



4-H

# CAKE DECORATING

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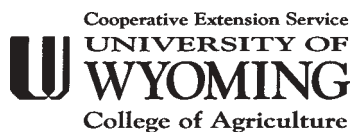
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# PROJECT INFORMATION

## Introduction

When you bake and decorate a cake for a special occasion, the smiling faces around the table will be your greatest reward.

After a few lessons and a lot of practice you will be able to decorate beautiful cakes for birthday parties, anniversaries, and other special days. You can practice on practice boards, waxed paper, or freezer paper (waxed side up) taped to cardboard—or even a cake pan turned upside down. Once you decorate the practice surface, scrape the icing off and use it over again.

## Cake decorating records

Keeping records or descriptions of your decorated cakes is important. Either take a picture or draw a simple diagram of each cake you decorate, then give a short explanation of what you did and what you learned, even if you had problems. Also, keep a record of expenses and compare the amount to what it would have cost to buy a decorated cake.

## Cake decorating levels

The 4-H Cake Decorating Project offers four levels. These levels are:

**Level 1:** Beginning cake decorating—let's begin.

**Level 2:** Intermediate cake decorating—flat surface flowers, roses, and layer cakes.

**Level 3:** Advanced cake decorating—stacked cakes, side decorations, lily nail flowers, and more flowers.

**Level 4:** Master cake decorating—design your own.

This cake decorating manual contains goals, skills, and techniques for the project's four levels. Study these goals and establish your own goals

each year. Refer to the table of contents to find information for each project level.

Place this manual in a loose-leaf binder. You may want to keep your cake decorating records in the same binder and add other information as you progress.

## Basic supplies

1. Straight-sided cake pan or pans, preferably 8 inches round, 3 inches tall.
2. Metal spatula with a rounded end (8 inches or 11 inches, depending on your hand size).
3. Decorating bags, three types are available.
  - Featherweight® or plastic bag with or without coupler. (The coupler allows the decorator to change tips on the same bag.) Beginners should start with three 10-inch Featherweight® bags.
  - Clear plastic disposable bags, usually available in packages of 12 or 24.
  - Parchment or plastic-coated freezer paper.
4. Decorating tips (see your particular level for specific tips needed).
5. Three types of food colorings
  - Paste color
  - Liquid coloring
  - Powdered coloring



6. Box for storing all supplies together. Mark all supplies with your initials for easy identification, and store tips separately as they can be easily dented or bent. Tips can be marked with an engraver or fingernail polish.
7. Folder to hold your manual, cake records, and other paperwork.
8. Flat plate or cake board for displaying decorated cake.
9. Revolving cake stand or turntable (optional).

## 4-H cake decorating

The Wyoming 4-H Cake Decorating project is divided into four skill levels:

### **LEVEL 1: The Beginning Decorator**

Members will learn to bake and frost single-layer cakes and learn simple decorating procedures.

### **LEVEL 2: The Intermediate Decorator**

Members will learn how to bake two-layer cakes and make flat surface flowers, simple flower nail flowers, roses, a variety of borders, and special effects like Cornelli lace, lattice work, basket-weave, and others.

### **LEVEL 3: The Advanced Decorator**

Members will learn to bake stacked and tiered cakes, master all flat surface flowers, and learn to make flowers using the lily nail.

### **LEVEL 4: The Master Decorator**

Members will design their own projects using the skills learned from previous levels.

## Skills, techniques, and goals

The skills and techniques learned in this project are listed in the chart found on pages 3 to 8. They are divided by subject with the skill level listed down the left side of the chart. Your 4-H leader and parents can help you identify the skills you want to learn according to the level in which you are enrolled. Then, as the year progresses, you can check to see what you have learned and what you still have to do. Refer to pages 3 through 8 in this manual to see what will be learned in each level.

You might like to try a technique above your skill level, and you may have to repeat some methods. However, you should master the minimum number of required items in each decorating level before moving on to the next level. Stay in a level for more than one year if you have not mastered the required skills.



# Decorating skills and techniques

L E V E L	<b>SKILLS AND TECHNIQUES</b> Write year accomplished in small box.	Want to learn	Tried	Needs improvement	Average skill developed	Above average skill developed	MASTERED	Notes or comments
<b>THE CAKE</b>								
Master all the items in your level before advancing to the next level.								
1, 2	Bake and prepare level cake							
1	Prepare single-layer cake (minimum 5)							
1, 2	Prepare cut-up cake							
1, 2	Prepare a cake in a shaped specialty pan							
2	Prepare one- and two-layer cakes (minimum of 5)							
2,3	Cut cakes for serving using different methods							
3	Prepare a level, stacked cake							
3	Prepare a level, tiered cake							
<b>FROSTING THE CAKE</b>								
Master all the items in your level before advancing to the next level.								
1, 2	Achieve proper consistency of icing for frosting the cake							
1, 2	Frost a smooth cake for decorating							
2	Prepare a "filled" cake							
<b>ICINGS</b>								
Master all the items in your level before advancing to the next level. Achieve the proper consistency for making the following:								
<b>BUTTERCREAM ICING</b>								
1	Decorations of stars, flowers, leaves							
1, 2	Borders							
1, 2	Writing							
2	Flowers							
2	Combination borders							
2	Figure piping							
2, 3	Side decorations							
3	Drop string work							
<b>ROYAL ICING</b>								
2, 3	Flowers							
2, 3	Figure piping							

LEVEL	SKILLS AND TECHNIQUES Write year accomplished in small box.	Want to learn	Tried	Needs improvement	Average skill developed	Above average skill developed	MASTERED	Notes or comments
<b>COLORING TECHNIQUES</b> Master all the items in your level before advancing to the next level.								
1	Basic color blending							
2	Brush striping							
2	Spatula striping							
3	Deep color effects							
3	Painting							
<b>BORDERS AND SIDE DECORATIONS</b> Level 1: Try all Level 1 items and master at least four before advancing to next level.								
1	Star							
1	Pullout star							
1	Shell with star tip							
1	Shell with writing tip (beads)							
1	Rosette							
1	Star puff							
1	"C" motion							
1	Zagzag							
1	Dots							
1	Leaf							
<b>Level 2: Try all Level 2 items and master at least four before advancing to next level.</b>								
2	Reverse shell							
2	Horizontal "C"							
2	Rope							
2	"S" scroll							
2	Plume							
2	"e" motion							
2	Ruffle							
2	Puff							
2	Zagzag puff							
2	Ribbon							

L E V E L	<b>SKILLS AND TECHNIQUES</b> Write year accomplished in small box.	Want to learn	Tried	Needs improvement	Average skill developed	Above average skill developed	MASTERED	Notes or comments
		<b>COMBINATION BORDERS AND SIDE DECORATIONS</b>						
<b>Level 1: Try all Level 1 items and master at least two before advancing to next level.</b>								
1	Rosette and star							
1	Leaf and drop flower							
1	Shell and flute							
<b>Level 2: Try all Level 2 items and master at least three before advancing to next level.</b>								
2	"S" scroll and drop flower							
2	Dot and heart							
2	Puff and drop flower							
2	Shell puff and ruffle or zigzag							
2, 3	Basket weave							
<b>Level 3: Try all Level 3 items and master at least three before advancing to next level.</b>								
3	Bow trimmed strings							
3	Crown							
3	Drop strings							
3	Lambeth method							
3	Fleur-de-lis							
3	Flower and vine							
3	Ribbon and ball fringe							
3	Ribbon swag							
3	Shirred ribbon and shell							
3	String lace							
3	Triple drop strings							
3	Zigzag garland and ruffle							
<b>LEAVES</b>								
<b>Level 1: Try all Level 1 items and master at least one before advancing to the next level.</b>								
<b>Level 2: Continue working on leaves until all are mastered.</b>								
1, 2	Plain leaf							
1, 2	Stand up leaf							
1, 2	Ruffled leaf							
1, 2	Holly							
2	Violet leaf							

LEVEL	SKILLS AND TECHNIQUES Write year accomplished in small box.	Want to learn	Tried	Needs improvement	Average skill developed	Above average skill developed	MASTERED	Notes or comments
<b>FLOWERS</b> Try all Level 1 flowers. Master at least three before advancing to next level.								
1	Drop flowers, one squeeze star							
1	Drop flowers, swirl							
1	Free hand (star tip)							
1	Rosette							
1	Rosette with star center							
1	Star puffs							
1	Stars							
1	Variety (writing tip)							
<b>FLAT SURFACE FLOWERS</b> Level 2: Master six flowers, any combination of flat surface and flower nail flowers.								
1, 2	Rosebud							
1, 2	Sweet pea							
2	Bleeding heart							
2	Lily of the valley							
2	Half carnation							
2	Half rose							
<b>FLOWER NAIL FLOWERS</b> Level 3: Try several new flowers and master four new flowers (either flat flower nail flowers or lily nail flowers).								
2, 3	Apple blossom							
2, 3	Aster							
2, 3	Bachelor button							
2, 3	Brown-eyed susan - daisy variation							
2, 3	Chrysanthemum							
2, 3	Daffodil and jonquil							
2, 3	Daisy							
2, 3	Dogwood							
2, 3	Forget-me-not							
2, 3	Full carnation							
2, 3	Narcissus							
2, 3	Pansy							
2, 3	Poinsettia - method 1							
2, 3	Poppy							
2, 3	Rose							
2, 3	Sunflower							
2, 3	Violet							
2, 3	Wild rose							
2, 3	Other flat flower nail - describe							



L E V E L	SKILLS AND TECHNIQUES Write year accomplished in small box.	Want to learn	Tried	Needs improvement	Average skill developed	Above average skill developed	MASTERED	Notes or comments
		<b>LILY NAIL FLOWERS</b>						
3	Bluebell							
3	California poppy							
3	Easter lily							
3	Morning glory							
3	Nasturtium							
3	Poinsettia - method 2							
3	Petunia							
3	Other lily nail - describe							
<b>LETTERING</b>								
Master all the items in your level before advancing to the next level.								
1	Dots							
1, 2	Lettering forms - fill in with dots or lines							
1,2,3	Printing							
2, 3	Script (cursive)							
<b>SPECIAL EFFECTS</b>								
Level 1: Try all Level 1 and 2 items. Master at least two before advancing to the next level.								
1	Combing							
1, 2	Grass, fur, or hair							
1	Outline and fill in							
1	Paper pattern							
1, 2	Stencil applications							
1, 2	Sugar mold, solid							
Level 2: Try all Level 2 items. Master at least three before advancing								
2	Color flow* (pictures with thinned icing)							
2	Cornell lace							
2	Figure piping							
2	Haystacks							
2	Lattice design							
2	Pine cones							
2	Pine needles and cat whiskers							
2	Royal icing lace							
2	Sotas							
2	Sugar mold, hollow							
2	Trees							
2	Wheat							

L E V E L	SKILLS AND TECHNIQUES Write year accomplished in small box.	Want to learn	Tried	Needs improvement	Average skill developed	Above average skill developed	MASTERED	Notes or comments
<b>Level 3</b> Try all Level 3 items. Master at least two before advancing.								
3	Austrian lace							
3	Chocolate modeling - flowers							
3	Chocolate modeling - leaves							
3	Fondant, cooked							
3	Fondant, rolled, cake covering							
3	Fondant, rolled, flowers and decorations							
3	Gum paste							
3	Marzipan							
3	Pulled sugar							
3	Wires with assorted decorations attached							



# Level 1: Beginning cake decorating

## LET'S BEGIN Supplies

1. Basic supplies listed for all units (Project information, page 1).
2. Decorating tips—Four types are suggested; however, you may select any that give the desired results.
  - One plain round or writing tip - 3 or 4
  - One leaf tip - 67 or 352
  - Three star tips - 16, 18, 22, or 25, 27, and 31 or 35
3. Practice surface
4. Optional:
  - Special molds—sugar, candy, and gelatin
  - Shaped cake pans

## Goals

1. Develop basic skills in cake decorating.
2. Combine color, design, and flavors in a pleasing way.

Objectives	Activities
1. Bake and frost a single-layer cake that will be good for decorating.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Read Section B, The Cake, pages 21 through 28.</li> <li>♦ Practice baking and frosting single layer cakes until you master a level cake with smooth icing. Try different frosting recipes and methods until you get a smooth icing. Decorate cakes for special occasions, take photos of your cakes.</li> </ul>
2. Prepare icing that is the proper consistency for borders, drop flowers, and lettering.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Read Section C, Frosting the Cake, pages 29 through 36.</li> <li>♦ Prepare stiff, medium, and thin consistency icing. Try different designs on your practice surface.</li> <li>♦ Experiment with different buttercream frosting recipes for different cakes.</li> </ul>
3. Develop a skill in using professional cake decorating equipment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Practice making cones from parchment paper. Experiment by filling the bags to different levels, and see what works best for you.</li> <li>♦ Compare parchment cones with cloth, plastic, and disposable decorating bags to see which you prefer.</li> <li>♦ Experiment with bags using just a tip and then a coupler and a tip.</li> <li>♦ Experiment with different tips to see how many designs you can make, including star, leaf, writing, and drop flower tips.</li> <li>♦ Make and decorate different solid sugar molds.</li> <li>♦ Make a salad or dessert using a gelatin mold and decorate it.</li> <li>♦ Bake and decorate a cake using a shaped cake pan.</li> </ul>

Objectives	Activities
<p>4. Develop basic skills in cake decorating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Three Level 1 borders</li> <li>b. All Level 1 lettering skills</li> <li>c. Three Level 1 flowers</li> <li>d. One Level 1 leaf</li> <li>e. Two Level 1 special effects</li> </ul>	<p>Use a practice surface to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Try making all Level 1 borders.</li> <li>♦ Practice all Level 1 lettering skills.</li> <li>♦ Try making all Level 1 flowers.</li> <li>♦ Try making all Level 1 leaves.</li> <li>♦ Design a stencil and use it to decorate a cake.</li> <li>♦ Design a paper pattern, transfer it to the cake, and decorate.</li> </ul>
<p>5. Bake and decorate a minimum of five cakes for special occasions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Plan and make decorated cakes for special occasions using various colors, designs, and flavors. Take pictures of all cakes to show improvements.</li> <li>♦ Plan, bake, frost, and decorate a single-layer cake for a special occasion.</li> <li>♦ Plan, bake, frost, and decorate a cut-up cake.</li> <li>♦ Plan, bake, frost, and decorate a cake using a special shaped pan.</li> <li>♦ Compare the cost of home-decorated cakes with bakery cakes.</li> </ul>

## Exhibit

Decorated cake using a minimum of four different skills and techniques learned in this unit: cake frosted smoothly, proper icing consistency for decorations, borders, drop flowers, writing, and leaves.

4. Cake baked in shaped cake pan (one technique) and three additional skills or techniques (for a total of four skills and techniques) learned in this unit.
5. Educational display showing techniques learned (posters, record books, etc.)

## Additional exhibits

1. Decorated cake using either the stencil or outline technique (one technique) with three additional skills or techniques (for a total of four skills and techniques) learned in this unit.
2. Cut-up cake (one technique) using a minimum of three additional skills or techniques (for a total of four skills and techniques) learned in this unit.
3. Cake or exhibit using solid sugar molds (one technique) and three additional skills or techniques learned in this unit (for a total of four skills and techniques).

## Judging standards

1. Each exhibit should show a minimum of four different skills or techniques learned in this level.
2. Cakes should have uniform shape and thickness and be level (except cut-up cakes and cakes baked in special shaped pans).
3. Cake forms (Styrofoam™) are better for exhibits than actual cakes.  
(Note: State Fair exhibits are required to be cake forms.)
4. Cakes should be placed on disposable cake boards which may be covered with plastic or paper doilies.

5. Cakes should be frosted neatly; however, extremely smooth frosting is not necessary.
6. Design of decorations should be suitable for the size and shape of the cake. A decorated cake should show good use of color and a pleasing combination of decorations.



## Record books

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1. A record book should be neat and contain the following: beginning and ending inventory, goals, one individual cake record for each cake decorated during the project, leadership activities, and a project story.
2. A record book should show that the member has decorated a minimum of five cakes during the project year.
3. Pictures or simple diagrams and explanations may be used. Other cakes decorated while taking this unit may be included.

# Level 2: Intermediate cake decorating

## FLAT SURFACE FLOWERS, ROSES, AND LAYER CAKES Supplies

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1. Basic supplies listed for all units (page 1).
2. Decorating tips—four types are suggested. You may already have some of these tips from Unit 1.
  - Plain round or writing tips - 2, 4, 7
  - Leaf tips - 69, 75, 352
  - Star tips - 16, 18, 20, 22 or 25, 27, and 31, or 35
  - Petal tips - 104, 150

- Flat flower nail - 7
  - Basket weave tip - 47 or 48
3. Sugar molds for hollow sugar molding. For example, Easter egg, ball, or bell.
  4. Color Flow® icing mix.
  5. Artificial cake form (may be used for exhibit) can be purchased from a craft store or made from Styrofoam™.

## Goals

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1. Develop intermediate skills in cake decorating.
2. Develop intermediate skills in combining color, design, and flavors in a pleasing way.

Objectives	Activities
1. Bake and frost one- or two-layer cakes that will be good decorating bases.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Bake and frost one- and two-layer cakes until you master a level cake with smooth icing appropriate for decorating.</li> <li>♦ Try filling a two-layer cake with jam, pudding, or another filling.</li> <li>♦ Take pictures or make sketches of all activities to show progress.</li> </ul>
2. Prepare royal icing for decorating.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Make royal icing, and practice making flowers and decorations with it.</li> </ul>
3. Develop intermediate cake decorating skills by mastering the following Level 2 skills and techniques: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Borders:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ four single borders</li> <li>♦ three combination borders</li> </ul> </li> <li>b. All lettering skills.</li> <li>c. Six flowers, any combination:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Flat surface flowers</li> <li>♦ Flowers made on a flower nail</li> </ul> </li> <li>d. All Level 2 leaves.</li> <li>e. At least three Level 2 special effects.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Make all Level 2 borders.</li> <li>♦ Experiment making different lettering styles.</li> <li>♦ Practice all Level 2 flat surface flowers and flowers made on a flower nail.</li> <li>♦ Practice all Level 2 leaves.</li> <li>♦ Make a hollow sugar mold and decorate.</li> <li>♦ Make a variety of figures using the figure piping technique and use them to decorate a cake or hollow sugar mold.</li> <li>♦ Stripe a decorator bag to make borders, flowers, leaves, etc.</li> <li>♦ Make Cornelli lace, lattice work, sotas, Color Flow®, basketweave, pine cones, pine needles, wheat, and haystacks, etc. Use as part of the decorations for a cake.</li> <li>♦ Review and master all Level 1 skills.</li> </ul>
4. Learn to cut a cake for serving. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Read page 23, <i>Cutting the cake</i>.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Experiment with different ways to cut cakes, using different knives. Consider the cake's shape, size, decoration placement, and number of servings desired.</li> <li>♦ Cut a cake for a special occasion.</li> </ul>
5. Bake and decorate a minimum of five cakes for special occasions using Level 2 skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Locate a cake decorating book and study the designs used to make attractive cakes.</li> <li>♦ Use a variety of colors, designs, and flavors to plan, make, and decorate cakes. Include two- or three-layer cakes, cut-up cakes, and cakes baked in shaped pans.</li> <li>♦ Compare the cost of home-decorated cakes with bakery cakes.</li> </ul>

## Exhibit

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Decorated cake using a minimum of five Level 2 techniques: cake frosted smoothly, proper icing consistency for decorations, flowers, borders, combination borders, or special effects.

