIENTS**

- \* 3 cups confectioners' sugar
- \* 1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar
- \* 2 egg whites, beaten

### **DIRECTIONS**

In a bowl, sift together confectioners' sugar and cream of tartar.



Using electric mixer, beat in 2 beaten egg whites for about 5 minutes or until mixture is thick enough to hold its shape.

### **Creating Roses with Royal Icing**

Royal icing with flowers is quite a fascinating sight. It is also light in weight and the flowers can be made many days in advance. As you can see in the picture, what value these little flowers add to the cake.

As mentioned above, you can have these flowers ready in advance and use them when you need them.

In case you have to make the Royal frosting flowers at the last minute, put them in the oven for at least 30 minutes at very low temperature. They do not absorb butter or cream or any greasy substance.

### **Decorator Frosting I**

"This is a pure white wedding cake frosting. You can double the recipe if you have a sturdy mixer.

Add milk according to purpose; you need less if you are making flowers or borders than if you are just covering

a cake. Remove what you need for decorating before you thin the rest down for frosting."

### **INGREDIENTS**

- \* 1 cup shortening
- \* 4 cups confectioners' sugar
- \* 4 tablespoons milk
- \* 1 1/2 teaspoons almond extract

### **DIRECTIONS**

Combine all ingredients in a mixing bowl. Beat on low speed of electric mixer until well blended and very smooth.



## **Color**

Color is as basic to your decorating as the icing and the cake. Choosing appropriate colors for your cake will help you capture just the mood you want for the occasion. When planning your cake, think about color.

Gather inspiration from the theme of your celebration. The icing colors you choose will carry that theme and personalize your decorating.

Look around, notice everyday objects - from a garden in bloom, to the clothes people wear. Which colors appeal to you? Use your favorite colors in your decorating.

Don't be afraid to try something different. Have fun using rich, bright colors or different color combinations. Begin by making a monochromatic cake, decorated all in white or in a single, pale color.

Try using color decorations in contrast to an all-white cake background. Decorate using all pastels or all primary colors. Experimenting with color will help you decide which colors work to make your cake designs spectacular.

## **Mixing Color in Icing**

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Begin with white icing and use concentrated icing color, which will not affect your icing consistency. Using standard food colors can thin down your icing and affect your ability to pipe certain decorations.

If you are tinting icing dark brown or black, begin with chocolate icing - your icing will not have the aftertaste that large amounts of these icing colors may produce. If you are tinting a large area red, use No-Taste Red.

Dip a toothpick into the color, and then swirl it into the icing. Add color a little at a time until you achieve the shade you desire.

Always use a new toothpick each time you add color; you want to avoid getting icing into your jar of color to make it last longer. Blend the icing well with a spatula.

Consider the type of icing you are using when mixing color. Icing colors intensify or darken in buttercream icing about 1-2 hours after mixing. Royal icing requires more color than buttercream icing to achieve the same color intensity.

Always mix enough of any one icing color for your entire cake.

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For example, if you are going to decorate a cake with pink flowers and borders, color enough icing for both.

It is difficult to duplicate an exact shade of any color, an important fact if you want to keep color consistent on the cake.

### **Bag Striping Effects**

You can easily pipe two-tone decorations just by adding a different color inside the bag before you put in your tinted icing.

This way, you can pipe flowers with natural light and dark tones or a rainbow-colored clown suit to brighten up the party.

### **Brush Striping**

Coloring Icing - Brush Striping Produces more intense multiple colors because it is done with straight icing color brushed into the bag.

Apply one or more stripes of icing color with a decorating brush, then fill the bag with white or pastel-colored icing.

As the icing is squeezed past the color, decorations will come out striped.



### **Spatula Striping**

Coloring Icing - Spatula Striping Produces two-tone and realistic pastel tones in flowers and figure piping.

It is done with pastel-colored icing, striped inside the decorating bag with a spatula. After striping, fill the bag with white icing or another shade of the same color as the striping. Squeeze out decorations with soft contrasts.



If the consistency of your icing is not right, your decorations will not be right either. Just a few drops of liquid can make a great deal of difference in your decorating results. Many factors can affect icing consistency, such as humidity, temperature, ingredients and equipment.

You may try using different icing consistencies when decorating to determine what works for you.

As a general guideline, if you are having trouble creating the decorations you want and you feel your icing is too thin, add a little more confectioners' sugar; if you feel your icing is too thick, add a little more liquid.

In royal icing recipes, if adding more than 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar to thicken icing, also add 1-2 additional teaspoons of Meringue Powder.

Stiff Icing is used for decorations such as flowers with upright petals, like roses, carnations and sweet peas. Stiff icing also creates figure piping and string work.

If icing is not stiff enough, flower petals will droop. If icing cracks when piped out, icing is probably too

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stiff. Add light corn syrup to icing used for stringwork to give strings greater elasticity so they will not break.

