

## Simple Cake Decorating Ideas

Cake decorating is not as difficult as it seems. We look at the elaborately decorated masterpieces and feel completely intimidated. Here are a few simple ideas and hints to make your cake decorating project a winner.

- Buy readymade cakes, or make your cake from a mix.
- Make sure you have several pastry bags, a coupler, a flower nail, and 6 icing tips- #824 large open star, #23 small open star, #104 small rose, #125 large rose, and #109 and #129 drop flowers.
- A turntable makes icing a cake much easier. A lazy susan will work.
- Use decorations that are already made- fresh flowers, silk flowers, ribbons, and fruit are some of the items you can use.
- Always brush fresh fruit with a glaze to seal in moisture.
- Use a decorative cake plate or platter to present your cake.
- Use Ganache icing.

## Ganache

1 pound semi sweet chocolate, finely chopped  
1 cup heavy cream or evaporated milk  
1/4 cup sugar  
4 tsp. unsalted butter

Place the chocolate in a bowl.

Combine cream, butter, and sugar in a pan, bring the mixture to a boil. Pour the mixture over the chocolate, stirring gently until it is melted. Using royal or buttercream icing, ice the cake with a thin coating, and freeze for 15 minutes.

Place a cooling rack on a cookie sheet.

Make sure the icing is set, and place the cake on the cooling rack.

Quickly pour the ganache over the top of the cake and down the sides. You can use a spatula to smooth the surface if needed. The hot ganache will melt the icing, so only smooth as necessary. Tap the rack to remove any excess ganache, this can be refrigerated for later use.

Chill the cake until set, remove to a serving platter.

#### Fruit Flan

You can choose to purchase a pre-made flan, or bake one yourself.  
Slice your choice of assorted fruit and arrange it on the cake surface in concentric circles.  
Coat with apricot glaze.  
Serve on a decorative cake plate or platter.

#### Apricot Glaze

12 oz. jar of apricot jam  
2-3 tbsp. Water

Combine jam and water in a saucepan.  
Bring ingredients to a boil.  
Strain glaze and keep in the refrigerator until needed.  
Heat to brush on fruit.

#### Piping

Using a pastry bag and the tip of your choice, you can create a number of cake decorations, ranging from flowers to simple borders. Basic icing recipes can be found on the internet. Work on a piece of waxed paper before you apply any icing to a cake.

#### Edible Flowers

Apply icing to your cake  
Decorate the cake with piping if you desire  
Distribute edible flowers in a decorative fashion

I hope that any, or all, of these tips will help you with your cake decorating projects. My suggestion is to gather all of the tips, tricks, and ideas you can find and print them out. Put your collection in a binder and the next time you are having a problem with your cake decorating project, you will have an answer at your fingertips.