## Additional exhibits

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1. Any other decorated cake using at least five skills and techniques learned in this unit.
2. Cut-up cake (one technique) and at least four additional skills and techniques learned in this unit.
3. Any other decorated item using at least five skills and techniques learned in this unit.
4. Decorated cake or other exhibit using figure piping techniques (one technique) and four additional skills and techniques learned in this unit.
5. Educational display showing techniques learned (posters, record books, etc.).

## Judging standards

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1. Exhibits in this unit should contain a minimum of five Level 2 skills and techniques.
2. Artificial cake forms (Styrofoam™) are better for exhibits than actual cakes. State Fair exhibits require cake forms.
3. Cakes should be placed on disposable cake boards which may be covered with paper or plastic doilies.
4. Frosting should make a good base for decorations. Colored frosting should be well blended and free of discolorations.

5. Decorations should show a variety of techniques (borders, side decorations, special effects, etc.). They should be evenly spaced and show even pressure.
6. Design should be suitable for the size and shape of the cake. It should demonstrate good use of color and a pleasing combination of decorations.

## Record books

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1. Record books should be neat and complete with the following information: beginning and ending inventory, goals, one individual cake record for each cake decorated during the project, leadership activities, and a project story.
2. Record books should show that a minimum of five cakes have been decorated. Either pictures or simple diagrams and explanations may be used on the page provided. Other cakes decorated while taking the unit may be included.



# Level 3: Advanced cake decorating

## MORE FLOWERS, STACKED AND TIERED CAKES

### Supplies

1. Basic supplies listed for all units (page 5).
2. Wedding cake pans in various sizes. The 3-inch deep pans eliminate the need for layering cakes.
3. Two different sized pans for stacked cakes, for example, 8-inch and 10-inch.
4. Three different sized pans for a stacked and tiered wedding cake: 6-inch, 8-inch, and 12-inch.
5. Two separator plates for each layer. Plates should be 2 inches larger than the tier that will be placed on the plate, but both plates must be the same size. For example, an 8-inch cake will need two 10-inch separator plates.
6. Pillars, or columns, to fit separator plates. Most plates take 4 pillars.
7. Dowel rods  $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch diameter.
8. Tips:
  - Plain round or writing tips - 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, and 9
  - Star tips - 14, 16, 18, 20, 54, 199, and 51
  - Petal tips - 102, 103, 104, 150, and 59
  - Variety tips - 88 and 127
  - Set of lily nails
9. Artificial cake forms (may be used for exhibit). State Fair entries must be on artificial cake forms.

### Goals

1. Develop advanced skill in cake decorating
2. Combine color, design, and flavors in a pleasing way

Objectives	Activities
1. Bake, frost, assemble, and decorate stacked tiered cakes. You should be able to bake, frost, assemble, and decorate a cake for a wedding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Read <i>Assembling stacked and tiered cakes</i>, pages .</li> <li>♦ Visit a bakery. Observe how separator plates and pillars are used to decorate stacked and tiered cakes.</li> <li>♦ Practice making stacked or tiered cakes until you are pleased with the results. (Use artificial cake forms for first attempts since the emphasis is on decorating, some of the cakes you decorate should be real cakes.)</li> </ul>
2. Develop advanced cake decorating skills by mastering the following techniques: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Three Level 3 borders</li> <li>b. All Level 3 lettering skills</li> <li>c. Four Level 3 flowers using the flat nail or the lily nail</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Practice all Level 3 borders.</li> <li>♦ Practice all Level 3 lettering skills. Invent new lettering combinations.</li> <li>♦ Practice all Level 3 flowers using a flat flower nail and lily nail. Go back and master Level 2 flowers that were not mastered before.</li> </ul>



Objectives	Activities
3. Master as many Level 3 special effects as possible (a minimum of 2).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Experiment making gum paste. Shape gum paste decorations and flowers and use on a cake.</li> <li>♦ Color and shape marzipan for decorations.</li> <li>♦ Make pulled sugar decorations.</li> <li>♦ Apply rolled fondant icing to a cake and decorate it.</li> <li>♦ Make modeling chocolate and form flowers, leaves, and other designs.</li> <li>♦ Attach flowers to floral wire stems and make bouquets that stand away from the cake.</li> <li>♦ Learn the Lambeth method and use it on a cake.</li> <li>♦ Use Australian net nails and royal icing to make a lacy decoration.</li> </ul>
4. Learn to disassemble and cut a stacked or tiered cake.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Cut a stacked or tiered cake for a special occasion.</li> <li>♦ Teach someone else to disassemble and cut a stacked or tiered cake.</li> </ul>
5. Bake and decorate a minimum of five cakes for special occasions using Level 3 skills and the principles and elements of good design. At least one cake should be a stacked or tiered cake.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Study the principles and elements of design used in cake decorating books.</li> <li>♦ Compare the cost of home-decorated cakes with bakery cakes.</li> </ul>

## Exhibit

Decorated stacked and/or tiered cake using a minimum of four Level 3 skills and techniques.

## Additional exhibits

1. Cut-up cake using at least four skills and techniques learned in Level 3.
2. Any other decorated cake using at least four skills and techniques learned Level 3.
3. Any other decorated item using at least four skills and techniques learned in this unit.
4. Educational display showing skills and techniques learned in this unit.
5. Record book.

## Judging standards

1. Exhibited cakes should have a minimum of four Level 3 skills and techniques.
2. Cakes or artificial cake forms may be used (primary exhibit must be a tiered cake or a stacked and tiered cake).
3. Additional exhibits are not required to be tiered cakes.
4. Cakes should be placed on disposable, suitable cake plates.
5. Design and decorations should be suitable for the size and shape of the cake and should show good use of color and pleasing decoration combinations.

- Optional decorations: Lambeth method, marzipan, gum paste, rolled or cooked fondant, pulled sugar flowers, Australian net nail decorations, molded chocolate, and combinations or variations.
- Special occasion ornaments may be used.
- Techniques learned in previous units may also be used.

## Record books

- Record books should be neat and complete with the following information: beginning and ending inventory, goals, leadership, one individual cake record for each cake decorated during the project, and project story.

- Record books should show that the member has decorated at least one tiered cake. Pictures or simple diagrams and simple explanations may be used. All cakes decorated while taking this unit may be included in the record book.



# Level 4: Master cake decorating

## DESIGN YOUR OWN Supplies

Determine the supplies you will need to accomplish your goals.

## Goal

Investigate areas of personal interest in cake decorating.

## Objective

Plan, develop, complete, and evaluate an advanced cake decorating project. Include goals, objectives, activities, and an evaluation of your activities.

## Activities

- Design various original patterns using the techniques learned in Levels 1 through 3.

- Decorate a cake or cakes using your own designs.
- Experiment with scratch recipes and mixes for both cakes and icing. Document.
- Interview local home decorators about markets, pricing, and advertising, etc.
- Contact (or start) a local cake decorator club in your area.
- Visit a professional decorator for ideas.
- Teach a lower-level cake decorating project.
- Expand cake decorating skills to decorating food. Use ideas in professional books and magazines and create your own.
- Visit a food or restaurant show.

## Exhibit

- A brief, written description of your project including your goals, plans, accomplishments, and evaluation of results. You might

use pictures or records to provide evidence of your accomplishments.

2. Decorated cake using more than five techniques (original design).

### ***Project plan***

1. Goals and skills to be learned.
2. Resources that can be used, where information or help can be located, how to determine what has been accomplished.

### ***Evaluation***

1. What was accomplished and learned.
2. How well goals were met.
3. The results of your project (may include a decorated cake if that applied to your goals.)

## **Citizenship**

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Good citizens use their knowledge and skills to make better lives for themselves, their families, and their communities. Complete one or more activities to help others.

### ***Activities***

- Make a decorated cake for a neighbor.
- Make a decorated cake or food item for a nursing home or day care center.
- Make a decorated cake for a local function or fundraiser.
- Share a skill.
- Help a 4-H leader or Extension educator at a county event or at fair.
- Look around and find some other way to show your concern for others and help in some way.

## **Leadership**

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Leadership responsibilities should develop and increase throughout your 4-H experiences. You will expand your skills further as you select areas where you feel less confident or less capable. What kind of skills would help you the most?

### ***Activities***

- Plan and organize an activity.
- Teach or show others how to use a skill.
- Assist a leader with a project lesson.
- Plan leadership activities and follow through with them.

## **Record books**

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The record book for Level 4 should include Page 1 of the *Cake Decorating Record*, a beginning and ending inventory, the project story, the project plan and evaluation, and leadership and citizenship activities.





# T H E

# C A K E

## Baking the cake

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Start with a good recipe or a good quality cake mix. Be sure to adjust the recipe for Wyoming's high altitude unless you are already using a high altitude recipe.

1. Use the correct pan size. Cakes baked in a pan that is too large will become flat and dry. Baking a cake in a pan that is too small results in a peaked cake or the batter runs over the pan. (The peak can be cut off, but you may end up with an uneven top.) Use a straight-sided pan. There are many good baking finishes to choose from, including non-stick, anodized aluminum, and insulated. Just be sure to select a durable pan that won't warp, rust, or chip during repeated use. Shiny pans distribute heat more evenly and give cakes a golden color. If you use a glass pan, reduce the oven temperature by 25 degrees.
2. Generously grease the inside of the cake pan or pans with solid vegetable shortening. Use a pastry brush or paper towel to spread the shortening evenly on the bottom and sides, making sure all inside surfaces are covered. Then, shake flour in the pan to coat the sides and bottom. (The flour helps the cake batter climb the pan side and raise properly.) If you prefer, grease the bottom of the pan and line it with cut parchment paper. There is no need to flour the parchment. Be sure to remove the paper before the cake completely cools, so it won't stick to the cake.

Another simple and effective method to prepare the pan is to use an aerosol spray that has the grease and flour in the same preparation. Follow label directions.

3. To help your cake remain level, fold a strip of terry cloth so it is the same height as the pan

sides. Wet the terry cloth then wrap it around the outside of the pan and pin it together with straight or safety pins. Pour equal amounts of batter into the pans and bake. The terry cloth adds humidity to the oven, which helps keep the cake level. It also keeps the outer portion of the batter from baking more rapidly than the center.

*Note: You can purchase specifically designed oven-safe bands to wrap around pans before baking.*

4. Bake the cake in the center of the oven according to temperature and time directions on the recipe or mix. To see if the cake is done, lightly touch a finger to the cake's center. If it is done, it will spring back. Or, stick a toothpick in the center, and if it comes out clean the cake is done. If the cake is not done, bake it for a few more minutes. The cake should pull away from the edges of the pan.

## Cooling the cake

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1. Take the cake from the oven and place it on the cooling rack. If the cake is not level, saturate a light-weight cotton tea towel (not terry cloth) with water, wring it dry, and press the cake's top gently to form an even top. Remove the towel immediately.

Cool the cake for 10 to 15 minutes on a cooling rack. (Larger cakes, 14 inches in diameter, may need to cool 15 to 20 minutes.)

2. Gently loosen the sides of the cake by running a metal spatula or table knife around the edges. Place the cooling rack on the cake's top and, while holding the rack and the pan, turn both over. If the cake does not release from the pan, return it to a warm oven (250°)

for approximately 5 minutes and repeat the procedure. Cool completely at least one hour on a cooling rack. (If cooled on a plate or board, it will steam and make the bottom surface soggy.) Larger cakes will break if not turned right side up to cool.

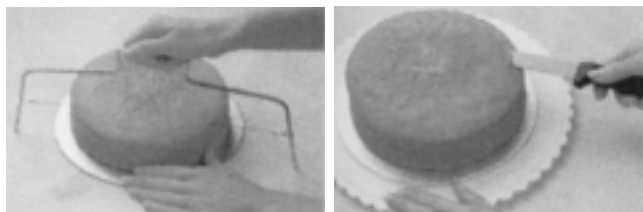
## Leveling the cake

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1. If you did not level your cake with the damp towel, you can level it by trimming off the raised portions using a serrated knife or cake leveler. Let the cake cool for at least 1 hour (or chill in the refrigerator). Use a serrated knife or cake leveling tool to trim off excess cake. You may need to ask for help from an adult.
2. Brush off loose crumbs. Freezing the cake will make it easier to handle.

Now you are ready to ice the cake. The bottom of the cake will be more level and easier to frost.

- For a single layer cake, place the top of the cake down on the cake board and frost the bottom.
- For a two-layer cake, place one layer right side up on the cake board. Put frosting on the first layer. Place the second layer upside down on the first so you are frosting the bottom of the top layer.
- When layering large cakes or tortes, use a cake board as a large spatula and shimmy the top layer off the board onto the top of the bottom cake layer.



*Leveling*

## Planning the design

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Before planning the cake's design, look in magazines and cake decorating books. A visit to your local bakery might provide you with several interesting ideas.

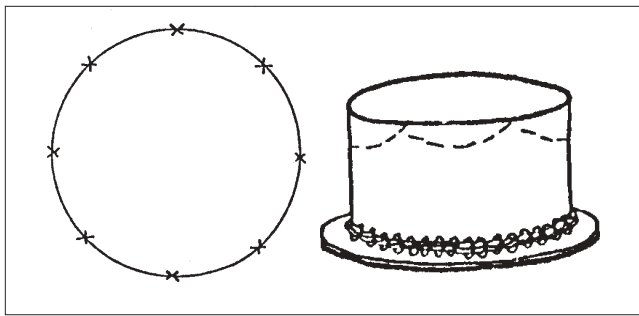
Designs should be:

1. Suitable for the cake's shape:
  - Round or wedge-shaped design on a round cake.
  - Straight or triangular design on a square or rectangular cake.
2. In proportion to the size of the cake:
  - Large designs or groups of small designs are best on a large cake.
  - Small designs are best on a small cake.
3. Seen well from the viewing area:
  - Some cakes are planned to be viewed from one side only; others are the same on all sides.
  - Bring out design details by using colors that go well together:
    - ◆ In general, lighter colors are best for backgrounds and deeper, brighter, colors are best for decorations.
    - ◆ If colors are too dark or too pale, the details of the design may be lost.

## Balancing the design

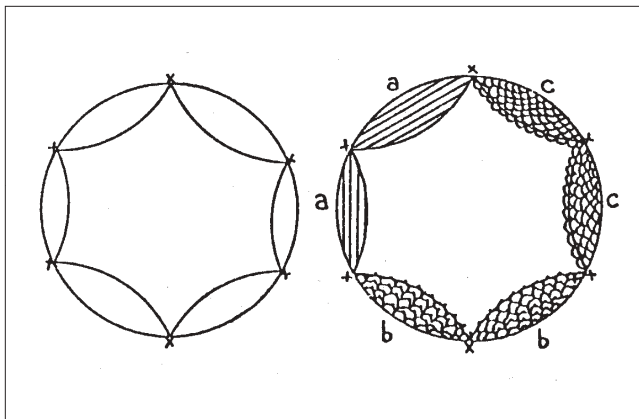
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1. You must mark the cake when you select a design that is repeated or placed at equally spaced intervals (such as scallop or lattice). Decide whether you want to divide the cake into four, six, eight, or more sections. Place a small dot of the background icing at each "x" to serve as a guide. Draw a design line with a toothpick and check for accuracy before going over it with icing.



2. Try this quick and easy way to divide a cake into equally spaced sections:
  - Take a 2-inch wide length of paper (calculator tape works well) and place it around the outside of your cake pan. Cut it to the exact length.
  - Remove and fold the tape in half and continue folding it in half until you have as many sections as you need. Unfold and place the tape around the top edge of the cake and attach it with a toothpick or large pin. Mark the cake at each fold. Your cake is now marked for your design.

3. When doing latticework on the cake top, use various sized pans or bowls as a guide. (Round pans, margarine tubs, and plastic storage containers work well for this.) Press the desired size of container lightly on the top of the cake. Then, place or pipe straight or decorative lines in a contrasting color of frosting.



## Assembling a tiered cake

1. Check to make sure the assembled cake will fit through any door.
2. The base for your cake must be sturdy enough to support the weight of the assembled cake. How heavy is your cake? The following cakes were made with Betty Crocker Super Moist® yellow cake mix. They were filled, frosted, and decorated with buttercream icing. The weights and heights are for two-layer round cakes.