Medium icing is used for decorations such as stars, borders and flowers with flat petals. If the icing is too stiff or too thin, you will not get the uniformity that characterizes these decorations.

Thin icing is used for decorations such as printing and writing, vines and leaves. Leaves will be pointier, vines will not break and writing will flow easily if you add 1-2 teaspoons light corn syrup to each cup of icing. Thin icing is used to ice cakes smooth.

Begin with your prepared icing recipe, and add small amounts of the same liquid used in the recipe (usually milk or water) until the proper spreading consistency is reached.

### **Covering the Cake with Fondant**

To determine the diameter you need to roll fondant for covering your cake: measure opposite sides and top of cake across center; roll out fondant to that size, 1/4 inch thick.



For example, an 8 inch, two-layer cake, with two sides each 4 inches, equals 16 inches diameter.

For simple, accurate measuring, roll out the fondant on top of a Cake Dividing Wheel included in the Wilton Cake Dividing Set.

Prepare cake by covering with buttercream icing.



Before rolling out fondant, knead until it is a workable consistency. If fondant is sticky, knead in a little confectioners' sugar. Lightly dust smooth work surface and rolling pin with confectioners' sugar to prevent sticking.



Roll out fondant sized to your cake. Roll fondant with rolling pin, lifting and moving as you roll. Add more confectioners' sugar if necessary.



Gently lift fondant over rolling pin, or lift with the support of both hands, taking care not to tear it with your fingernails. Position on cake. If tear develops, pinch together.



Shape fondant to sides of cake with Easy-Glide Smoother. We recommend using the Smoother because the warmth of your hands may affect fondant. Use the straight edge of Smoother to mark fondant at base of

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cake; trim off excess using a sharp knife or pizza cutter.



Smooth and shape fondant on cake using palm of hand or Easy-Glide Smoother.

Beginning in the middle of the cake top, move the Easy-Glide Smoother outward and down the sides to smooth and shape fondant to cake and remove air bubbles.

If an air bubble appears, pop it with a pin and smooth area again.

## Cutting And Wrapping The Board



### Cake Board Preparation

For round, square and sheet cakes, you don't need to cut the cake board. Simply use a board that is 2 inches larger than your cake. (For example, if the cake is 8 in. diameter, buy a 10 in. round board.)

For any shaped cakes, cut a board to fit: Turn the pan upside down and trace onto your cake board, leaving 1 inch extra around the edges.

Cut board with a craft knife. Next, trace the cut board onto Fanci-Foil Wrap, making the outline 3-4 inches larger than the board.

Cut Fanci-Foil along the outline. Place your board, white side down, on top of your cut foil. Cut deep slits at several points along foil edge, creating tabs of foil to wrap neatly around the board. Secure foil tabs to the board with tape.

### **Filling the Layers**

Fill a decorating bag with medium consistency icing and use a large round tip, like tip 12. Or simply use the coupler without mounting a tip.

Starting with the bottom layer, leveled or torted side up, create a dam or circle of icing just inside the edge of the cake.

Creating a dam will prevent filling from seeping out when other layers are placed on top. To create the dam, squeeze a circle about 3/4 in. high and 1/4 in. from the outside edge.



Fill the dam with your choice of filling.



Place the next layer on top, making sure it is level. The weight of the layer will cause the circle of icing to expand just right. Repeat until all layers, except the top, are assembled.

Place the top layer, leveled side down, so the top of the cake is perfectly smooth and level.



### **Feathered frosting:**

Here's what you'll need to do feathered frosting:

- \* Two, contrasting colors of cake decorating gel
- \* Paring knife

Pipe line of first color of decorating gel in straight line across frosted cake, starting about 1 inch from top edge of cake top.

Pipe line of contrasting color gel straight across cake about 1 inch below first line.



# Continue to pipe lines of gel until about 1 inch from bottom edge of cake top, spacing lines about 1 inch apart and alternating colors.

# Carefully draw tip of paring knife straight down cake to form feathering, starting at left end of top line. Clean off tip of knife with paper towel.



Carefully draw tip of knife straight up cake to feather in opposite direction, starting at bottom edge of cake top and about 1 inch to the right of the first knife line. Repeat drawing knife through gels, alternating directions to form feathered design across entire cake top.





**Lattice (use basketweave tip):**

Hold bag so tip is at a 45-degree angle just above cake about 1/4 inch from top left of desired area to be covered with lattice and serrated side of tip facing out.

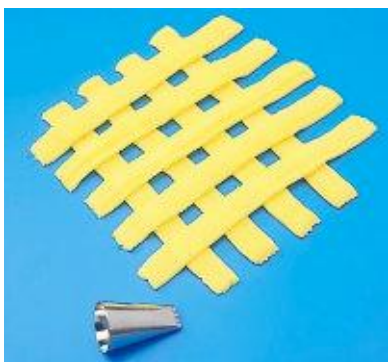
While gently squeezing, guide tip in straight line diagonally across area. Stop squeezing when line reaches 1/4 inch from opposite edge of area, then lift tip.

Repeat to make diagonal lines in same direction spaced about 1/4 inch apart.



Start about 1/4 inch from top of one diagonal line of frosting. Hold bag at a 45-degree angle with tip positioned just to the right of this line and serrated side of tip facing out.

While gently squeezing, guide tip straight down to pipe a line of frosting that criss-crosses diagonal lines. At the edge of desired area, stop squeezing, then lift tip. Repeat to make lines spaced about 1/4 inch apart across area.



Finish edges of desired area by piping a long line of frosting close to each edge.

**Basketweave (use basketweave tip):**

1. Hold bag so tip is at a 45-degree angle with serrated side of tip facing out and just above cake.
2. Position tip so it is about 1/2 inch from top left of desired area to be covered with basketweave.
3. While gently squeezing, guide tip in straight line vertically down desired area. Stop squeezing when

line reaches 1/4 inch from bottom left of desired area and then lift tip.

4. Continue to hold bag at a 45-degree angle with tip positioned 1/2 inch to the left of the vertical line at the top and serrated side of tip facing out.

5. Gently squeeze, guiding tip horizontally up and over vertical line of frosting to about 1/2 inch to right of vertical line. Stop squeezing, then lift tip.

6. Pipe additional horizontal lines to cover vertical line, each a tip's width apart.



# Pipe another vertical line, slightly overlapping edges of horizontal lines.

# Position tip slightly under first vertical line and pipe horizontal lines over second vertical line, filling in skipped spaces between first set of horizontal lines.

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# Repeat vertical and horizontal lines, always slightly overlapping edges of horizontal lines with the vertical lines and tucking tip under vertical lines when piping horizontal line.

Continue until desired area is covered with basketweave.



Finish edges of desired area by piping a long line of frosting close to each edge.

## **Marzipan**

Want to learn a fancy way of decorating cakes?

Marzipan!

### **Description:**

Marzipan has been used for centuries by pastry chefs all over the world. It can be used in baking and for covering and filling cakes. Marzipan looks fabulous for colorful cake decorations and figurines.

Marzipan has to have at least 25 % almonds otherwise it is considered almond paste. A thin layer of Marzipan can be used to cover a cake.

Colored it can replace the need for frosting. It is also used under Fondant, much like apricot glaze to protect the Fondant from moisture.

Quite simply, Marzipan is simply a mixture of almond paste, powdered sugar, and a moistening agent such as water, corn syrup, glucose, fondant, or egg whites.

After the ingredients are mixed, marzipan reaches a consistency of dough or soft rubber and can be rolled, shaped, cut, or molded.

Because marzipan is both delicious to eat on its own and simple to make, it is often used both as the icing for cakes and as decoration.

When used to ice a cake, marzipan is rolled into a thin sheet and draped over the cake, usually with a fruit glaze applied between the cake and marzipan so that the icing sticks more securely.

Once the marzipan is draped over the cake, the sides are carefully smoothed down so that the icing is uniform and free of bubbles or wrinkles.

Marzipan is used to decorate cakes in many other ways as well. Its soft, pliable texture allows a decorator to shape the marzipan into three dimensional shapes such as flowers, fruits, people, or animals.

The marzipan can be colored with food dye or air brushed, and with the right techniques, a skilled artist can make very realistic shapes.

Using cookie cutters or a sharp knife, marzipan can be cut into shapes, letters and numbers, which are then

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attached to the sides or top of a cake. These decorations add color, flavor, and texture to what might otherwise be a plain cake.

Besides its role in cake icing and decorating, marzipan is popular as a candy. Its sweet, nutty taste, all natural ingredients, and the often whimsical shapes it can take make it a favorite among both children and adults.

Marzipan can be purchased pre-made in many baking shops and candy or grocery stores.



## Working With Marzipan

Marzipan is best worked with at room temperature.

Always keep marzipan you are not working with covered, to prevent it from drying out. To tint the marzipan, knead in liquid food coloring ONE DROP AT A TIME.

A little food coloring goes a long way. For brown, knead in cocoa powder. You can also paint marzipan.

Allow your marzipan creation to skin over for two hours.

This will prevent the color from "bleeding" Add a drop of food coloring to a tablespoon of kirsch or any other clear liqueur. Use a small artist's brush to apply the color.

### **Here is a basic recipe for Marzipan:**

1 cup of almond paste  
2 egg whites  
23/4 cups of confectioner's sugar  
1/2 teaspoon vanilla



Knead the almond paste until it has softened.

Add eggs whites, mix. Knead in Confectioners sugar 1/4 cup at a time. Add vanilla and knead.