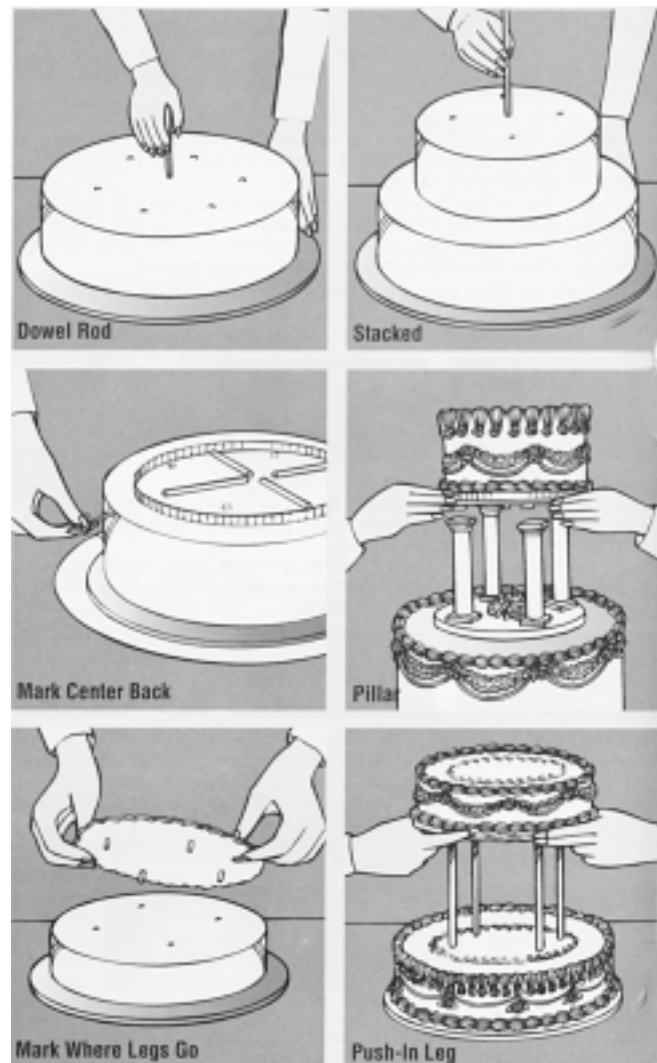
Round size	Height with icing	Weight
16"	4"	16 lbs. 3 oz.
14"	4"	13 lbs. 2 oz.
12"	4"	11 lbs.
10"	3"	6 lbs. 12 oz.
8"	3"	5 lbs. 4 oz.
6"	3"	2 lbs. 12 oz.

3. Level and ice all tiers first. Each tier of your cake must be on a cake circle or board cut to fit. Smear a few strokes of icing on the boards to secure the cake. Fill and ice the layers before assembly.
4. Place the bottom tier on a sturdy base plate or cake board cut 4 inches larger than the tier's diameter. Imprint an outline in the center of this tier using a cake pan or cake board circle 2 inches smaller in diameter than the tier to be placed above it. Press the cake board gently in the center of the lower tier; remove the circle. Push a ¼-inch dowel rod into the cake within the circular outline at the cake's lowest point. Push the rod all the way into the cake so it touches the base. Mark the dowel rod at the frosting line. Gently pull the dowel out of the cake. Use pruning shears to cut the dowel rod. Mark and cut six more dowels the same length as

the first. Push all seven rods into the cake base within the circular outline and even with the top of the cake. The dowels should not stick out above the cake. Do not reposition the dowels after placing them in the cake. Generally, the larger and more numerous the upper tiers, the more dowels will be needed. Very large cakes need ½-inch dowels in the base tier.

5. If you plan to position a small cake on top of a novelty cake, ice the small cake on a cake board cut to fit. Dowel rods also may be necessary to support the small cake. *Note: Ice all cakes on cut-to-fit boards when making any tiered cake.*
6. Sprinkle coconut lightly on the top of the bottom tier within the imprinted circle. This will keep the next tier from sticking to the frosting and pulling it off when the cake is cut and served.
7. Sharpen the end of another dowel rod with a kitchen knife or pencil sharpener and push it through both layers of the cake to the cardboard circle base. Hit the end of the rod sharply with a tack hammer to drive the rod through the cardboard to the bottom cake tier. Clip the rod even with the top of the second tier using pruning shears. This serves to secure the tiers, keeping them in place for transporting.
8. When using separator plates and pillars, skip a cake size for each separator set used. For example, you can use a 14-inch base cake with a 12-inch layer directly on top of the 14-inch layer (with the cardboard circle and dowel rods for support under the 12-inch layer). Place the 10-inch separator plates and pillars on top of the 12-inch layer. Skip the 10-inch cake and use an 8-inch cake on top of the 10-inch separator plate. A 6-inch cake on a cut-to-fit cardboard circle can be placed directly on top of the 8-inch cake. A sharpened dowel rod through both the 6-inch and 8-inch cakes will offer more stability.

9. Plastic pegs are needed in the separator plates to prevent slipping. Insert the plastic pegs into the cake to determine if the pegs are too long and will need to be cut off. Mark the peg at the cake's lowest point. Use pruning shears to cut all the pegs the same length. Attach the pillars to the top of the separator plate. Then, insert the pegs into the base of the separator plate. With the pillars on top, determine the proper alignment and push the separator plate pegs into the tier top. The cake plate must rest level on top of the cake. If there is space between the cake separator plate and the supporting tier, the cake will be unstable and not travel well.
10. Place the top plate of the set on top of the pillars. Position the top cake tier on the





separator plate. Remove this top tier and any tiers separated by plates when transporting the cake.

11. Separator plates should always be 2 inches larger than the size of your cake pan to allow room for borders and to give the cake a balanced appearance. Therefore, if you are planning to use an 8-inch cake on the separator plate, a 10-inch plate set should be used. Always purchase two of the same size separator plates because they are used in sets. Each set of plates should have four plastic pegs with it for support.

## Storing the cake

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1. Sunlight will alter colors and cause the icing to soften. Store your cake in a covered cake box out of direct sunlight. Find a box that will fit your cake without squashing the top decorations. You can purchase special cake boxes from a craft or cake supply store, or ask your grocery store bakery for a box.
2. Humidity can soften royal and buttercream icing. When the humidity gets high, prepare your royal icing using only pure cane confectioners' sugar (not beet sugar or dextrose), and add 1 teaspoon more of meringue powder to the recipe. Buttercream icing can be stabilized with 1 to 2 tablespoons of meringue powder.
3. Cakes iced with buttercream icing can be stored at room temperature, refrigerated for two to three days, or frozen. Bright colors might weep when thawed.
4. Cakes with thoroughly dried royal icing decorations should be stored according to the type of icing they are covered with. If you are going to freeze the cake, wait and put the royal icing decorations on after the cake has thawed.
5. Do not freeze cakes on separator plates as plastic becomes brittle and may crack or warp.

## Transporting the cake

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1. Place your cake in a clean sturdy box that fits the cake board or plate. A box the size of the cake board will keep the cake from shifting and crushing the sides of the cake. Place the box on carpet foam, a non-skid mat, or a damp bath towel on the floor of the car. Do not place it on the car seat. If the weather is cool, the cake can be transported in the trunk.
2. To remove the cake, cut the side of the box and slide the cake out.
3. Cakes on pillars should be disassembled before transporting. Toppers, candles, and ornaments should not be transported on the cake, but added at the destination.

## Cutting the cake

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The first requirement for well-cut cakes is a thin, pointed, very sharp knife. Serrated (saw-like edge) or scalloped-edge knives are particularly good for sponge cakes. Insert the point of the knife into the cake and, keeping the point angled down slightly, saw through the cake with a gentle back and forth motion. Put very little pressure on the knife; let the sharp edge do the work. When you are cutting more than one cake at a time, there is always at least one with icing that sticks to the knife. Dip the cake knife in hot water to take the "stick" out of the icing. Keep an extra plate handy for cleaning frosting off the knife as you go.

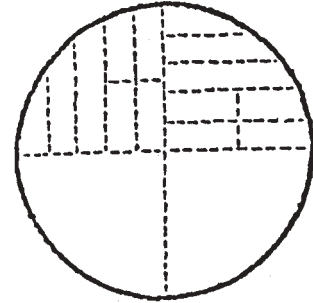
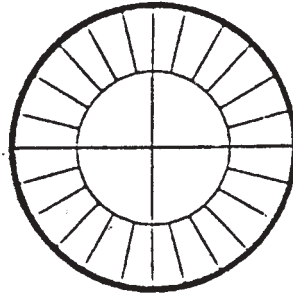
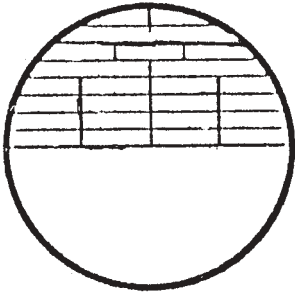
## Suggested activities

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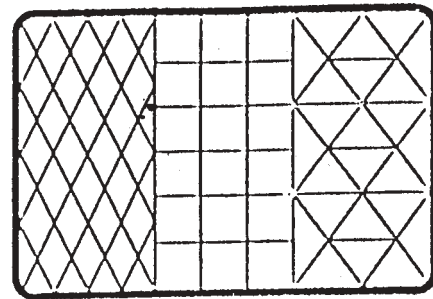
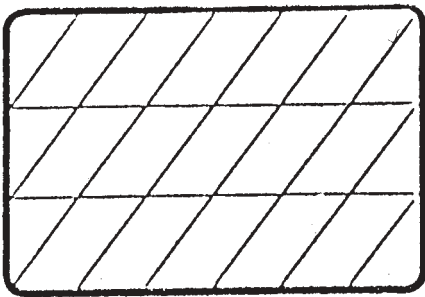
1. Cut one or more of your decorated cakes and evaluate the results on your record sheet.
2. Experiment with different ways to cut cakes. Decide which ways would work for the cakes you decorate. Consider cake shape, size, decoration placement, and desired serving size.

- Attend a wedding reception or other party and observe how the cakes are cut. (Don't assume that they have been cut correctly!)
- Experiment with different knives for cutting your cakes.
- Determine and practice the proper ways to hold a knife when cutting a cake.
- Try some of the following ways to cut a cake.

*Round cakes*



*Rectangular cakes*



# FROSTING THE CAKE

## Ingredients

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Each ingredient plays an important role in creating perfect icing. Always choose the best ingredient for the job.

1. **Confectioners' sugar** is a sweetener. Sifting the sugar helps make the icing smoother. When available, confectioners' sugar made from pure cane sugar should be used.
2. **Binder**, such as solid white vegetable shortening, butter, or cream cheese, is used in buttercream icings to bind the icing together and give it texture for frosting and decorating the cake. Shortening will give the stiffest consistency while cream cheese and margarine create a softer and more flavorful icing.
3. **Meringue powder** is used instead of egg whites in various icings. It enables you to re-beat royal icing to restore stiffness. It also can be used to help stabilize buttercream icing. (See recipe for snow white buttercream icing.)
4. **Liquid**, such as water, fruit juice, milk, cream, or light corn syrup is used to achieve proper consistency.
5. **Flavors or extracts** are used to give icings personal tastes. Special clear decorator flavorings (vanilla, butter, almond, lemon) will not change icing colors.
6. **Salt** adds flavor to buttercream icing.

## Helpful hints

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1. A 2-pound bag of confectioners' (powdered) sugar is equal to 9 cups.
2. Buttercream icing may be stored in the freezer. When you are ready to use it, thaw and beat it with an electric mixer.

3. Beginners need one and a half batches to frost and decorate a cake.
4. To make clean up easier and quicker when you are decorating with buttercream icing, use a degreaser liquid soap to dissolve the icing from the tools. It is especially important to have grease-free utensils when using royal or Color Flow® icings.
5. To remove air bubbles from the icing place approximately 2 cups of icing on a sheet of Plexiglas® (or a cardboard covered with freezer paper, shiny side up). Blend the icing with a spatula using a back and forth action with the flat side of the spatula.

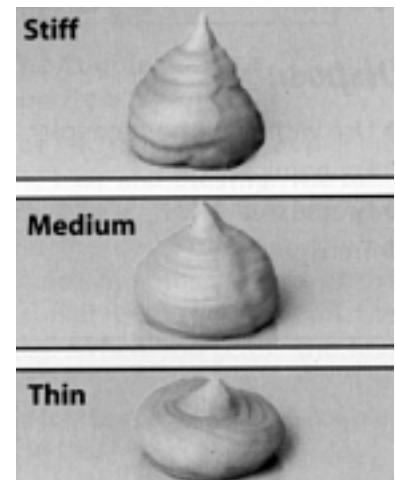
## Icing

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Smooth icing makes a cake look good. Icing also adds flavor to the cake and keeps the cake moist and fresh.

Proper consistency is the key to making decorating icing that will shape the petals of a flower, show the details of a border, or cover the surface of the cake. It is important that you use the recommended icing consistency for each job. Flowers usually require a stiff icing. Borders need a medium-stiff consistency, and writing or leaves need a slightly thinned icing. If the icing is too stiff, add a few drops of liquid. If it is too thin, add more powdered sugar.

Stiff icing holds a ¾-inch peak on the spatula. Use it for flowers with upright



petals. (If the icing is not stiff enough, the petals will droop.)

Medium icing is used for flowers with flat petals and for borders. (When the icing is too stiff or too thin, you can't get the uniform designs that characterize a perfect border.)

Thin icing is used for writing, stems, leaves, and for frosting a cake.

## Icing recipes

### *Buttercream icing*

Buttercream icing tastes good and is creamy. It can be made to any consistency—stiff, medium, or thin. Buttercream is ideal for icing a cake and for making borders and most flowers such as the rose, drop flower, or sweet pea.

#### Buttercream recipe 1

- 1½ cups white all vegetable shortening
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons flavoring (clear or no color)
- 2 pounds confectioners' sugar, sifted (pure cane confectioners' sugar if available)
- ¼ to ½ cup water or milk (use milk if you are going to use lavender color)

Blend the shortening, salt, and flavorings. Add the powdered sugar, then, add water slowly and blend on medium speed until all the ingredients are mixed well. Blend 1 to 2 minutes until all the ingredients are creamy.

*Note: Altering the sugar, shortening, and water ratio too much will cause the icing to break down and look greasy.*

Add 3 to 4 tablespoons of light corn syrup per recipe to thin for icing the cake.

#### Chocolate buttercream recipe 1

Add to buttercream icing 1:

- ¾ cup cocoa or three 1-ounce unsweetened chocolate squares, melted
- 1 to 2 additional tablespoons milk

Mix until well blended.

#### Buttercream recipe 2

- ½ cup white vegetable shortening
- ½ cup butter or margarine, softened but not melted
- 1 pound confectioners' sugar (about 4 cups)
- 2 tablespoons milk or water
- ½ teaspoon almond flavoring
- Pinch of salt

Cream shortening, butter, and flavoring. Add sugar and blend slowly. Add the remaining ingredients. Beat on high speed 5 to 7 minutes. Beat a double batch 7 to 12 minutes.

#### Chocolate buttercream 2

Add to buttercream recipe 2:

- ¼ to ⅓ cup cocoa powder

If the icing is too thin add more powdered sugar. If the icing is too thick, add small amounts of milk until the proper consistency is reached.

#### Snow white buttercream recipe

Snow white buttercream icing has an ideal consistency for frosting cakes. It has a firm quality, making it good for wedding cake decorations and flat surface or flower nail flowers. Flowers made with this icing may be air-dried. These decorations have a pretty, translucent quality. They taste good and do not require refrigeration or freezing. Most decorations must be air dried for 24 hours; however, apple blossoms, violets, and drop flowers may be handled after 4 hours of air drying.

- ⅔ cup water
- 4 tablespoons meringue powder
- 12 cups sifted confectioners' sugar (approximately 3 pounds)
- 1¼ cups white vegetable shortening
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon almond flavoring
- ½ teaspoon clear vanilla flavoring
- ¼ teaspoon butter flavoring

Combine the water and meringue powder. Whip at high speed until peaks form. Add 4 cups of sugar, 1 cup at a time, beating at low speed after each addition. Add the shortening and the remainder of the sugar alternately. Add the salt and flavorings. Beat at low speed until smooth.

*Note: Experiment with each of these recipes until you decide which recipe works best for you.*

## **Royal icing**

Royal icing is an egg-white icing with a stiff consistency. Any trace of shortening will break this icing down into a thin, soupy mixture. Be sure your utensils are completely greaseless. Glass and metal containers are better than plastic for royal icing. For that same reason, parchment, freezer paper, or disposable plastic decorating bags are more suitable than reusable plastic decorating bags.

Royal icing dries very hard; therefore, use it when decorating sugar eggs, making lily nail flowers, and anytime you need to make decorations in advance.

### **Royal icing**

*Single batch (yield 3 cups)*

- 3 level tablespoons meringue powder
- 1 pound sifted confectioners' sugar
- 5-6 tablespoons lukewarm water

*Double Batch (yield approximately 6 cups)*

- 6 level tablespoons meringue powder
- 2 pounds sifted confectioners' sugar
- 10-12 tablespoons lukewarm water

*Note: If using a hand-held mixer, make one single batch at a time.*

Combine all the ingredients. Mix 7 to 10 minutes at low to medium speed until the icing loses its sheen. To prevent drying, be sure to cover the bowl with a damp cloth while working with the icing.

Store in an airtight container for up to two weeks. To reuse, beat on low to restore the original texture.

### **Royal egg white icing (yield: 2 ½ cups)**

- 3 egg whites (room temperature)
- 1 pound sifted confectioners' sugar
- ½ teaspoon cream of tartar
- 1 teaspoon flavoring

Combine all the ingredients. Beat the mixture with an electric mixer for 7 to 10 minutes or until it is very stiff. This is a hard drying icing so keep it tightly covered. Use it immediately. Re-beating will not restore the texture.

Use glass or metal bowls for mixing. Plastic retains grease and causes the egg whites to break down. Use parchment, freezer paper, or disposable plastic decorating bags because plastic or featherweight bags also retain grease.

## **Canned icing**

Choose a ready-to-spread canned frosting. If you wish to use it as a decorator icing, refrigerate it. If the icing becomes too soft, place the decorating bag in the refrigerator until the icing is firm enough for decorating. Each can yields about 1¾ cups of icing.

## **Packaged frosting mixes**

You can use a packaged creamy vanilla frosting mix as a decorator icing. Simply eliminate 4 teaspoons of water from the amount listed on the package directions. Less water gives the icing a texture similar to buttercream. One packaged mix yields 1½ cups of icing. Do not refrigerate the icing before decorating. The cake may be refrigerated after decorating.

## **Quick pour fondant recipe**

- 6 cups confectioners' sugar, sifted
- ½ cup water
- 2 tablespoons light corn syrup
- 1 teaspoon almond extract
- paste icing colors

Place the sugar in a saucepan. Combine the water and corn syrup. Add to the sugar and stir

mixture until well mixed. Place it over low heat. Don't allow the temperature of the fondant to exceed 100°. Remove from heat, stir in the flavor and paste color. Optional: Cakes may be covered with a thin coating of buttercream icing or apricot glaze before applying the fondant. Allow the icing or glaze to set before covering it with the fondant. To cover, place the cake or cookies on a wire rack over a drip pan. Pour the fondant into the center and work it out toward the edges. Touch up bare spots with a spatula. Let set. Excess fondant can be reheated.

### ***Cooked rolled fondant***

This icing is rolled out and used as a covering for a pound cake or fruitcake, which is traditionally first covered with a layer of marzipan to seal in flavor and moistness. This technique is characteristic of the Australian decorating methods.