If storing for later use, wrap in plastic and place in a sealed container in the refrigerator.

Before using, allow it to stand at room temperature to soften and knead briefly.



The marzipan will harden quickly if not sealed. If the marzipan hardens, add a bit of water to soften.

To flatten marzipan before cutting, place in between two sheets of wax paper before rolling out.

Add food coloring in small amounts until desired color is achieved. Use toothpicks to make "realistic" indentations or add small bits of color.

## **Working With Ganache**

Ganache is a French term referring to a smooth mixture of chopped chocolate and heavy cream. The origins of ganache are debatable but it is believed to have been invented around 1850.

Some say it originated in Switzerland where it was used as a base for truffles. Others say it was invented in Paris at the Patisserie Siravdin.

To make ganache hot cream is poured over chopped chocolate and the mixture is stirred until velvety smooth. The proportions of chocolate to cream can vary depending on its use, but the basic form is equal weights of chocolate and cream.

Dark, milk, or white chocolate can be used to make ganache and different flavorings can be added such as liqueurs and extracts. Butter, oil, or corn syrup can also be added when a dark shiny glaze is desired.

### **General Guideline:**

To make a glaze or coating:

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1 part cream to 3 parts chocolate.

To make a truffle filling: 1 part cream to 2 parts chocolate.

To make a light filling: 1 part cream to 1 part chocolate.

Ganache is widely used in the pastry kitchen. When barely warm and liquid ganache can be poured over a cake or torte for a smooth and shiny glaze. If cooled to room temperature it becomes a spreadable filling and frosting. Refrigerated ganache can be whipped for fillings and frostings or formed into truffles.

The taste and quality of the ganache is primarily dependent on the quality of chocolate you start with. Remember not all chocolates are the same.

Chocolate begins with the beans from the tropical tree Theobroma which translates to "Food of the Gods".

There are three types of cacao beans (Forastero, Criollo, and Trinitario) and the type and/or blend of beans, their quality, and where they are grown all contribute to the quality and taste of the chocolate.

Other factors affecting taste and quality are how the beans are roasted, how the beans are ground into a mass called chocolate liquor, how much extra cocoa butter is added to the chocolate liquor, quality and amount of other ingredients added, and how long the chocolate liquor is conched (processed).

A chocolate with a higher cocoa butter content will produce a ganache that is firmer than one made with a chocolate that has a low cocoa butter content. A chocolate with a velvety smooth texture will produce a ganache that is velvety smooth.

The most important point to consider when choosing a chocolate for making ganache is whether you like the chocolate when eaten out of hand.

Ganache: Place the chopped chocolate in a medium sized stainless steel bowl. Set aside. Heat the cream and butter in a medium sized saucepan over medium heat. Bring just to a boil.

Immediately pour the boiling cream over the chocolate and allow to stand for 5 minutes. Stir with a whisk until smooth. If desired, add the liqueur.

Makes enough ganache to cover a 9 inch (23 cm) cake or torte.

The following page includes several Ganache recipes.

### **Ganache Recipes**

#### **Ganache Recipe:**

8 ounces (227 grams) semisweet or bittersweet chocolate, cut into small pieces

3/4 cup (180 ml) heavy whipping cream

2 tablespoons (28 grams) unsalted butter

1 tablespoons cognac or brandy (optional)

#### **Ganache Recipe #2**

##### **INGREDIENTS**

- \* 9 ounces bittersweet chocolate, chopped
- \* 1 cup heavy cream
- \* 1 tablespoon dark rum (optional)

##### **DIRECTIONS**

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Place the chocolate into a medium bowl. Heat the cream in a small sauce pan over medium heat. Bring just to a boil, watching very carefully because if it boils for a few seconds, it will boil out of the pot.

When the cream has come to a boil, pour over the chopped chocolate, and whisk until smooth. Stir in the rum if desired.

Allow the ganache to cool slightly before pouring over a cake. Start at the center of the cake and work outward. For a fluffy frosting or chocolate filling, allow it to cool until thick, then whip with a whisk until light and fluffy.

#### **To Cover a Torte or Cake:**

Note: If covering a cake that is to be refrigerated, make sure the cake is cold before covering with the ganache.

This will ensure that the ganache does not dull when stored in the refrigerator.

Brush any loose crumbs from the cake and place cake on a wire rack. Put the wire rack on a baking sheet. In

this way if the ganache drips it will end up on the baking sheet, which makes clean up easier.

Using a cake spatula, cover the sides and top of the cake with about 2 tablespoons ganache.

This is called a crumb coat and seals in any cake crumbs so that your cake will have a smooth finish. Refrigerate cake for 5 minutes to set the crumb coat. If you have any air bubbles or crumbs in your ganache, pour through a strainer.

To cover cake, pour the remaining ganache into the center of the cake.