#### **Rolled fondant recipe**

- 1 tablespoon unflavored gelatin
- ½ cup cold water
- ⅔ cup light corn syrup
- 2 tablespoons bakers' glycerin (Wilton's Glycerin)
- 2 tablespoons solid vegetable shortening
- 2 pounds confectioners' sugar

Prepare the cake by covering it with a crumb coat of buttercream icing.

Combine the gelatin and cold water; let stand until thick. Place the gelatin mixture in the top of a double boiler and heat until dissolved. Add the syrup and glycerin, mix well. Stir in the shortening and, just before it is completely melted, remove it from the heat. Cool the mixture until it is lukewarm.

Next, place 1 pound of confectioners' sugar in a bowl and make a well. Pour the lukewarm gelatin mixture into the well and stir with a wooden spoon, mixing in the sugar and adding more, a

little at a time, until it thins. Knead in the remaining sugar, icing color, and flavoring. Knead it until the fondant is smooth, pliable, and does not stick to your hands. If the fondant is too soft, add more sugar; if it is too stiff, add more water (a drop at a time). Rolled fondant should be firm and dry to the touch.

Use the fondant immediately or store it in an airtight container in the refrigerator. When you are ready to use the fondant, bring it to room temperature and knead it again until it is soft. This recipe yields enough to cover a 10-inch by 3-inch high cake.

To roll the fondant, spray the work surface and a rolling pin with vegetable oil cooking spray. Dust both surfaces with a mixture of confectioners' sugar and cornstarch. Roll out the fondant into a circle twice the diameter of the cake you are covering. If you are covering an 8-inch cake, your circle needs to be 16 inches in diameter. As you roll, lift and move the fondant often to prevent it from sticking to the surface. Gently lift the fondant over the rolling pin or slide it onto a cake circle that has been dusted with confectioners' sugar to move it to the cake. Smooth it with the palm of your hand or fondant smoother. Trim the bottom edge with a sharp knife or pizza cutter.

### ***Ready-to-use rolled fondant recipe***

Ready-to-use white or chocolate rolled fondant is available at cake supply stores. Just add coloring.

## **Frosting the cake**

1. Bake the cake at least one day before you plan to decorate. Cool the cake thoroughly before frosting it. After the cake cools, wrap it in heavy-duty foil or a plastic bag and freeze it. Slightly thaw the cake before icing it (unwrap it so the moisture can escape, or the packaging will stick to the cake). The cake will be fresh and easy to ice because it will be firm.

2. When making a cut-up cake, cut the desired shape while the cake is partially frozen. Then quickly crumb coat the sides before the cake completely thaws. This will keep the cut sides of the cake from crumbling.
3. Level the cake by trimming the top with a sharp serrated knife. This method of trimming is easiest while the cake is still in the pan.
4. Brush any loose crumbs from the cake's sides.
5. To keep the cake plate clean while frosting, place four 3-inch strips of waxed paper under the edges of the cake to form a square. The waxed paper will slip out easily when the cake is frosted. Be sure to remove the paper before the bottom border is added.
6. When frosting a single-layer cake, place the cake bottom side up. This will give the most even surface with the least crumbs.



7. When frosting two or more layers, place one cake on the cake board, leveled side up. Fit the bag with a coupler (or use a paper or parchment bag with the tip cut off). Fill the bag with icing, and make a dam by squeezing out a circle of icing about 3/4-inch high on the cake top.
8. Use a spatula to spread icing, jam, pudding, or other filling in the center of cake. Next, position the top layer bottom side up.
9. Crumb coat the cake. Thin approximately 1 1/2 cups of buttercream icing with milk or light corn syrup (approximately 2 teaspoons per

cup) for easy spreading. The consistency is correct when the icing spreads easily and the spatula glides over the icing. Cover the entire cake with a thin layer of icing so the cake shows through. This will seal in the moisture and crumbs. Let it dry completely.

10. Ice the top. With a large angled spatula, place a large amount of frosting on the center of the cake top. Spread the frosting across the top, pushing the excess down over the edges onto the sides.
11. Ice the sides. Cover the sides of the cake with the excess frosting, using more if needed.

Smooth the side of the cake first, using the edge of the large spatula. Hold the spatula upright against the side of the cake, and slowly spin the stand without lifting the spatula from the cake's surface. Return the excess frosting to the bowl.

12. Smooth the top of the cake last using the edge of the large spatula. Sweep the edge of the spatula from the rim of the cake to its center. Then, lift it off and remove the 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. Finally, smooth the center of the cake by leveling the frosting with the edge of your spatula.

### ***Alternate techniques for smoothing icing:***

- **Hot knife.** Dip the spatula in hot water (make sure all of the excess water is shaken off the spatula) and glide it across the entire surface using the same leveling procedure as above.
- **Spray bottle.** Put plain water in a *clean* spray bottle. Spray a light mist over the cake and glide the edge of the spatula over the surface from the rim of the cake to the center. Lift off and remove any excess icing.

- **Parchment paper.** Allow the cake to crust over for at least 15 minutes. Lay parchment paper on the iced top and gently smooth it with the palm of your hand. The sides can be smoothed in the same manner.
- **Paper towel.** Textured icing can be created by smoothing it with a clean cloth or a textured paper towel.
- **Plastic wrap.** On three-dimensional cakes (ball, egg, doll, lamb, character cakes), let the icing crust slightly (approximately 15 minutes). Gently smooth it using the plastic wrap with the palm of your hand. Carefully remove the wrap.





# E Q U I P M E N T

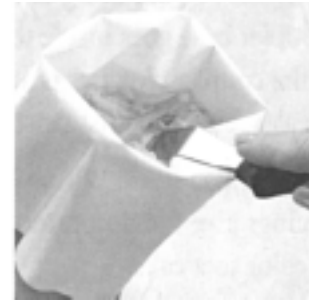
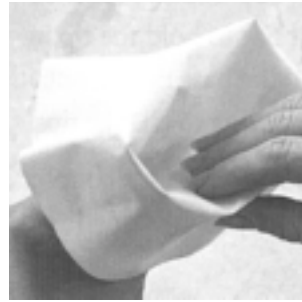
## Decorating bags

1. Featherweight® bags are pliable, ready-made, and ready-to-use. They may be used with or without a coupler to hold your decorating tip. The coupler allows you to change decorating tips on the same bag. This saves time when you want to use several different tips and the same color icing.

a. To fit and fill the decorating bag with a coupler, twist the ring off the threaded coupler base and drop the base, narrow end first, down into the end of the bag. Push the coupler base as far down into the bag as it will go. Mark the location of the coupler's bottom thread on the outside of the bag with a pencil.

b. Next, push the coupler out of the bag. Cut off the tip of the decorating bag at the pencil mark and put the coupler base back in the bag so that two threads show through the open tip of the bag. Slip the tip onto the coupler base and screw the coupler ring in place over the tip. When you want to change tips, simply unscrew the ring and replace.

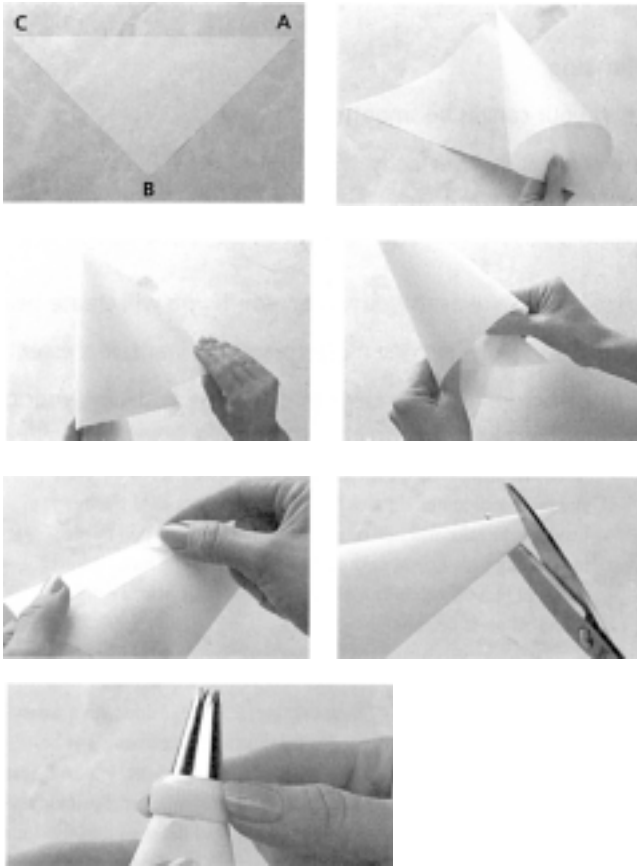
c. With the coupler and tip in place, fill the bag with decorator icing. Fold down the open end of the bag to form a cuff approximately 2 inches wide. Hold the bag beneath the cuff and use a spatula to push your decorator icing down into the bag. Remove icing from the spatula by squeezing the bag with your thumb and fingers against the spatula while pulling the spatula out. Fill your decorating bag only half full. You might think that a full bag of icing will allow you to squeeze out more decorations, but all you'll get is extra icing backing up and out of the bag into your hands.



d. When the bag is ready, unfold the cuff and twist the end of the bag closed. As you decorate, continually twist the end of the bag to force the icing down into the decorating tip.

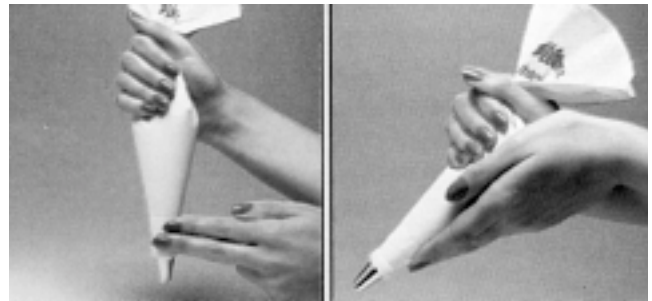
2. Parchment paper bags are made from parchment paper triangles. Generally, you'll use parchment bags for royal icing or when small amounts of icing are needed. A decorating bag can also be made from readily available freezer paper. These bags are messy to refill. You may want to discard a bag when it's empty and start with a new parchment or freezer paper bag after each use.

Make the bags from any size paper, depending on the amount of icing to be used. Decorating parchment is already cut in triangles. Freezer paper will need to be cut in triangle shapes. Start with a piece of paper approximately 17 inches square. Fold it in half to make a triangle and cut on the fold.



- a. To construct the paper cone:
  - 1) Mark the paper triangle points A, B, and C to correspond with the diagram. Lay the triangle flat with point A facing you. Hold point C between the right thumb and forefinger.
  - 2) Roll corner A up and over to point B. Hold points A and B together with the left hand.
  - 3) With the right hand, roll corner point B up and wrap it around to meet the back of points A and B to form a cone.
  - 4) Adjust the outside seam where all three triangle points form a W and the tip of the cone is needle sharp. Staple or tape the cone together to keep it from slipping.
  - 5) Cut  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch off the end of the cone and use wide masking tape to secure the tip on the cone.

- c. To fill the bag, hold the base of the bag and, with a spatula, push the icing down into the bag. Pull the spatula out against the side of the bag to remove all of the icing, and repeat the procedure until the bag is half full. Fold the outside edges of the opening toward the center and fold the end closed. Continue to fold down the end of the bag to force the icing down into the tip.
3. Hold the bag correctly.
    - a. Hold the bag near the top with the twisted or folded end locked between your thumb and fingers. Use the first two fingers of the opposite hand to guide or steady it.
    - b. There are times when a  $45^\circ$  angle is recommended. Borders and writing usually use a  $45^\circ$  angle.
    - c. Hold the bag straight up, with the tip perpendicular to the surface. This is referred to as a  $90^\circ$  angle. This is used for stars, drop flowers, and rosettes.

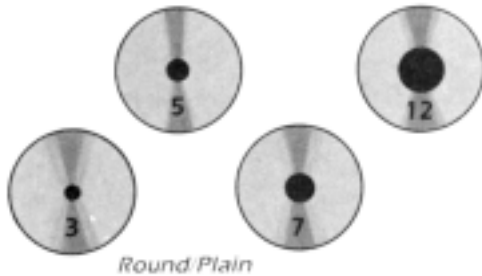


4. Left-hand decorators should hold the decorating bag in their left hands and guide the decorating tip with the fingers of their right hands. A right-handed person will always decorate from left to right, and a left-handed person from right to left, except when writing or printing.

# Decorating tips

Learn to use professional decorating tips to make special designs and decorations. Decorating tips are identified by their number and the shape of their opening. The shape of the opening distinguishes the tip family it belongs to.

Group 1: Round tips - 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 12, and 233



Round tips have plain, round openings corresponding to their size. The higher the number, the bigger the opening.

- Printing and writing messages
- Dots, balls, stems, vines, flower centers, beads, bead hearts, and bead or dot flowers
- Outlining
- Figure piping
- String work such as lattice, drop strings, etc.
- For specific instructions, look in the sections of *Borders and decorations*, page 37, *Flowers*, page 45, *Lettering*, page 61, and *Special effects*, page 63

Group 2: Star tips (open stars) - 14, 16, 18, 19, 21, 32, 199, 4B and 2010

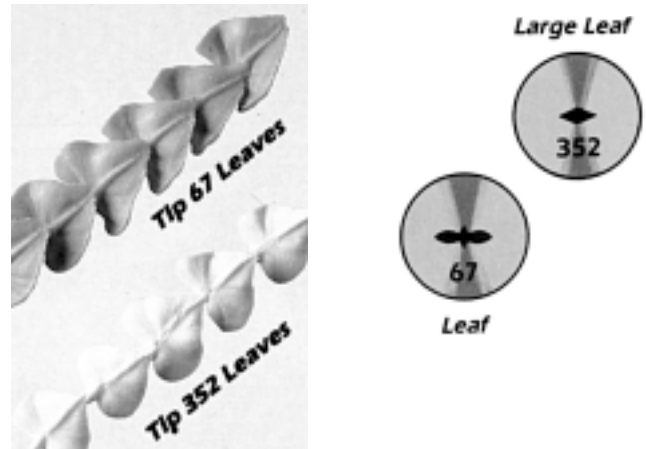


- The star-shaped openings make the most popular decorations such as stars, zigzags,

shells, rosettes, and more. The most often used stars are numbers 13 through 22. For deep ribbed decorations using the closed star tips, try tips 24 through 33, 35, 133, and 54.

- See *Borders and decorations*, page 38 for specific instructions.

Group 3: Leaf tips - 65, 67, 68, 70, 73, 349, 352, and 366



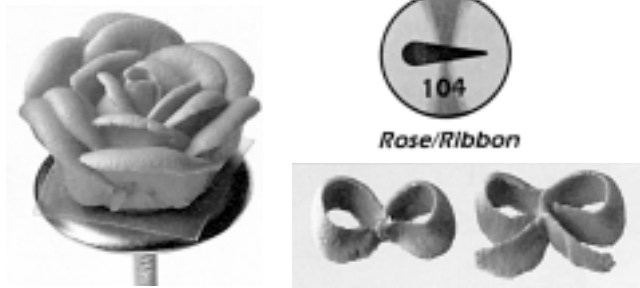
- The v-shaped openings give icing leaves pointed tips. With any leaf tip you can make plain, ruffled, or stand-up leaves. You also can use leaf tips to make flowers and borders.
- See *Leaves and flowers*, page 45 and *Borders and decorations*, page 37 for specific instructions.

Group 4: Drop flower tips - 30, 106, 129, 136, 190, 224, 225, 131, 140, 109, 194, 2D, and 2F

- Most drop flower tips have a small post centered in the opening of the star. The number of openings on the end of the tip determines the number of petals the flower will have. Drop flower tips can make either plain or swirled flowers.
- See *Leaves and flowers*, page 45

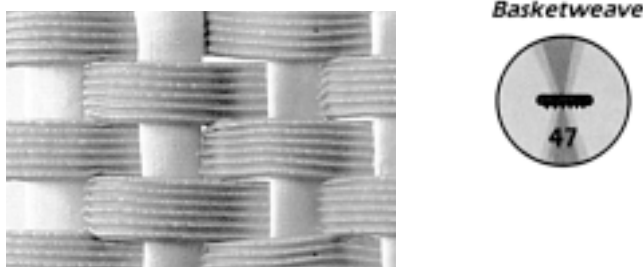


Group 5: Rose/ribbon (petal) tips - 101, 103, 104, 124, and 127



- These tips have an opening that is wide at one end, narrow at the other. This teardrop shaped opening yields a variety of petals that form flowers such as the rose, carnation, daisy, pansy, and more. Rose tips also can make ribbons, drapes and swags, bows, and streamers. Plain rose tips include tips 102, 103, 104, 124, 125, and 126. Tip 127 will make giant roses.
- Curved rose tips that make instant-curved petals are tip numbers 97, 116, 118, and 119.
- Other curved petal tips include tip numbers 59s, 59, 60, 61, 121, 122, 123, 62, 64, and 150.
- Specific instructions for using petal tips are found in *Borders and decorations*, page 41 and *Leaves and flowers*, page 45

Group 6: Basketweave tips - 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 789, 1D and 2B



- Basketweave tips may have two serrated edges or one plain edge and one serrated edge.
- See page 42 for instructions on how to use the basketweave tip.

Group 7: Other specialty tips



- Multi-string tips - 41, 42, 43, 89, 233, 234, and 134
- Ruffle tips - 87, 88, 99, 100, 339, 340, 353, 401, 402, and 403
- Specialty tips - 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 83, 95, 96, 98, 105, 110, 136, 250, 252, and 347

## Flower nails

- Flat nail - variety of sizes for piping icing flowers, including roses, daisies, pansies, and violets. Basic flower nails are the number 7 (1½ inch) and number 9 (1¼ inch).
- Lily nail - for making cup flowers like lilies, petunias, morning glories, and poinsettias.

## Flower formers

Special tools to place your flowers on while they dry to give them curved shapes. The formers have curved convex or concave shapes. You can achieve the same effect by laying your flower on the curve of a mixing bowl or against a pan until it dries.

## Lettering sets

Plastic lettering guides. Press the message into the cake and pipe over the letters.

As you become more experienced as a cake decorator, you will want to experiment with many of these tips and decorating tools.

# COLORING TECHNIQUES

Color is vital to your decorating because it adds realism to flowers and personalizes special event and holiday cakes. Choosing appropriate colors for your cake will help you capture the mood you want for the occasion. When planning your cake, think about color. Gather inspiration from the theme of your celebration. 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 and don't be afraid to try something different.

## Kinds of food or cake coloring

There are three kinds of color bases used to tint icing: liquid, paste, and powder.

1. Paste is preferred because it does not change the consistency of the icing as liquid colors do. Paste colors are concentrated, so a little goes a long way. Use paste food colors when you want the deepest, darkest colors.
2. Liquid food coloring is usually less expensive and can be obtained in local grocery stores. It does change the consistency of the icing, but it can be used to achieve soft pastel shades.
3. Powdered food coloring distributes evenly, does not alter the liquid in recipes, and does not seem to bleed as badly as other types.

A starter kit of eight basic colors offers a good selection of colors for most projects. If you don't

have exactly the right color, you can achieve almost any color by using the right combination of icing colors in the right amounts. With proper blending, you can duplicate team colors, party decorations, and more. Use the guidelines in the table below, but don't be afraid to experiment.

## How to tint icing

1. Add the color a little at a time until you get the shade you want. Use a toothpick to add and blend the paste color. Add liquid color one drop at a time. Hint: Tint a small amount of the icing first, then mix it in with the remainder of the white icing. Colors intensify or darken one to two hours after they are mixed.
2. Always mix enough of one shade for its total use on the cake. It is almost impossible to get exactly the same shade when mixing a second time.
3. Icing mixed with lemon juice may cause the colors to change shades, so experiment with each icing recipe you use.
4. Always use milk instead of water when mixing lavender icing to keep the color from fading or turning blue.
5. When mixing red icing, you may want to add extra extract or flavoring to the icing to cover any taste caused by the color. You may need

NEW COLOR	Navy blue	Warm gold	Raspberry	Maroon	Hunter green	Aqua	Chartreuse
Base color	Royal blue	Golden yellow	Burgundy	Red-red	Kelly green	5 parts sky blue	9 parts lemon yellow
PLUS	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Second color	Small amount of black	Touch of brown	Red-red	Black	Small amount of black	1 part leaf green	1 part leaf green

to add extra powdered sugar if you use extra flavoring. Use a small amount of lemon yellow, golden yellow, or pink to help darken red icing. It is better to use red as an accent color rather than for large areas of the cake. When you want to use red on large areas and a deep red isn't necessary, try watermelon-colored icing. If you want a darker red, try *No-taste red*.

## Helpful hints

1. Always start with a clean toothpick. Just dip it into the color, swirl it in the icing, and blend it well with a spatula. Always use fresh toothpicks when adding more color. You want to avoid getting icing into your jar of color.
2. Royal icing requires more base color than buttercream to achieve the same intensity.
3. If you are using dark brown or black, start with chocolate icing. Add 6 tablespoons of unsweetened cocoa powder or three 1-ounce squares of melted unsweetened baking chocolate and 1 tablespoon of milk to 1½ cups of white icing.

## Special color effects—Level 2 and above

Striping gives multiple or deep color effects to icing. To use striping, apply one or more colors to the inside of the parchment or freezer paper bag. Then fill the bag with white or pastel icing and, as the icing is squeezed past the color, the striped decoration comes out.

1. When brush striping, apply one or more stripes of full-strength food coloring to the inside of the paper decorating bag



(paste food coloring stains plastic bags). Fill the bag with white or pastel icing and squeeze out multi-colored borders, flowers, or even figure-piped clowns. When making stripes with several colors, be sure the brush is cleaned each time.

2. To achieve deep color effects, brush the entire inside of the parchment or paper decorating bag with any paste food coloring. Fill the bag with icing in a medium shade of the same color and squeeze out deep, dramatic decorations.



3. Spatula striping produces two-tone and realistic pastel tones in flowers and figure piping. Using a small spatula, start at the tip and stripe the inside of a decorating bag with pastel icing. Then fill the bag with white icing or another shade the same color as the striping. Squeeze out decorations with soft contrasts.



Use the above color techniques when figure piping for exciting results. Try to achieve natural looking flower colors by using the spatula striping method. Roses look especially beautiful with this effect.

# BORDERS & DECORATIONS

## Planning a design

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1. Before you plan the design for your cake, look in magazines and cake decorating books, visit your local bakery, and collect ideas you think would be interesting.
2. Check each design to be certain that:
  - The pattern is suitable for the cake's shape.
    - ♦ A round or wedge-shaped design is usually best on a round cake.
    - ♦ A straight or triangular design is usually best on a square or rectangular cake.
  - The size of the design is in proportion to the size of the cake.
    - ♦ Use a large design or groups of small designs on a large cake.
    - ♦ Use small designs on a small cake.
  - The design can be seen well from the viewing area. Some cakes are planned to be viewed from one side only; others are designed to be viewed from all sides.
  - The colors go well together and bring out the details of the design.
    - ♦ In general, lighter colors are best for backgrounds and deeper, brighter colors are better for the decorations.
    - ♦ If the colors are too dark or too pale, the details of the design may be lost.

## Three essentials of cake decorating

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1. Icing consistency
  - Your decorations will not turn out if the consistency of your icing is not right. Just a few drops of liquid can make a great deal of difference in your decorating

results. Many factors can affect your icing consistency such as humidity, temperature, ingredients, and equipment.

- If your icing is too thin, add a little more confectioners' sugar. If it is too thick, add liquid a few drops at a time (light corn syrup works well to thin icing). If you are adding more than ½ cup confectioners' sugar to thicken royal icing, also add 1 to 2 additional teaspoons of meringue powder.
2. Correct bag angle
    - Angle refers to the position of the bag relative to the work surface. There are two basic angle positions:
      - ♦ 90° (straight up) for drop flowers, dots, rosettes, cornelli lace, and sotas.
      - ♦ 45° (halfway between vertical and horizontal) for borders, writing, and vines.
  3. Pressure control
    - The size and uniformity of any icing design will be determined by the amount of pressure and steadiness used on the bag. Some decorations will be made with an even pressure. Others will be made by varying the pressure from light to medium or heavy. Your goal is to learn to apply pressure so consistently that you can move the bag in a free and easy glide while just the right amount of icing flows through the tip. Practice, practice, practice.



Heavy  
pressure  
control

Medium  
pressure  
control

Light pressure  
control

# LEVEL 1

## Borders and decorations

### Stars



Hold the bag at a 90° angle with the tip almost touching the surface. Squeeze the bag to form a star, then stop the pressure, and pull the tip away. Increase or decrease pressure to change star size. When arranged side by side, stars can cover an entire cake top. They also can be used for borders around a cake's edge.

### Pull-out stars



Pull-out stars add even more dimension to your cake. (These stars look like little pine trees.) Hold the bag at a 90° angle on the top of the cake. As you squeeze out the icing, pull the tip up and away from the cake. When your mound is high enough, stop the pressure and pull the tip away. If using pull-out stars on a bottom border, hold the bag at a 45° angle.

### Balls or dots



Use a round tip. Hold the bag at a 90° angle with the tip almost touching the surface. Squeeze out a dot of icing and lift the tip slightly, keeping it in the icing. Stop the pressure and pull the tip away. Vary the pressure and use different size tips to make different size dots and balls.

*Note: These decorations should not be pointed.*

### Rosette

Hold the bag at a 90° angle, squeeze while moving your hand to the left, up, and around in a circular motion. Stop the pressure when you reach the original starting position.



### Star puffs

This design uses the same procedure as a rosette, except it moves past the starting position. Hold the bag at 90° angle with the tip almost touching the surface.

Squeeze while moving your hand to the left, up, and around in a circular motion past the starting point, continuing to squeeze into the decoration's center. Stop the pressure and pull the tip away.



### Zigzag



Hold the bag at a 45° angle to the surface, so that the end of the bag points to the right and your fingertips face you. Touch the tip to the surface and, as you squeeze out the icing with a steady, even pressure, move the tip up and down as you move the bag to the right, forming a zigzag line.

### Shells



When making shells, hold the bag at a 45° 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 lift the tip slightly and relax the pressure as you pull the tip down



and toward you to make a tail. Stop the pressure completely and pull the tip away. When making shells, always work toward your body, starting each new shell slightly behind the previous shell's tail.

### Beads

If you can pipe a shell, you can pipe a bead. Hold the tip slightly above the surface at a 45° angle. Squeeze while lifting the tip slightly so that the icing fans out. Relax the pressure as you draw



the tip down and bring the bead to a point. To make a bead border, start the end of the next bead so that the fanned end covers the tail of the preceding bead to form an even chain.

### "C" motion

Hold the tip slightly above the surface at a 45° angle. Squeeze out the icing and let it build slightly at the top of the "C." With even pressure, curve the tip down and around to the right as if



you were writing a "C." Start the next "C" at the same height as the first, covering the tip of the first "C" as you curve the tip down and to the right. To end, stop the pressure and pull the tip away.

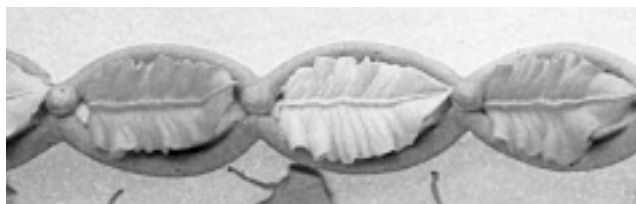
## Combination borders

### Rosettes and stars



Use open star tip 16 and pipe a horizontal row of rosettes. Continue to use the open star tip 16, but with a different icing color, and squeeze a single star in the center of each rosette.

### Leaf borders



Single leaves or groups of leaves can accent any border. Plain or ruffled leaves joined together also can make a border. Tuck the beginning of each new leaf under the tip of the previous leaf.

### Leaf and drop flower

Make a leaf border by squeezing individual leaves, either plain or ruffled. Leave a small space between each leaf and place a drop flower in the space between the leaves.

### Shell and flute

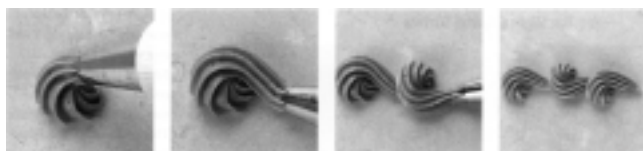


Use open star tip 21. Squeeze out a horizontal row of shells around the cake, and make long tails on the shells. Next, with petal tip 104 and contrasting icing, place the wide end of the tip in the space between each shell with the narrow end of the tip pointing straight up. Without moving the tip, squeeze, then stop the pressure and lift the tip off for a fluted stand-up trim.

# LEVEL 2

## Borders and decorations

### Reverse shells



Icing consistency: Medium. Hold the bag at a 45° angle with the tip lightly touching the surface. Squeeze the bag to let the icing build up and fan out as if you were making a regular shell, then swing the tip around to the left in a curve while relaxing the pressure to form the shell's tail. Stop the pressure and pull the tip away. Repeat the procedure, only this time swing the tip around to the right while forming the shell's tail. Continue this procedure in alternating directions for a series of reverse shells. If you are making the border on a round cake, turn the cake as you go so that you are always working toward yourself.

### Horizontal "C"



Hold the bag at a 90° angle to the surface and make a horizontal C-motion shell, relaxing the pressure to taper the tail. Make a reverse C-motion shell, but before piping the tail, relax the pressure and taper the tail to overlap the first C-motion shell tail.

### "e" motion



Use a round or star tip. Hold the bag at a 45° angle to the surface. As you squeeze out the icing, move the tip down, up to the right, and around as if writing the letter "e." Use a steady, even pressure as you repeat the procedure several times. To end, stop the pressure and pull the tip away. These continuous e-shaped loops work best on a bottom border or as a western lariat. If you have to stop to change positions, push in your tip at the end of the "e" and continue piping to keep a smooth look.

### Zigzag puffs



Hold the bag at a 45° angle to the surface so the tip points to the left and the bag's end points to the right and your fingertips face your body. Touch the tip to the surface and begin to pipe with a light pressure. Use heavier pressure toward the center of the puff, then return gradually to a light pressure to form the tapered end. To end each puff, stop the pressure and pull the tip away. Repeat as you move in a straight line to form a row of puffs.

## Zigzag garlands



These are usually used on the side of a cake. Mark the cake with the desired width and depth of the garlands. Hold the bag at a 45° angle in the same manner as used in the basic zigzag design. Touch the tip to the first mark and squeeze with light, then heavy, pressure in a tight up and down motion to form the curves of the garland as you pipe toward the center. When you reach the center, reverse the process using heavy, then light, pressure toward the end. To end, stop the pressure and pull the tip away. Practice for rhythmic pressure control—light, heavy, light—so the garlands are uniform.

## Ropes



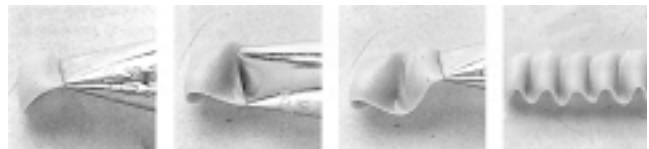
Hold the bag at a 45° angle to the surface. As you squeeze the bag with a steady, even pressure, move the tip in a gentle sideways “S” curve. Stop the pressure and pull the tip away. Now tuck the tip under the bottom curve of the “S” shape. Squeeze the bag with steady pressure as you pull down, then 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. Be sure to tuck the tip into the bottom curve of the previous “S” before you begin squeezing to insure the clean, continuous look of a rope.

## Ribbon drape



Hold the bag at a 45° angle with the tip lightly touching the surface. Your fingertips wrapped around the decorating bag should face you. Touch the wide end of tip to the surface; angle the narrow end of the tip out and about ¼ inch away from the surface. As you squeeze, swing the tip down and up to the right in an arc, forming a draped ribbon.

## Ruffle



Hold the tip at a 45° angle to the surface. Keep the wide end of the tip lightly touching the surface with the narrow end down and away from the surface. Your fingertips wrapped around the decorating bag should face you. Move your wrist up to pull up the icing. Move your wrist down to complete one curl of the ruffle. As you squeeze out the icing and swing the tip down and up to the right to form a curve, use a slight up and down hand motion for a ruffled effect. Repeat the procedure several times to form a continuous row of ruffle.

## Ruffle garland



Generally, garlands are used as a side decoration on a cake. Mark the cake for the desired width and depth of the garlands. Hold the bag with the tip positioned as for ruffles, but angle the narrow

end about ¼ inch away from the surface. As you squeeze, move your hand up and down slightly to ruffle the icing. Continue moving your hand up and down as you position the bag to form the curve of the garland. For a stand-up ruffle, just turn the tip so the narrow end is angled up and away from the surface and the wide end is on the surface.

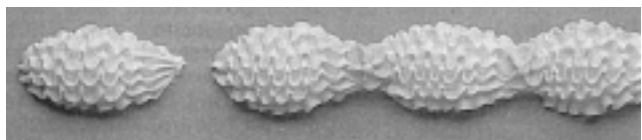
### Plume border



This is similar to the reverse shell except the tails are longer. Use specialty tip 78 and squeeze as if making a shell, then swing the tip to the right as you relax the pressure and draw the shell to a long point. Repeat this procedure, swinging the tip to the left as you relax the pressure and draw the shell to a point. The end of each point should be covered with the beginning of the next shell. Continue this procedure, alternating directions.

### *Combination borders*

#### Puff and drop flower



Pipe a horizontal row of open star tip 22 shells. Then, position drop flower tip 225 between each pair of puffs.

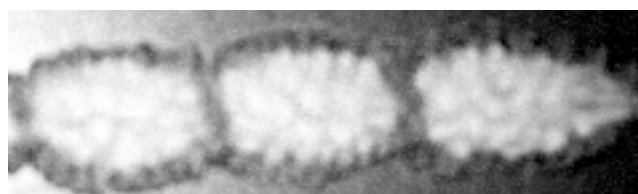
#### Shell puff with ruffle



Use either open star tip 22 or closed star tip 31 for shells. Hold the tip at a 60° angle to the surface and begin squeezing out the first shell.

When the shell is nice and full, raise the tip slightly, ease off the pressure, pull down, then stop all pressure completely. This stopping point, called the tail, is where you form your second shell. Repeat this procedure until finished. To complete the border with a ruffle, use petal tip 103. With the tip's wide end touching the tail of a shell, squeeze out a rippled edging, easing the pressure as you approach the tail of the next shell. Repeat this procedure until you have edged all the shells. For variation, try making the ruffle at the top of the shell instead of the bottom.

#### Shell puff and zigzag scallops



Follow the procedure outlined for a shell puff with ruffle. To finish the border, use closed star tip 24 and add a small zigzag trim around each shell puff.

#### Dot and heart



Mark the scallop design. Pipe two dots using round tip 3. Make one heart using tip 4 and the beading technique. Join the tails together to form a point. Continue making three dots, one heart, three dots, one heart, ending the scallop with two dots. Add a heart to each scallop point using round tip 3. Instead of making hearts with tip 4, use specialty tip 252.

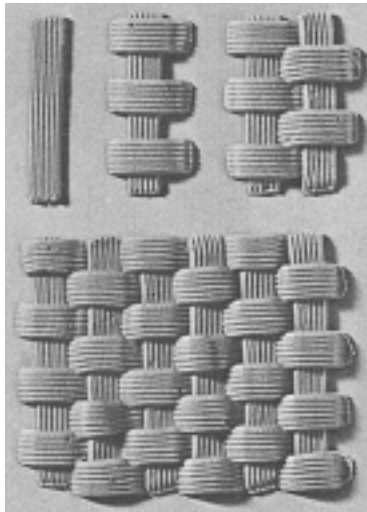
### "S" scroll and drop flower



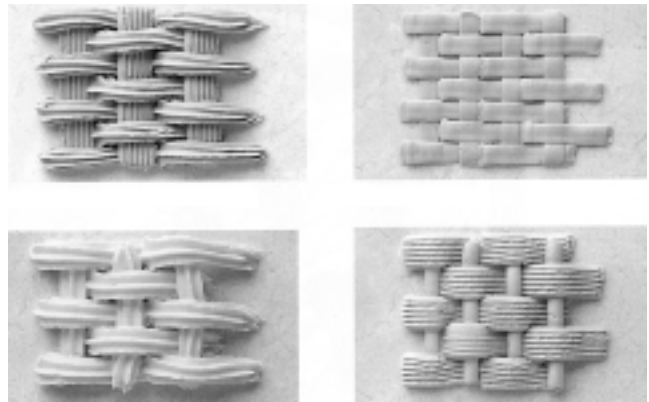
Use open star tip 364. Apply steady, even pressure to make a horizontal row of large "S" scrolls. Make tiny leaves using leaf tip 352 on top of the beginning and end of each "S" scroll. Use tip 225 and place a drop flower between each pair of leaves.