Working quickly, spread with a spatula, using big strokes to push the ganache over the sides of the cake, to create an even coating of ganache.

If there are any bare spots on sides of cake, cover with leftover ganache. Leftover ganache can be strained to remove any crumbs and used to make truffles.

## **CREATING INCREDIBLY DELICIOUS GANACHE TRUFFLES**

Chocolate truffles are traditionally made with ganache shaped into rough spheres by hand and covered in cocoa powder.

The powdery coating and imperfect shaping of the confections make them appear similar to dirt covered truffles - the famed culinary fungi.

Chocolate truffles are easy to prepare at home and make irresistible desserts that will make you a welcome guest at any holiday party.

Even though the center of a truffle is traditionally ganache, truffles can be made with a variety of fillings ranging from nuts to caramel to nougat.

When not made with ganache, these truffles are generally coated in a thin shell of hard chocolate. The truffles in this recipe will be made with a ganache center.

Ganache is simply a mixture of chocolate and cream.

For the centers of these truffles, we'll make hard ganache - utilizing significantly more chocolate than cream. A ratio of about 2 to 1 of chocolate to cream by



mass will yield a dense ganache appropriate for making truffles.

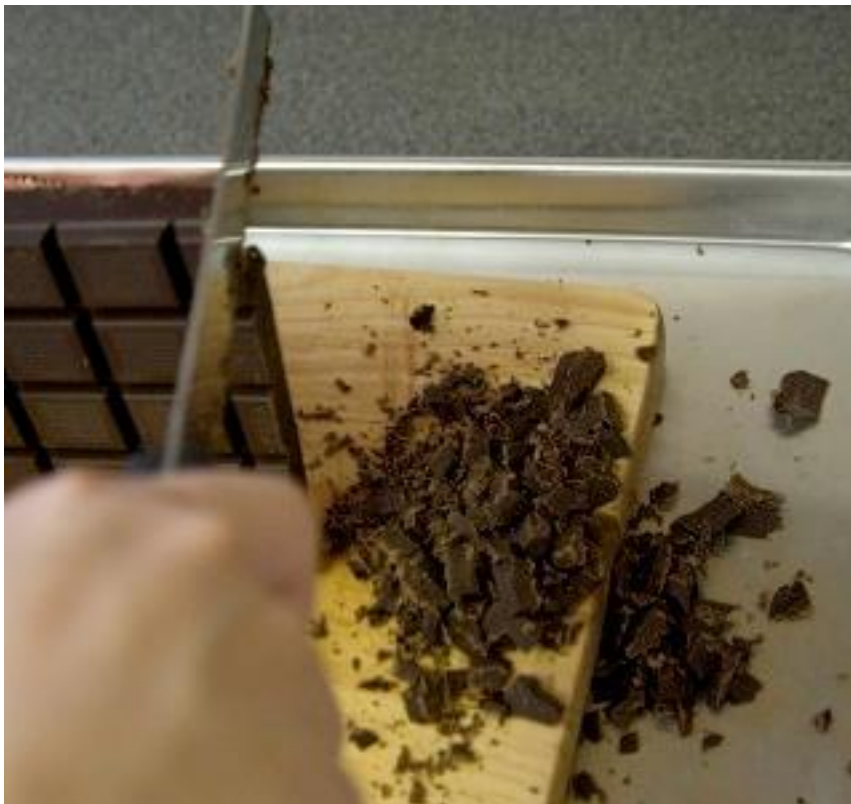
Obtain 1 pound (455 g) of dark chocolate and 1 cup (235 mL) heavy whipping cream. Be sure to select a chocolate that you enjoy the flavor of.



Cut the chocolate into pieces using a large serrated knife (like a sturdy bread knife).

Cutting the chocolate into strips about 5 mm apart with the serrated knife will cause the chocolate to break into small pieces.

Pieces of chocolate will fall all over the place, so I like to place the cutting board in a sheet pan to catch the chocolate shards.



After breaking down the whole pound of chocolate, you should have a bunch of similarly sized pieces.

Small, uniformly sized pieces will make melting the chocolate evenly easier. Pour all the pieces into a medium heat proof bowl.



Bring the cup of heavy whipping cream just to a boil.  
(This is called scalding.)



Pour the scalded heavy cream onto the chocolate and  
allow it to sit for five minutes.



Stir the now melted chocolate with the cream. Chocolate and small amounts of aqueous solutions (liquids containing water) do not mix well - the chocolate clumps up in what is called seizing.

However, when a substantial amount of liquid is added to the chocolate, we can make chocolate syrup.

A ganache is simply a syrup of chocolate and cream that does not contain enough cream to be liquid at room temperature. Once this mixture cools, it will form a hard ganache that can be molded into shapes.



The melted ganache should be smooth in texture without lumps. If not all the chocolate has melted, you can heat the ganache gently over a hot pot of water. Stir until the chocolate melts and the ganache is smooth.

You can transfer the ganache into a smaller bowl to cool. When the ganache is solid, it may be easier for you to scoop out when working with a smaller bowl.

Let the ganache cool down and chill for about an hour in the refrigerator to harden. Cold ganache is harder to scoop, but easier to form into a ball.



Using a melon baller or small ice cream scoop (such as a #70), scoop out balls of hard ganache and place on a cookie sheet lined with either parchment paper or a silicone baking mat.

As the ganache gets warmer, it will have a tendency to stick to the scooping device. You might find it easier to work with after rechilling the ganache, dipping the utensil in ice water, or simply using your hands to form rough spheres.





After forming all the balls, chill the pan in the refrigerator for fifteen minutes to allow the ganache to harden back up and set into their shapes.



Scoop a little cocoa powder into a small bowl. Use a pair of spoons to pick up and roll each ganache ball in the cocoa powder to coat.



If you prefer a hard chocolate shell, then you'll need to melt and temper some chocolate (usually, a couple ounces will be more than enough to coat the truffles). Once the chocolate has been tempered, use a spatula to spread some onto the palm of one hand.

Place the ball of ganache into the layer of chocolate and rotate, coating the ball.

Place the truffle on a sheet of parchment paper or silicone baking mat or other non-stick surface for it to cool and set. Repeat the spreading of chocolate on the palm and coating for each truffle.

The tempered chocolate will shrink slightly as it cools and clad itself to the ganache.



Because of this shrinking action, if it cools too rapidly, the shell can crack, so don't immediately chill them in the refrigerator - allow the truffles to set in a cool room. The ganache should also be allowed to warm up a bit before you coat them.

After the chocolate has hardened, chill for 15 minutes in the refrigerator and then remove and store at room temperature.

The chocolate-coated truffles should not be allowed to touch each other (touching the truffles together can mar the hard surface of the truffles) - so divide them with small paper cups or paper muffin liners.



The cocoa dusted truffles can be packed together without harm. These truffles can be stored at cool room temperature in an airtight container for at least a month - but good luck keeping them from being eaten for that long!



Chocolate Truffles (yields about 32 to 36 truffles)

Absolutely delicious!

## **Gum Paste 101**

Gum paste, also known as sugar paste, pastillage or sometimes called candy clay, is used for making all kinds of fancy decorations, such as long-lasting flowers, ribbons, bows, leaves, and just about anything else you can imagine.

It has a long and interesting history and has been used by confectioners to make edible decorations since the late medieval period.

Today it is quite popular with cake designers.

### **Gum Paste Recipe**

1 tablespoon Gum-tex or tragacanth gum  
1 heaping tablespoon glucose  
3 tablespoons warm water  
1 tablespoon lemon juice  
1 pound powdered sugar

Mix warm water and Glucose until Glucose is absorbed. Add the gum and lemon juice and, after these ingredients are thoroughly mixed, add small amounts of -powdered sugar until you can work the mixture with your hands.

Continue adding small amounts of powdered sugar as you knead the mixture on a tabletop.

As soon as the mixture is pliable and can be shaped without sticking to your fingers, you've added enough sugar (a pound or more) and the gum is of correct working consistency.

If you're not going to use the gum paste mixture immediately, place it in a plastic bag and then in a covered container to prevent drying. When stored properly, your gum paste will keep for several months. Gum paste handles best when it is several days old.

### **How to color gum paste**

Once you've made the gum paste recipe, you can tint it any color you desire, or divide the mixture and tint it several different colors.

To color gumpaste, apply small amounts of liquid or paste food color with a toothpick. Then with your hands, knead and work the color into the gum paste piece until the tint is evenly applied.

If you would like a deeper shade, you can add more color a little at a time, and re-work the gum paste

until you achieve the desired shade. Remember, you can always darken a color easier than you can lighten one.

### **How to roll out gum paste**

Always dust your work surface with cornstarch first! This is standard procedure for rolling out gum paste to cut any floral shape.

After your work surface is adequately dusted, take a small piece of gum paste, work it awhile with your hands and then place it on the LIGHTLY cornstarch-covered area.

Now dust more cornstarch on the surface of your rolling pin and roll out gum paste until it's the thickness you desire—this is usually about 1/16-inch for most flowers.

Remember, roll out one small piece of gum paste at a time to avoid drying; and cover every petal and flower cut you make.

### **How to hand-work gum paste**

When you remove gum paste from a plastic bag or covered container, you will need to re-work it with your hands until it's soft and pliable once again.

If the gum paste has been stored for some time and seems a little stiff, add a small piece of freshly made gum paste and then re-work it with your hands.

**Important reminders:**

ALWAYS dust work surface, rolling pin and your hands with cornstarch when handling gum paste and flower cuts.

ALWAYS keep gum paste and flower cuts covered to prevent drying.