### Basketweave

Use basketweave specialty tip 47. Squeeze out a vertical line on the side of the cake from top to bottom. Starting at the top, pipe a row of 1/2-inch horizontal stripes using the same 47 tip. Stop each stripe in line with the one above it. Spacing between stripes should be the same as the width of the tip opening. Pipe the next vertical line over the ends of the horizontal stripes. Start the next set of horizontal stripes by burying the tip under the first vertical stripe. Repeat the vertical lines then the horizontal lines until you achieve a basketweave effect. Each new set should fit between the previous set.



### Basketweave variation



- Practice with star tip 16 for vertical lines and basketweave tip 47 for horizontal lines.
- Use the smooth basketweave tip 44 for both horizontal and vertical lines.
- Use star tip 17 for both vertical and horizontal lines.
- Use round tip 7 or 9 to make vertical lines and basketweave tip 47 or 48 to make horizontal bars.

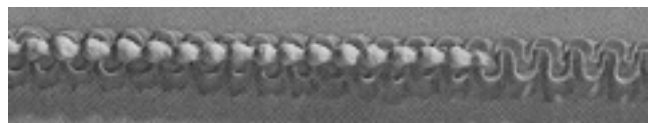
## LEVEL 3 Borders and decorations

### Shirred ribbon and shell



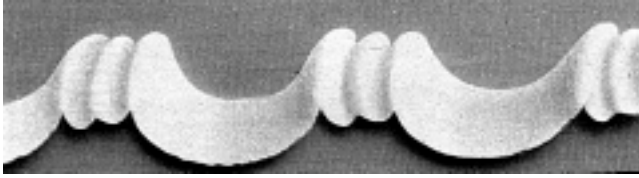
Use open star tip 14 or basketweave tip 46. Hold the bag at a 45° angle and with steady, even pressure make a narrow zigzag (shirred ribbon) all around the cake. Use star tip 14 and contrasting icing to pipe a tiny shell in the middle of the zigzag.

### Shirred ribbon and ball fringe



Use open star tip 14 to make a shirred zigzag ribbon. Then use round tip 2 and white icing to pipe a bead or shell in the centers or a line of sideways "S."

## Ribbon swag



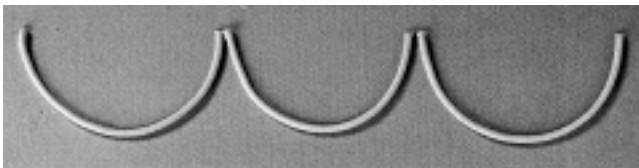
Use the same tip position and basic procedure for making a ribbon drape; however, as you finish each ribbon's curve, move the tip up and down in three short strokes to form a swag.

## Zigzag garland and ruffle



Use petal tip 103 with the wide end touching the cake and narrow end facing out. Use a back and forth motion to pipe a row of ruffle drapes. Now with tip 15 and light-to-heavy pressure, squeeze out a row of zigzag garlands that curve along top edges of ruffle drapes.

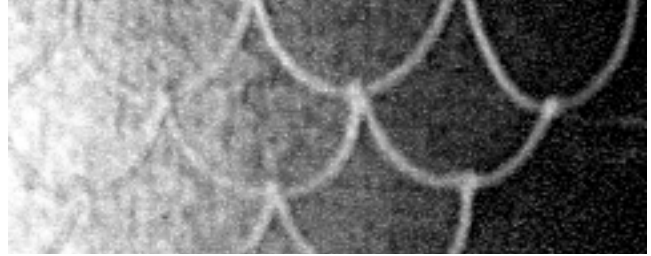
## Drop strings



Use round tip 2 or 3. Larger tips make the decoration too bulky. Use buttercream icing thinned with a few drops of white corn syrup. Royal icing is also good for string work. The drop-string technique is the basis for all other drop-string work variations.

Mark 1½-inch intervals on the practice surface with a pencil. Hold the bag at a 90° angle so that the bag's large end points just slightly to the right. Touch the tip to the surface and squeeze, holding the bag in place momentarily so that the icing sticks. Pull the tip straight away from the surface allowing the icing to drop into an arc. Relax the pressure and touch the tip to the next mark to end the string. The secret of making drop strings is to let each string drop by itself and not to drop your hand to form the curvature.

## String lace



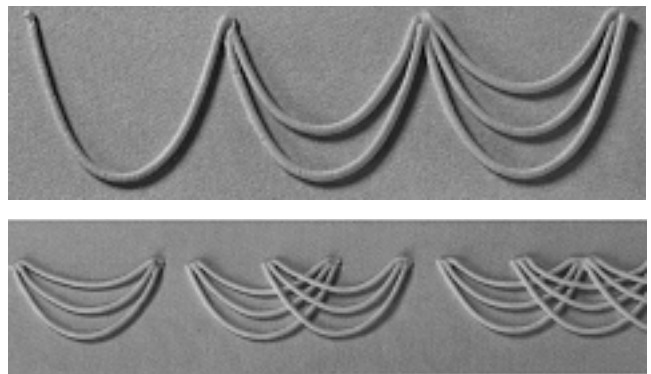
Mark the top edge of the cake every ½ inch all the way around. With round tip 2, drop string drape from mark to mark. To make the second row, attach the string just above the center of one of the string drapes in the first row. Let the string drop and attach it again above the center of the next drape. Repeat. Make the third row the same as the second, working from the drape's center in the second row.

## Bow-trimmed strings



Pipe a row of round tip 2 single-string drapes around the top edge of the cake, making them 2 inches wide and 1½ inch deep. Approximately ¼ inch in from the ends of each drape, drop a shorter drape. With the same tip, pipe a string bow and streamers at each point where the longest drapes join, letting bows cover the ends of shorter drapes.

## Triple-drop strings



Mark the cake's top edge at 1-inch intervals. Pipe round tip 3 triple-string drapes between alternate marks. Always pipe the longest string first. Go

back to a skipped mark and attach another triple-string drape to it until all the skipped marks have been attached. Pipe a row of closed star tip 26 shells in a contrasting color around the cake top to cover the string ends.

### Zigzag garland, ruffle, and string

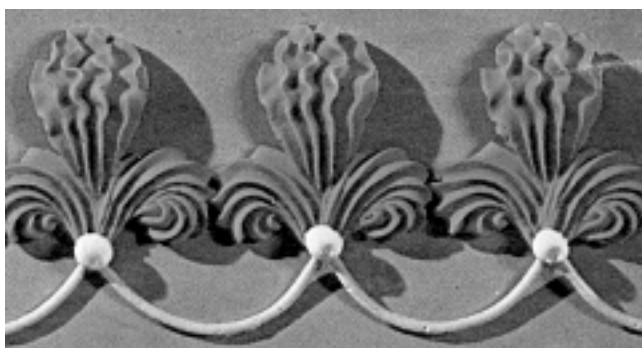


Pipe a row of petal tip 104 ruffle drapes. Add open star tip 16 zigzag garlands atop the ruffle drapes. Drape round or writing tip 3 string across the top curve of the zigzag garlands, attaching the string at the garland points. Finally, drape a second string across the top curve of the ruffle drapes.

### Crown border

Make a row of upright shells. Add round tip 3 string drapes in a deeper color to the point of the alternate shells. Go back to a skipped shell and attach the string drape to it and so on with each skipped shell. With closed star tip 26, pipe a star on each shell point.

### Fleur-de-lis with strings



Begin by making a row of open star tip 19 fleur-de-lis, jiggling your hand as the center shells puff to ripple them. Add a string drape in a contrasting color from base-to-base point of each fleur-de-lis. Add a tiny round tip 2 bead of icing to each base point to cover the string ends.

### Swiss scallops



Mark the center of the cake's side at 2-inch intervals. First make an up-curved open star tip 14 zigzag garland from mark to mark, then a down-curved garland. Let them dry. Over-pipe these frames with round tip 2 string drapes. Pipe "e" motion edging around the frames. Pipe a tiny round tip 1 row of white dots around the "e" motion edging. Pipe a tiny leaf tip 65 green leaf trio at each frame point. Position tip 225 drop flowers on top of each leaf trio.

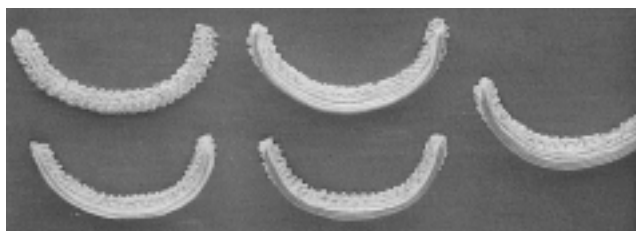
### Flower and vine



Use round tip 4 to pipe on the long, curved stem. Make up tiny half roses and buds in advance with petal tip 102 and place in position, using icing as glue. Make leaves with leaf tip 66 and use the brush-stripping method to achieve a brown edging.

Variation: Use tiny drop flowers instead of half roses and buds.

### Lambeth or English method borders



Although elaborate in appearance, these are not as impossible as they look. They're simply layers of symmetrical decorations that give a built-up effect. This particular border consists of five sets of drop strings—four of which have more than

one layer. To practice this border, use slightly stiffened icing and round tips 3, 2, and 1.

First mark 2½-inch intervals around the top edge of a loaf or angel food cake pan and a horizontal guideline 2 inches from the pan's top edge. Use round tip 3 to drop 2-inch deep strings from mark to mark. Next use round tip 3 to add a second layer of 2-inch deep drop strings on top of the first row. Continue to use round or writing tip 3 and drop a second row of strings, each approximately ¾ inch deep. Use round tip 2 to add a third layer of drop strings to the first row, a second layer to the second row, and to add a new third row. Continue to use round tip 2 to add a fourth layer of drop strings to the first row, a

third layer to the second row, a second layer to the third row, and add a fourth row. Use round tip 1 to add the fifth layer to the first row, a fourth layer to the second row, a third layer to the third row, a second layer to the fourth row, and a final fifth row. Try a contrasting color for the fifth step.

Variation: For step number two use open star tip 14 zigzags. Over-pipe with an open star tip 14 white drop string.

*Note: This is a very precise technique. It would be a good idea to practice several times before trying this on a cake.*





# LEAVES AND FLOWERS

## LEVEL 1 Leaves

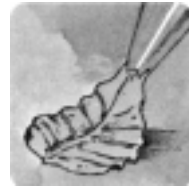
### Plain or basic leaf

Buttercream icing should be thinned slightly with corn syrup. Hold the decorating bag at a 45° angle to the surface so that your fingertips face you. Squeeze and hold the tip in place to let the icing fan out into a base, then relax and stop pressure as you pull the tip away, drawing the leaf to a point. Three different leaves can be made with this technique by using three different leaf tips: basic leaf, tip 352; veined leaf, tip 67; large leaf, tip 366 (use large coupler).



### Stand-up leaf

Hold the bag at a 90° angle with the tip lightly touching the surface. Squeeze and hold the tip in place to let the icing fan out into a base, then pull the tip straight up and away from the surface as you relax and stop the pressure.



### Ruffled leaf

Use the same procedure as for a plain leaf, except when pulling the tip away, move the tip back and forth to give it a ruffled effect as you bring the leaf to a point.



### Holly—Method 1

Form clusters of three ruffled leaves. Add a second row of leaves on top if desired. Add red dots for berries (always in groups of three) with round tip 3.

### Holly—Method 2

Use thin royal icing, leaf tip 70, and a flower nail 7 with a square of waxed paper attached. Pipe a basic leaf by holding the bag at 45° angle to the surface with the wide opening parallel to and lightly touching the surface. While the icing is wet, pull out tiny points around the edge with a toothpick. Let the leaves dry on a flower former or curved surface.



### Violet leaf

Use medium consistency royal icing. Using flower tip 104 and flower nail 7, hold the wide end of the tip lightly touching the nail. Squeeze with medium pressure, using a jiggling motion. Slide the tip out about ¼ inch as you turn the nail. Relax the pressure, move back to the starting point. Stop the pressure and pull away.



## Drop flowers

Drop flowers are the easiest flowers for a beginning decorator to make. They are made using a drop flower tip and slightly stiff icing. Drop flower tips look like “star” tips with a little post in the opening.

### One-squeeze star drop flowers



Hold the bag at a 90° angle to the surface with the tip lightly touching the surface. Squeeze, keeping the tip in the icing as the flower is formed, then stop the pressure and pull the tip away. Dot the flower's center with a complimentary color using round tip 3.

### Swirl drop flowers

Hold the bag at a 90° angle to the surface with the tip lightly touching the surface. Before squeezing, turn your hand as far left as possible; squeeze out the icing as you turn your hand back to the right. Stop the pressure and pull the tip away from the practice surface. Dot the flower's center with a complimentary color using round tip 3



## Other flowers

### Free-hand flower

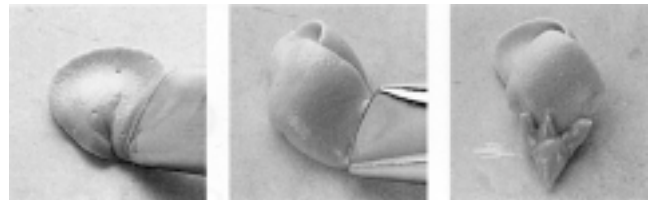
Using a star tip, hold the bag at a 90° angle to the surface. Make flower petals by forming loops. Make five or six petals and dot the flower's center with round tip 3.

### Variety flower

Use round tip 4 or 5 and hold the bag at a 90° angle to the surface. Form the petals by squeezing out 5 to 7 dots in a circle. Dot the flower's center using a contrasting icing color. Place a green stem at the base of the flower with round tip 2.

1. Make the center petal first. Hold the bag at a 45° angle to the surface, so the bag's end points toward you with the wide end of the tip down and the narrow end straight up. Squeeze the bag and lift the tip slightly off the surface (about ¼ inch) as the icing moves forward and curls. Continue to squeeze without changing position. Relax the pressure and return the tip to the surface. Stop squeezing and pull the tip away.
2. To make side petals, touch the tip's wide end to the bottom left edge of the center petal; then point the narrow end of the tip up and out to the left. Squeeze, lift the tip slightly, relax the pressure, lower the tip, stop the pressure, and pull the tip away. Repeat the procedure for the right petal, starting at the bottom right edge of the center petal.
3. Add the calyx using round tip 3 and thin icing. Hold the bag at a 45° angle to the surface, so the bag's end points toward you. Insert the tip into the base of the sweet pea and hold it in place as you squeeze to build up a base. Relax the pressure as you draw the tip down, narrowing the stem to a point.

### Rosebud



Make this flower with stiff buttercream icing using petal tip 104 and round tip 3 for the calyx. You can pipe this flower on waxed paper on a cookie sheet or directly on your cake after a little practice.

1. Make the base petal first. Hold the bag at a 45° angle to the surface so that end of the bag points over your right shoulder and your fingertips face you. Touch the wide end of petal tip 104 to the surface, point the narrow end of the tip up and to the right. Squeeze, move the tip along the surface away from you

## LEVEL 1 & 2

### Flat surface flowers

#### Sweet pea



This is one of the fastest, easiest-to-make flowers in the garden. Sweet peas work beautifully by themselves or as part of a floral cascade. After practice you will be able to pipe them directly on your cake. Use stiff buttercream icing for the petals and thin icing for the calyx. Practice with flower tip 103 and round tip 3.

in a straight line about ¼ inch long, hesitate, then continue squeezing as the icing fans out. Returning the tip to the original position and halfway back, start to release the pressure, move the tip to the starting point, and pull the tip away.

2. To make the overlapping petal, hold the bag in the same position as for the base petal. The wide end of the tip should touch the inside right edge of the base petal and the narrow end of the tip should be slightly above the base petal. Squeeze and hold the tip in place as the icing catches the inside edge of the base petal and rolls into an interlocking bud. Stop the pressure and pull the tip away.
3. Make the sepals and calyx using thin icing and round tip 3. Hold the bag at a 45° angle to the bud's base with the end of the bag pointing toward you. Touch the tip to the bottom of the bud, squeeze, and pull the tip up and away from the flower; relax the pressure and draw the sepal to a point. Repeat to make two more sepals. Add the calyx by inserting tip 3 into the base of the center sepal. Squeeze, letting the icing build up. Slowly draw the tip toward you, relaxing the pressure as you move away from the sepal. Stop the pressure and pull away. You may want to blend the calyx into the stem using a dampened decorator's brush.

1. Make a rosebud, omitting the sepals and calyx. To make the left petal, hold the bag at a 45° angle so that the bag's end points to the right and your fingertips gripping the bag face you. Touch the wide end of petal tip 104 near the bottom left side of the bud. As you squeeze, move the tip up, around to the right and down, relaxing the pressure.
2. To make the right petal, hold the bag in the opposite position as you did for the left petal. Touch the tip's wide end near the bottom right side of the rosebud base. Squeeze and move the tip up, around to the left, and down to the bud's center base. Stop the pressure, pull the tip away.
3. Make the sepals and calyx using thin icing and round tip 3. Follow the same procedure as step 3 of the rosebud, starting at the bottom center of the half rose. Add three sepals first, then a calyx for a finished flower.

### Lily of the valley

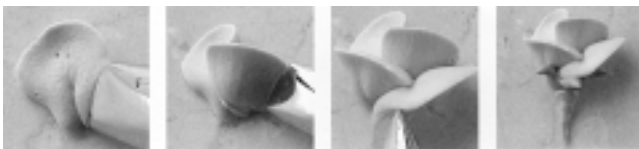


Use medium consistency buttercream icing. Practice with tips 68, 2, 81, and 1. To create a three dimensional leaf effect, angle the top edge of the decorating tip about 45°. The greater the angle, the more dimension your leaf will have. Stems of the little bell-shaped flowers can be piped on the broad leaf or may be piped separately using the leaves to complement the flower stem.

1. Make the leaf first using tip 68. Squeeze out the icing, letting it build up slightly for a broad width. Move upward, curve to the right and gradually stop the pressure to bring the leaf to a point.
2. Make the stems by adding a tip 2 stem along the center of the leaf, moving off to an angle. Pipe the short secondary stems outward from the main stem.

## LEVEL 2 Flower nail flowers

### Half rose



Use petal tip 104 and round tip 3. Stiff buttercream icing is needed for the petals and thin buttercream icing is needed for the sepals and calyx.