ALWAYS add food coloring in small amounts until you achieve the gum paste tint you desire.

ALWAYS re-work gum paste before rolling it out to cut flowers and, if the gum paste has been stored for sometime, add a small piece of freshly made gum paste and re-work until pliable.

**Royal Icing Gumpaste**

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Make a double batch of Royal Icing Mix (above). At the end add 3 teaspoons of Sugarpaste gums.

This will make a very quick drying gumpaste. Wrap in plastic wrap and put into a Ziploc bag.

### **Pastillage**

Pastillage, pronounced PAHS-tee-AHJ, is a type of sugar-based dough used to make edible decorations -- edible meaning that they can be eaten, not that you should try to eat them.

### **Pastillage Recipe**

4 cups powdered sugar (set aside 2/3 cup)  
1 Tablespoon Sugarpaste gum mixture  
1/4 cup water

Grease the bowl, paddle/beater. On slow setting mix the powdered sugar and gum mixture.

Add water. Mix on slow setting. Grease the work surface, pour 2/3 cup powdered sugar on work surface.

Grease hands with Crisco. Put pastillage mixture onto sugar and knead very well.

The pastillage can be used immediately. However, it will dry out faster than gumpaste so don't use it for anything that takes a long time to make.

**TIPS:**

Wrap it up immediately -- pastillage begins to dry out in seconds. Keep the dough tightly wrapped at all times that you're not using it and remember to work quickly to avoid drying and cracking.



## Figure Piping

Figure Piping is a decorating technique used to form figures out of icing. The form figures normally consist of fruits, vegetables, animals, or people.

Figure piping forms the icing into different types of figures or things by the manipulation of the pastry bag, tips and icing. Special coloring techniques such as Bag Stripping can give piped decorations greater emphasis.

There is a reason I didn't go into detail with Figure Piping and that is because it really is an art in itself.

I suggest getting a copy of the best book out there on Figure Piping which is Roland A Winbeckler's "Figure Piping Ideas", available in paperback form at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

It's an entire world of decorating and creativity on its own, good luck!

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## **Private Swipe File Of Classic Recipes**

Here are all of the icing recipes that I use frequently.

Enjoy!

### **Coconut Icing**

20 oz. sour cream

2 cups sugar

Mix together. Set in refrigerator and let sugar dissolve.

Add 2-14oz. bags of coconut

This is very time consuming. The coconut must be patted and spread. Keep in refrigerator until completely served.

### **Mock Whipped Cream Icing**

1 cup milk

2 Tablespoons flour

pinch of salt

1/2 cup of butter, room temperature

1/2 cup of shortening, room temperature

1 cup granulated sugar

In a small saucepan, combine milk, flour and salt. Cook over medium heat about 5-7 minutes, until thickened. Cool. Combine butter, shortening and sugar in a medium bowl. Beat well. Add to cooled milk mixture, beating constantly. Beat about 7 minutes, until smooth.

This is a nice soft icing. Not intended for piping flowers.

### **No-Cook Marshmallow Frosting**

2 EGG WHITES

1/4 TSP. SALT

1/4 CUP FINE GRANULAR SUGAR (berry sugar)

3/4 CORN SYRUP

1-1/4 TSP. CLEAR VANILLA

Using electric mixer, beat egg whites and salt until soft peaks form. Add sugar gradually, beating constantly until smooth and glossy.

Add vanilla, and then slowly add corn syrup a little at a time, beating after each addition until the frosting peaks.

The finished icing has the texture and appearance of marshmallow cream. Use icing immediately.

Best used as a frosting on cake as it is too soft to decorate with. Pastel colors only.

### **Fluffy White Icing**

1/4 cup Butter  
1/2 cup Shortening  
1 cup Sugar  
3 tsp. Flour  
1 tsp. Vanilla  
1/2 cup Warm Milk

Beat all ingredients together with a electric mixer on med. speed until smooth and fluffy.

Takes approximately 10 minutes. (the longer you beat the fluffier icing will get )

### **Frosting for Angel Food Cake**

1 - 3 ounce package of flavored Jello crystals  
1 cup Sugar  
2 cups Whipping Cream

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Combine and beat all ingredients with an electric mixer on medium speed till stiff.

Split angel food cake into 3 layers and spread frosting between layers and over the top and sides.

Iced cake can be kept overnight in refrigerator and will not soak up.

### **Ganache Glaze**

1/2 cup Whipping Cream

14 ounce chocolate wafers or coatings

Break wafers into pieces.

Heat whipping cream in heavy saucepan just to boiling.

Remove from heat; add chopped wafers and stir untill smooth and glossy.

Cool slightly and pour over buttercream iced cake.