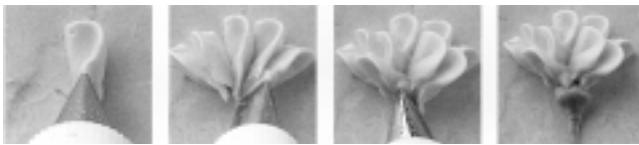
3. Add the lily of the valley blossom using specialty tip 81. Squeeze with light pressure above the surface with the inner curve of the tip facing you. Squeeze out a curve of icing and continue squeezing until a tiny bell shape is formed. Stop the pressure. Lightly touch the tip to the surface; give one more quick squeeze, stop, and lift away. Add two tip 1 stamens to the center.

### Bleeding heart flower

1. Pipe two round tip 5 pink beads to form a heart shape.
2. Pipe an open star tip 13 white inverted bead from the tip of the pink heart. Add two round tip 2 pink strings on each side of the white bead.
3. Add pink highlights with an art brush and thinned pink food color paste.
4. To make a bud, pipe a pink upright bead using round tip 5. To make a blossoming bud, pipe a white bead to the tip, using round tip 3.



### Half carnation



1. Use stiff icing to create the effect of broken petal tips. Hold petal tip 104 or 150 at a 45° angle with the wide end touching the surface and the narrow end straight up. Start squeezing and moving the tip straight up and down in a jiggling motion. Stop squeezing and pull away.
2. Repeat this procedure to make a fan of petals. Make five to seven equal-size petals.
3. Pipe a second row of shorter petals directly over the first.
4. Continue this procedure for four or five more rows. Make each row shorter and more upright until a rounded half flower is complete. Add a cone-shaped calyx and a thick stem, using round tip 3.

## LEVEL 2 & 3 Flower nail flowers

1. All flower nail flowers should be made in advance so they are dry before positioning them on the cake. Flowers made with royal icing should dry overnight. Buttercream flowers should be made from slightly stiffened icing and will handle easily if dried for a few hours.
2. To use the flower nail, hold the stem between your left thumb and forefinger and slowly turn it counter-clockwise, rotating the head. As you rotate the head, move the tip in various ways to form different flower petals. The rhythmic turning of the flower nail as you form a petal is the key to making flowers on a nail.
3. Attach a 2-inch waxed paper square to the center of the flower nail with a dot of icing (or a dot of florist's clay). After the flower is finished, remove the waxed paper and the flower. Attach another waxed paper square and start again.
4. Flat petal flowers have more shape if dried on a curved flower former. Flower formers can be purchased or you can make one by cutting a paper towel or toilet paper tube in half.

### American beauty rose

The most popular icing flower. This flower is sturdy enough to use immediately after making.

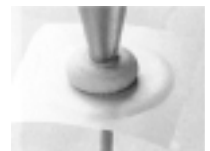


Icing: Stiff consistency icing, either buttercream or royal.

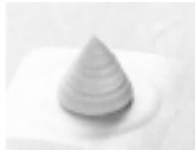
Tips: 104, 12. Flower nail: 7.

### The base

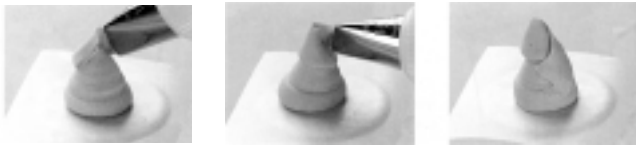
1. Hold the decorating bag perpendicular to the flower nail with round tip 12 touching the center of the nail.



- Squeeze with heavy pressure, keeping the tip's end in the icing until you've made a full, round cone-shaped base.
- Start to lift the tip higher, gradually raise the tip, and decrease the pressure as you raise the tip up and away from the nailhead. The rose base should be  $1\frac{1}{2}$  times as high as the rose tip opening. If you are using a large rose tip (104), the mound will need to be taller than if you are using a small rose tip (102).



### The bud



- Use petal tip 104. Hold the flower nail in your left hand and the bag at a  $45^\circ$  angle. The wide end of the tip should touch the cone of the icing base at, or slightly below the mid-point, and the narrow end of the tip should point up and be angled inward over the top of the base.
- Now you must do three things at the same time: squeeze the bag, move the tip, and rotate the nail. As you start to squeeze, pull the tip up and away from the top of the dome, making a ribbon of icing.
- Slowly turn the nail counter-clockwise (clockwise for lefties) at the same time and swing a band of icing around the dome, ending as you overlap the bud's starting point. Now you have a finished center bud.

### First row of three petals



- Touch the wide end of petal tip 104 to the midpoint of the bud base with the narrow end of the tip straight up. Turn the nail counter-clockwise and move the tip up and back down to the midpoint of the bud base, forming the first petal.

- Start slightly behind the end of the first petal and squeeze out a second petal the same as the first.
- Start slightly behind the end of the second petal and squeeze out a third petal. End the third petal at the starting point of the first petal for a complete row of three petals.

### Second row of five petals



- Touch the wide end of petal tip 104 to a point slightly below the center of a petal in the first row. Angle the narrow end of the tip out slightly more than you did for the top row of petals. Squeeze the bag and turn the nail counter-clockwise, move the tip up, then down, to form the first petal.
- Start slightly behind the first petal and make a second petal. Position the petals in the second row so they overlap the spaces in the first row. Rotate the nail  $\frac{1}{5}$  turn for each petal.
- Continue this procedure until you've made five petals. End the fifth petal on the starting point of the first petal.

### Third row of seven petals



- Touch the wide end of petal tip 104 to a point below the center of the petal in the second row. Angle the narrow end of the tip out a little more than the second row. Squeeze, turn the nail and move the tip up, then down, to form the first petal.
- Start slightly behind the end of the first petal and make the second petal, overlapping the spaces between the petals in the second row. Rotate the nail  $\frac{1}{7}$  turn for each petal. Continue this procedure to make seven petals.

- The seventh petal end should overlap the starting point of the first petal. Carefully slip the waxed paper square that holds your finished rose off the nail to dry and make another rose.

*Note: If you are going to be using your roses on your cake immediately, waxed paper squares are not necessary. Remove the finished rose off the nail with small scissors, slightly opened. Slide the flower off the scissors and onto the cake using a small spatula or table knife.*

### Roses: color variation

- Striped cones (spatula striping) add interesting color to roses and other flower-nail flowers.
- Two-toned rose: Pipe the base, bud, and first row of petals with the first color, then add the remaining petals in a contrasting shade.
- Three-toned rose: Pipe the base, bud, and first row of petals in the first color, the second row of petals in the second color, and the third row of petals in the third color.

### Wild rose



A round, flat flower about the size of your size 7 flower nail.

**Icing:** Medium consistency royal icing works best. Stiff snow white buttercream icing stabilized with meringue powder also can be used (see *Icing recipes*, pages 26 through 28).

**Tips:** 103, 2. **Flower nail:** 7.

- Hold petal tip 103 at a 45° angle to the nail with the wide end touching the center of the nail. The narrow end should be almost parallel to the nail's surface, about 1/8 inch above the surface. As you squeeze out the first petal, turn the nail to the left 1/5 turn and

move the tip out to the edge of the nail and back to the center. Relax the pressure as you return the tip to the center of the nail, curving the tip slightly upward to create a cupped shape. Stop squeezing as the wide end touches the center of the nail and lift up.

- Form a second petal in the same way, just to the right of the first.
- Make three more petals, always working to the right of the previous petal.
- Change to round tip 2 or 3 and hold the bag perpendicular (straight up) to the flower's center, slightly above the flower. Squeeze out six tiny dots at the center.

### Apple blossom



This springtime flower (usually pink) is virtually the same as the wild rose, but uses a smaller tip. Pipe apple blossoms about the size of a penny and dry them on flower formers or against the side of a cookie sheet or cake pan. Practice with tips 102 and 1.

- Hold petal tip 102 with the wide end touching the center of the nail. The narrow end should be almost parallel to the nail's surface, raised about 1/8 inch above the nail surface. Starting at the center of the flower nail, move your hand out approximately 1/2 inch as you squeeze, using light pressure. Turn the nail very slightly and then return to the center.
- Make four more identical petals. Do not overlap them.
- Add five tiny dots close together with tip 1 for the center. Hold the tip slightly above the flower while piping the dots.

## Forget-me-not



These tiny spring blossoms can be made in pink, white, or blue. They are about half the size of a dime. As with all icing flowers, be sure to make more than you think you need—you don't want to run out of flowers if they break when you are assembling your cake!

Icing: Medium consistency royal icing or stiff consistency snow white buttercream icing.

Tip: 101. Flower nail: 9.

1. Use the apple blossom procedure with smaller petal tip 101. The wide end of the tip should be touching the center of the nail, the narrow end pointing out and raised about  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch above the nail surface. Using light pressure make five tiny petals about  $\frac{1}{16}$  inch in length.
2. Pipe a single dot in the flower center with round tip 1. Hold the tip slightly above the flower pipe center.

## Primrose



The key to forming the heart-shaped petals is perfecting a “curve-dip-curve” motion as you spin the flower nail.

Icing: Medium consistency royal icing or stiff consistency snow white buttercream icing.

Tips: 103, 14, 1. Flower nail: 7.

1. Hold the wide end of the tip lightly touching the center of the flower nail, the narrow end pointing out and raised  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch above the nail

surface. Squeeze the bag and move the tip out  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch using a “curve-dip-curve” motion (move the tip out  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch, then in  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch, and back out) to form the first heart-shaped petal while turning the nail in the opposite direction. Relax the pressure as you return to the starting point.

2. Repeat this procedure for the remaining four petals.
3. Pipe a tip 14 center star. Add a tip 1 dot. Let dry.

## Poppy



A bright red-orange flower with a green center and a long black stamen.

1. Use petal tip 104 and the wild rose position to pipe four wide ruffled petals that are pointed at the base.
2. Pipe three center petals, turning the narrow end of the tip straight up to make the icing form a cup while you form the petals.
3. Add an open star tip 14 green center and black artificial stamens.

## Violet



The violet is an ideal filler flower. Use it to give an abundant look to all kinds of floral cakes. It looks beautiful in white and yellow, as well as violet.

Icing: Medium consistency royal icing or stiff consistency snow white buttercream icing.

Tips: 59s/59 or 101s, 1. Flower nail: 9.

1. Use the forget-me-not procedure but make the petals different lengths. Use petal tip 59 and squeeze out a  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch petal with the wide end of the tip touching the nail center and the narrow end pointed  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch away from the surface. Squeeze the bag and turn the nail  $\frac{1}{5}$  of a circle, relaxing the pressure as you return to the starting point. Add two  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch base petals. Pipe two yellow dots at the center using round tip 1.

## Pansy



Color options are abundant for this vibrant flower. Look in the greenhouse or garden for all the color possibilities. Petals can be dark blue, purple, orange, red, or white, and highlighted with a complementary color. Add multi-tones by using a striped bag or by painting in colors at the flower's center or edge with a fine artist's brush dipped in a small amount of clear vanilla that has been tinted with icing color.

Icing: Medium consistency royal icing or stiff consistency snow white buttercream.

Tips: 104, 1. Flower nail: 7 or 9.

1. Use two bags, each fitted with petal tip 104. Fill one bag with yellow icing, one with violet. If you want multi-tone pansies, brush stripe both with purple paste color from bottom to top on the same side as the wide end of the tip.
2. Using the wild rose position and yellow icing, pipe two petals, one overlapping. Jiggle your hand slightly for a ruffled effect.
3. Pipe two slightly smaller ruffled petals atop the first two.

4. For the bottom petal, with the violet icing pipe a larger ruffled petal the width of the back petals, using a back and forth motion for a ruffled effect.
5. Pipe a round tip 1 yellow string teardrop or loop at the flower's center.

## Chrysanthemum



A fall tradition, with a sunburst of sharply defined petals. You'll see them in rich, warm autumn colors like rust, golden yellow, and terra cotta, as well as pink and white.

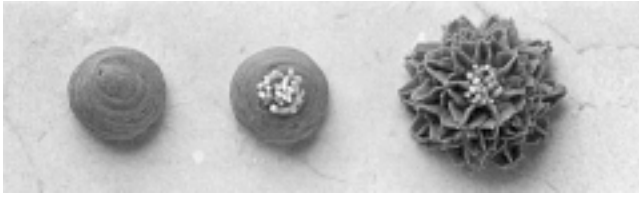
Icing: Stiff royal icing or stiff snow white buttercream.

Tips: 6, 79. Flower nail: 7.

1. Use very stiff icing for a broken petal effect. Hold round tip 6 perpendicular to the nail as you pipe a  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch icing mound for the base.
2. Use tip 79 and hold the bag at a  $45^\circ$  angle to the outer edge of the mound, with the half moon tip opening pointing up. Squeeze a row of  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch cupped base petals; pull up slightly as you release the pressure to form the petals.
3. Add a second row of shorter petals between those in the first row, lifting your hand to pull up the tips.
4. Continue piping rows of petals, each row shorter, more up-tilted than the last, so the center petals stand nearly upright.
5. Finish with a cluster of round tip 1 dots at the center.



## Bachelor button



This sturdy handsome flower is an excellent choice on men's cakes and in summer floral arrangements. Bachelor buttons look terrific in blue, white, pink, or lavender.

Icing: Stiff royal or stiff snow white buttercream.  
Tips: 1, 7, 16. Flower nail: 7.

1. Use the same general technique for this flower as for a chrysanthemum.
2. Use round tip 7 to squeeze a  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch diameter icing mound for the base.
3. First pipe a cluster of short pointed dots at the center of the mound. Then, with open star tip 16, starting at the base and working toward the center, pipe tiny one-squeeze star petals around and around the base until it is completely covered. Fill in with more petals where needed.

## Aster

A summer flower in a variety of bright colors, using the same basic techniques as the chrysanthemum and bachelor button.



Icing: Stiff royal or stiff snow white buttercream.  
Tips: 7 and leaf tip 75. Flower nail: 7.

1. Use the same general technique as for the chrysanthemum and bachelor button.
2. Use round tip 7 to make a 1-inch diameter flower base.
3. Pipe a first row of sharp, short petals all around the outer edge using leaf tip 75.
4. Continue adding rows of petals. Each row should be shorter and more upright, until the petals stand almost straight up at the center.

## Full carnation



Think of a carnation as row upon row of ruffles piped over a center mound. It's a welcome flower in any season—try it with a striped bag (stripe on narrow-tip side) for lovely color variations.

Icing: Use very stiff icing for a broken petal effect, either stiff royal or stiff snow white buttercream.

Tips: 12, 150 or 104. Flower nail: 7.

1. Use round tip 12. Hold the bag perpendicular (straight up) to the nail. Pipe a ball on the flower nail.
2. Using petal tip 150 or petal tip 104, pipe several upstanding petals in the center of the ball with a jiggling up and down motion, then circle them with ruffled petals.
3. As you continue piping rows of petals to cover, turn the narrow end of the tip farther out.
4. Pipe the last row of petals at the base of the flower with the tip straight out.

## Daisy

A delicate, fragile flower, typically white with



yellow centers. Try these color combinations on your daisies: yellow petals with yellow or blue centers, violet or blue petals with yellow centers, or peach petals with orange centers. Highlight the centers with crushed cake sparkles or colored cake sugars, which are extra fine. This clever pollen effect makes your daisy look fresh picked!

Icing: Medium royal icing works best with this fragile flower; however, you might experiment with stiff snow white buttercream (if your weather isn't too hot and humid).

Tips: 103, 5. Flower nail: 7.

1. Attach a 1½-inch square of waxed paper to flower nail 7. Pipe a small icing dot in the nail center with tip 5 as a guide for the flower center.
2. For petals, hold the bag almost straight up with the wide end of petal tip 103 lightly touching the nail about ¼ inch away from the center and the narrow end pointing out to the outer edge. Squeeze the bag and move in to meet the center dot. Ease off the pressure as you move to the center to narrow the petal slightly at the base.
3. Repeat for a circle of 12 identical petals.
4. Pipe a large round tip 5 yellow dot in the flower's center and press to flatten it. For a pollen effect, dampen your finger, dip it in crushed cake sparkles or tinted sugar, and press it on the center.
5. Dry the flowers thoroughly before trying to use them. Place some of the flowers on a flower former or against the side of a cookie sheet for curved shapes.

### Brown-eyed Susan or sunflower

Similar to the daisy except with gold petals and a brown center.

Icing: Medium royal icing or stiff snow white buttercream.

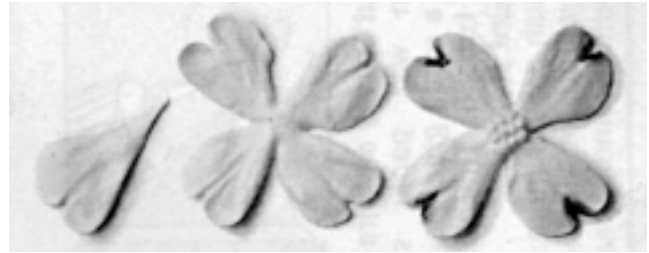
Tips: 103, 7. Flower nail: 7.

1. Make 14 yellow-gold petals with petal tip 103, using the same method as the daisy.
2. After the flower dries slightly, paint light brown lines (paintbrush dipped in brown food coloring and then in vanilla flavoring) in the center of each flower.



3. Pipe a large rounded mound of dark brown for the center with round tip 7. Do not flatten.
4. Create pollen on the brown with a dampened finger dipped in brown colored cake sparkles or tinted sugar.

### Dogwood



A spring flower of either pale pink or white heart-shaped petals with brown accents and yellow centers. The key to forming the heart-shaped petals is perfecting a “curve-dip-curve” motion as you spin the flower nail.

Icing: Medium royal or stiff snow white buttercream.

Tips: 103, 2. Flower nail: 7.

Other: Small paintbrush.

1. Use petal tip 103. Hold the bag at a 45° angle to the flower nail with the wide end of the tip touching the center and the narrow end pointed out. Squeeze out the icing, moving the tip out to the edge of the nail, back to the center, out to the edge and back again, forming a heart-shaped petal. (Use the “curve-dip-curve” technique used in the primrose flower.) Increase the pressure as you turn the nail and move the tip out to the edge for a half petal that fans out slightly. Move straight back to the center of the nail and right out to the edge again for the second half of the petal that fans out in the opposite direction to form a single, heart-shaped petal.
2. Repeat this process for a total of four heart-shaped petals. Then brush the edge of each heart with green, followed by brown paste color.