This recipe covers a 10 inch round cake

### **Maple Icing**

2 cups Butter  
3 cups Icing Sugar  
6 Tbsp. Maple Syrup  
1 tsp. Orange Juice Concentrate  
1 tsp. grated lemon rind

Cream together all ingredients with electric mixer on med. speed until icing is fluffy.

### **7 Minute Vanilla Frosting**

1/2 cup Cold Water  
1 Egg White  
1 cup Sugar  
1/4 tsp. Baking Powder  
1 tsp. Vanilla

Combine water, egg white and sugar in top of double boiler. Beat 5 - 7 min. on medium speed with electric mixer over boiling water till frosting stands in peaks.

Remove from heat and beat in baking powder and vanilla.

Frosts 8-inch cake.

**Fluffy Bakeshop Icing recipe**

1 1/2 cups milk  
2 tablespoons cornstarch  
1/2 cup vegetable shortening  
1/2 cup margarine (no butter)  
1 cup granulated sugar  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1 teaspoon almond extract

Mix milk with cornstarch. Cook until thick, stirring constantly. Set aside to cool.

Cream vegetable shortening, margarine and sugar. Beat with electric mixer for 10 full minutes.

Combine second mixture with the first. Add vanilla and almond extracts; beat both together until creamy. The mixture should look like whipped cream.

Put on cooled cake.

This makes enough frosting for a 13 x 9-inch cake.

### **French Silk Frosting recipe**

2 2/3 cups confectioners sugar

2/3 cup butter, softened

2 (1 ounce) squares unsweetened chocolate, melted and cooled

3/4 tablespoon vanilla extract

2 tablespoons milk

In a medium bowl, blend confectioners sugar, butter, melted chocolate and vanilla extract on low speed. Gradually add milk, beating until smooth and fluffy.

### **Chantilly Cream Filling recipe**

3/4 cup heavy cream

1/4 cup confectioners sugar

1 egg white

1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

Place chilled cream in ice-cold bowl and beat until stiff. Add sugar, white of egg beaten stiff and vanilla extract. After cake or pastries are filled, keep cool until ready to serve.

### **MERINGUE ICING**



\* SIFT TOGETHER: Pinch of salt (ice-cream salt is finer)

\* 6 tb Meringue powder

\* 2 cups Granulated sugar

\* ADD & BEAT STIFF 7-10 MIN:

\* 1 cup Hot water ADD & BEAT MORE:

\* 1/2 cup Warmed glucose Available [HERE](#)

\* ADD AT END & BEAT:

\* 1 teaspoon or more Flavorings

Set a measuring cup in hot water and add glucose. Stir until warm and thin. Add as directed above. Add almond extract and (clear) vanilla to taste. Add this only at the end, to prevent icing from breaking down.

Don't add butter flavor, may contain fat! Using "fine" sugar and salt is not necessary as long as you aren't going to press the icing through very fine decorating tips (#1,0,00, or 000). I use regular.

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NOTE: This icing is like the insides of marshmallows without the coating. It is the same as 7-minute icing without the cooking time.

Be sure all utensils used are grease-free. Any bit of grease will break the icing down to soup.

Very good-tasting =)

Great to use this type when adding coconut because it never crusts. Great to decorate with.

Makes wonderful flowers, but remember, they don't crust.

I have made flowers with it and they would crust - after a few weeks, but every time it rained, they got sticky again.

This icing is the type used by professionals who do lots of big figure-piped characters, since it is so smooth and especially since it is so light-weight.

### **Wilton's Buttercream Icing Recipe**

1 lb. (1 box) confectioners 10X sugar  
1 tablespoon Wilton Meringue Powder  
1 cup solid vegetable shortening (Snowdrift was recommended because it's the whitest)  
2 tablespoons water, warm  
1/2 teaspoon white popcorn salt  
1 teaspoon Wilton's clear vanilla extract  
1 teaspoon light Karo syrup  
icing colors

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Sift the confectioners sugar and meringue powder into a large mixing bowl and set aside.

Cream the shortening.

Dissolve the salt in the warm water.

Add the water and extract to the shortening and mix.

Gradually add the sugar, no more than 1 cup at a time, stopping to scrape the sides of the bowl.

With a hand mixer, mix for 5 minutes on medium speed.

With a stand-up mixer, mix on low for 2 minutes.

For the three different icing consistencies:

**STIFF:**

The above recipe will give you your stiff consistency.

After mixing, remove 1 cup for make flowers.

**MEDIUM:**

To the remaining 2 cups add 2 teaspoons of water.

Remove 1 cup for borders and flowers with petals that lie flat.

**THIN:**

To the remaining 1-cup add 1 teaspoon of light Karo syrup. This will give the icing more elasticity for icing the cake.

## **Conclusion: Final Words**

I hope you enjoy the frosting recipes, and I also hope that you found the techniques in this e-book helpful.

I am constantly adding new information and special tips, and I will be sure to notify you when new editions or revisions are available, absolutely free =)

To your success!