3. Make the center using round tip 2 dots. Dry in the flower former to allow the petals to curve up.

### Daffodil



A spring flower in yellow. Variations on this flower are the **narcissus** and the **jonquil**.

Dry all the flowers on curved flower formers or against a cookie sheet.

Icing: Medium consistency royal icing or stiff consistency snow white buttercream.

Tips: 104, 3, 1. Flower nail: 7.

1. Hold the bag at a 45° angle, and use petal tip 104 with the wide end lightly touching the nail center and the narrow end pointing out, about ¼ inch above the nail surface. Squeeze the bag, and as you turn the nail about ⅙ of a turn, move the tip out about ½ inch and back to the center of the nail to form a petal.
2. Make five more petals. Do not overlap.
3. Dip your fingers in cornstarch and pinch the ends of the petals into points while the icing is still wet.
4. For the center throat, hold the bag at a 90° angle and pipe a spiral of tip 3 string circles. Top with a tip 1 yellow zigzag.

### Narcissus

A smaller flower than a daffodil with white tip 103 petals, a yellow throat, and red trim on top of the throat.



Icing: Medium royal or stiff snow white buttercream.

Tips: 102, 1. Flower nail: 7.

1. Use the daffodil procedure, but with petal tip 102, and make five or six white petals.
2. Use round tip 1 for the coil center and tiny red tip 1 for the zigzag ruffle.

### Jonquil

Use the same techniques as the daffodil and narcissus. It is smaller than the daffodil, with tip 103 yellow petals, and a yellow center. There is no ruffle or trim on top of the yellow spiral center.

### Poinsettia

This winter flower can be made in red, pink, or white on a flat flower nail. (A variation made with a lily nail is on page 57.)



Icing: Stiff royal icing or stiff snow white buttercream

Tips: 74, 2. Flower nail: 7.

1. Dot the center of the flat flower nail as a starting point for the petals. Touch leaf tip 74 to the nail center and pull it straight out to the edge, making a 1⅛-inch long petal. Stop the pressure and pull away to make the first sharply pointed petal.
2. Pipe three more petals at right angles to each other (making a “+” formation). Then pipe four more petals between the first four for a circle of eight petals in all.
3. Top with a second layer of five ¾-inch petals, pulling each petal up and away at the tip.
4. Use green icing and round tip 1 to add the center dots. Top with yellow dots. Paint red paste color dots on the yellow.

# LEVEL 3

## Lily nail flowers

Use the bell-shaped lily nail to make bell-like flowers or flowers with long uplifted petals. Use different sized nails for small and large flowers. Nails range from ½



to 2½ inches in diameter and are available in one-piece and two-piece styles. A hard-drying royal icing is best for this technique because a softer icing will not hold its shape. To keep the foil from moving in the nail while you are making the flower, place a dab of icing in the nail before adding the foil. Place a square of foil on the bottom half of a two-piece lily nail and press in with the top half. This creates a perfectly shaped foil cup in which to pipe your flower. When the flower is finished, lift out on the foil cup to dry.

### Easter lily



Looks best when the petals are very pointed. If your petals split as you are piping, you can either widen the tip slightly by inserting a thin spatula into the opening or add a teaspoon of piping gel to one cup of stiff royal icing.

Icing: Stiff royal icing.

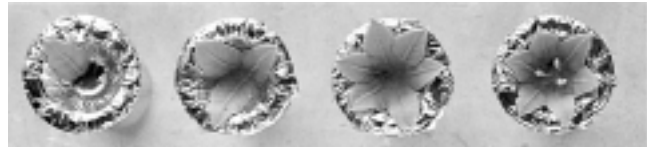
Tips: Leaf tip 68 and star tip 14. Flower nail: 1½-inch lily nail.

1. Use the 1½-inch lily nail and leaf tip 68. Touch the center well of the nail with the tip and squeeze, pulling the petal up and over the cup's edge. Decrease the pressure as you reach the tip, then stop it completely before

you move away to draw the tip to a sharp point.

2. Pipe two more petals at right angles to the first.
3. Pipe three more petals in the spaces between the first three.
4. Join the petals with a green star using open star tip 14. Push a cluster of artificial stamens in the center of the star. *Note: Artificial stamens are not to be eaten!*

### Bluebell



This is a smaller, slightly more shallow version of the lily, done in the smaller 1¼-inch lily nail. Bluebells may be piped in the traditional blue or in white, pink, or yellow.

Icing: Stiff royal icing

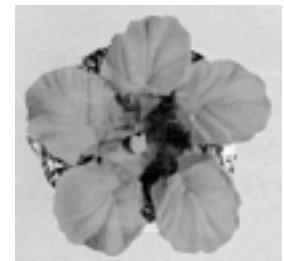
Tips: 66, 2. Flower nail: 1¼-inch lily nail

1. Use the same procedure as the Easter lily but with the 1¼-inch nail and leaf tip 66.
2. Make three evenly spaced ¾-inch petals, pulling only to the top of the nail. Add three more petals in the open spaces.
3. Join the petals with the round tip 2 center dot and push in 3 short artificial stamens.

### Nasturtium

This summer flower comes in a variety of warm colors - orange, yellow, red.

Icing: Stiff royal or stiff snow white buttercream.



Tips: 103, 6. Flower nail: 1¾-inch lily nail.

1. Use a 1¾-inch lily nail. Place the wide end of petal tip 103 in the center well. Start with light pressure, then pull the icing out long enough for it to curl over the nail's edge.

Turn the nail as you dip the bag four times for a deeply ruffled petal. Return as closely as possible to the starting point. Decrease the pressure as you do this to make a narrow petal base.

2. Make five petals in all, and keep them completely separated.
3. Brush a deeper shade of the paste color for the veins onto the flower.
4. Pipe a round tip 6 dot in the center to join the petals and push in an artificial stamen.

### California poppy

1. Press the foil halfway into a 1¼-inch lily nail. Touch the center well of the cup with the wide end of petal tip 103. Squeeze and pull the icing over the outer edge, then straight across the edge, and back to the center for a square, cupped petal. Smooth the center of the petal with a damp art brush.
2. Repeat for four, completely separated petals.
3. Join with a round tip 3 dot and push in a cluster of ½-inch artificial stamens.

### Petunia



This is a ruffled summer flower in any color. To ensure the proper spacing of petals, try this trick: pipe dots of icing with tip 103 on the top of the lily nail, dividing it in fifths—visualize the points of a star. Pipe each petal centered over its dot.

Icing: Stiff royal icing.

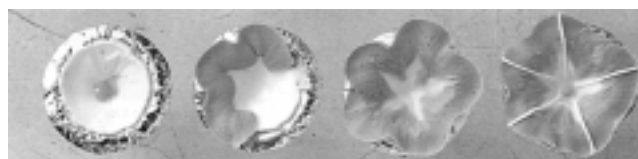
Tips: 103 and 16. Flower nail: 1<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>-inch lily nail.

1. Press the foil square into a 1<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>-inch two-piece lily nail. Insert tip 103 into the cup, positioning the wide end of the tip down with the narrow end slightly lifted. Squeeze inside the nail and move up to the outer edge. Turn the nail and jiggle the tip to form a ruffle, releasing the pressure as you bring the tip back

down inside the nail to the starting point. Stop squeezing, lift away.

2. Repeat to make four more petals.
3. Smooth the bases of the petals together at the center of the flower with a dampened decorator brush.
4. Using light pressure, pipe a tip 16 green star in the center.
5. Insert five stamen in the center; sprinkle with cake sparkles.

### Morning Glory



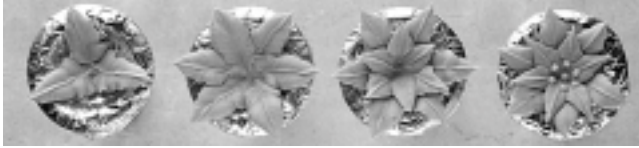
When you are smoothing together the edges of the inner cup and ruffled cup, use a brush; don't use too much water. Eliminate excess water by touching the brush to your hand before applying to the flower.

Icing: Stiff royal icing.

Tips: 104, 103, 2, 1. Flower nail: 1<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>-inch lily nail.

1. Line the 1<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>-inch lily nail with foil. Position the wide end of the 104 tip down in the nail, with both ends touching the nail. Using white icing, pipe a shallow cup within the nail. Pipe a second cup slightly above the first. Smooth with a small damp brush.
2. Using tinted icing and tip 103, hold the bag so the wide end touches the top of the nail. Pipe a ruffled cup slightly above the white inner cup, increasing the pressure in five places to form points.
3. With a dampened decorator brush, blend the tinted icing into the white center. Next, brush the white icing up to form a star shape.
4. Using tip 1 and thinned white icing, pipe five lines from the base of the flower to the edge.
5. Pipe a tip 2 center stamen using yellow icing.

## Poinsettia



This classic Christmas flower may be piped in white, pink, or red. It's one of the more shallow flowers you will pipe in the lily nail. Don't push the foil more than halfway into the cup, or put a small ball of foil under the foil that will make your foil cup.

Icing: Stiff royal icing.

Tips: Leaf tip 352, 1. Flower nail: 1<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>-inch lily nail.

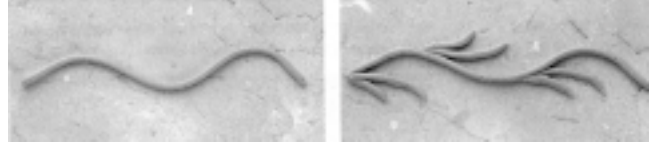
1. Position the foil halfway in the 1<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>-inch lily nail (use a small ball of foil under the cup if needed). Insert tip 352 into the lily nail with the pointed end touching the nail. Squeeze hard and pipe a leaf-shaped petal just over the edge of the foil cup. Relax the pressure, stop, and pull away. Pipe two more petals, dividing the nail into thirds.
2. Add three more petals in the open spaces.
3. Add six similar smaller leaf-shaped petals on top and between the larger ones.
4. Add seven tip 2 yellow or green dots in the circle for the center.

## Floral sprays

Floral sprays can be almost any shape that fits the size and shape of the cake. Flowers can be drop, formed or variety, made on a flat surface, or on a flower nail.

Look in cake decorating books for ideas and suggestions for making floral sprays. Experiment with various floral spray designs.

## Vines for sprays



Thin buttercream icing slightly with white corn syrup. Use writing tip 2 or 3. Position the bag at a 45° angle. Hold the tip so it is lightly touching the surface.

1. Touch the tip lightly to the surface and start to squeeze, then lift it slightly above the surface and draw out the stem.
2. Move the tip gently up and down to form "hills and valleys." To end the line, stop squeezing and pull the tip along the surface.
3. Add secondary curved stems, starting at the main stem and stopping the pressure while pulling to a point.

## Crescent spray

Begin in the center of the cake. Pipe the main stems from the center to the right outer edge of the cake top. Then pipe stems from the center of the left outer edge of the cake top. Add shorter stems randomly.



## Rambling rose and wild flower spray

Start at the center of the cake and pipe the stem to resemble a backward "S," placing it at the 12:00 position. Add others at 3:00, 6:00, and 9:00 positions. Add shorter stems between each main stem.



## Cascading spray

Pipe a main stem to resemble an elongated backward "S." Add short sweeping stems.



### Vine spray

Pipe an even curving line from left to right. Add secondary stems approximately half as long as the curves following the flow of the curves. Pipe short stems in the same direction to complete.



### Corner spray

Begin at the corner and pipe a stem upwards, pipe a secondary stem sweeping in the opposite direction. Return to the corner, and pipe a stem across to the opposite side of the cake. Repeat and pipe a secondary stem sweeping in the opposite direction. Add shorter stems to balance the spray.



### "S" spray

Begin at the center of the cake and pipe an upward curve out to the left. Return to the center and pipe a downward curve out to the right. Add secondary curves that are half as long as the curve, following the flow of the curve. Repeat with shorter stems.



### Creating a spray

1. Decide what shape you want and determine the focal point. Draw out the stems and branches. Distribute them equally to maintain balance. Avoid crossed stems, and remember to keep the basic shape of the spray in mind at all times. You can also draw the basic design first with a toothpick and then trace with icing.
2. Mound icing over the focal point. Now you are ready to begin adding the flowers.



3. Begin by trimming the ends of the stems with smaller, more delicate flowers. Mix colors to maintain balance.



4. Graduate to larger flowers as you work toward the main branches of the focal point with the largest, most open flowers. You will achieve the best color balance if these larger flowers are the deepest, richest tones of the spray.
5. When all the flowers are in place, add your leaves. Distribute them evenly to maintain the balance of the spray and to give a natural look.

### Flowers on wire stem



1. On a 2-inch square of waxed paper, pipe a small green icing mound with round tip 6.
2. Insert florist wire 4 to 6 inches long (depending on the size of the flower) into the mound of icing and brush smooth with a small art brush to blend the mound and the wire together.
3. Turn it over and push the bare end of the wire into a Styrofoam® block to dry. When it is dry, remove the waxed paper.
4. With round tip 6, pipe an icing dot on the mound at the top of the wire.
5. Press a dried royal icing flower on the mound so that the mound becomes the flower base. Place the flower on the stem back into the Styrofoam® block to dry.

## Placing leaves on wire stems



1. On a square of waxed paper, pipe a small green icing mound using round tip 6. This will hold the wire steady.
2. Push a wire at least 5 inches long into the dot while the icing is still wet. (Stemmed leaves in various lengths give flowers a natural look.)
3. Pipe a large leaf (with leaf tip 67) directly over the wire end so the wire becomes the leaf's center vein. Let it dry, and remove the waxed paper.

## Making flower and leaf bouquets

1. To make a flower and leaf on a single stem, hold the stemmed flower in your hand and attach a ½-inch wide strip of green self-

sealing florist tape just below the flower base. Wind it around the stem once. Place the stemmed leaf next to the flower, positioning it slightly lower, and wind the tape around both stems to join.

2. Make several flower-and-leaf sets in different lengths, then arrange them as a bouquet and tie them together with ribbon.



## Making curved petals, leaves, and trim

Give all your icing flower petals and leaves a graceful, natural look by drying them on flower formers. You can make your own flower formers by cutting a cardboard paper towel tube in half. While the freshly piped flower, leaf, or icing trim is still on waxed paper, place it on the outside surface of the paper tube to curve down or on the inside surface to curve up.





# LETTERING

## Writing and printing

Nothing personalizes a cake more than a written message. Printing or writing messages on a cake is different from writing on paper because you use your arm, not just your fingers, to form the letters.

The icing should be thin for writing and printing. Letters are combinations of straight and slanted lines, circles, half-circles, and curves. Therefore, it is important to practice these motions individually before combining them to form words.

Hold the decorating bag at a 45° angle to the surface with the back of the bag to the right so your fingertips face you. Touch the tip to the surface and squeeze so that the icing sticks, then lift the tip slightly and draw straight down to form a line. Stop the pressure, and pull the tip away. Then repeat this procedure.

As you practice, use your entire arm (not just your fingers) to form the individual lines, letters, and words. This arm movement is important for achieving satisfactory results when printing or writing messages on cakes. After you begin to master the curves and swings of the letters, lift up the tip slightly as you write. You'll find you have more control if you let the icing draw out slightly over the surface.

If you have trouble keeping the letters in a straight line, try drawing a guiding line in the frosting with a toothpick. You also may use a pattern for your lettering using a pattern press. If using a pattern press, let the icing crust slightly, then imprint the message.

Both printing and writing can be customized by using different tips and additional techniques. See illustrations.



Practice with Tip #3 with message press

Practice with Tip #2 with message press



Practice with Tip #14 bouncing letters



Practice with Tip #45 flat lettering

Practice with Tip #3 balls



Practice with Tip #5



Practice with Tip #101s calligraphy

Practice with Tip #3



Practice with Tip #2 with message press

# SPECIAL EFFECTS

## LEVEL 1 Stencil application

Stenciling with icing is most easily accomplished using an angled spatula—it keeps your fingers out of the icing. Apply one color at a time and spread the icing completely over the area in the stencil for the best coverage. Be careful not to rub the icing back and forth too hard, it can cause the cake icing to smear and lift.

1. Make a stencil from lightweight cardboard—cereal and pizza boxes work well. Draw or trace a simple pattern on the box. Carefully cut out the pattern using a craft knife. (You may want to have an adult help with this.) Save the outer portion because this becomes your stencil. You also can use stencils purchased at craft stores.
2. Check to make sure the frosting on the cake is dry before you start. Lay the stencil on the frosted cake.
3. Use a large spatula with enough icing to cover the cutout design. Carefully smooth the icing on the cake. Start on one of the outer edges and smooth to the other edge. Don't overwork this process, or you will pull icing off the cake.
4. Gently lift the stencil straight up and off the cake. A raised design will remain.
5. If the edges of the stenciled design are messy, make a star border around the design using open star 16.



### Using a pattern

Make a pattern, such as a valentine, shamrock, butterfly, jack-o-lantern, etc., from paper or lightweight cardboard. Cut out the pattern.

1. Lay the pattern on a completely dry frosted cake.
2. Gently trace around the pattern with a toothpick.
3. Remove the pattern.
4. Fill in the pattern with stars. Make sure the stars are formed properly and are close together.



### Transferring a paper pattern

Trace a simple pattern on tissue paper. Lay the pattern on a frosted cake. Be certain the frosting is dry. Secure the pattern to the cake with sharp toothpicks or pins. Use a large needle or very sharp toothpick to poke through the pattern into the cake to make a dot-to-dot pattern to follow. Remove the pattern and fill in as desired.

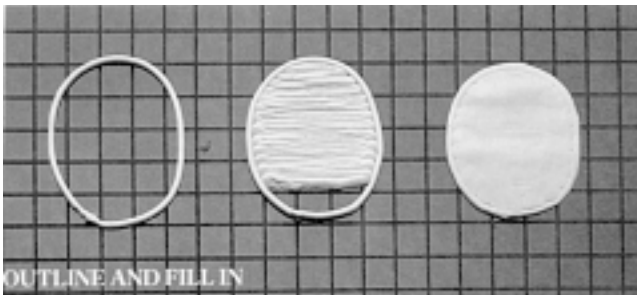


### Outline and filling in

Outline contours and details of shaped cakes or cover the marks transferred on your cake from a pattern.

1. *Outline.* Hold the decorating bag at a 45° angle and touch writing tip 2 or 3 to the surface. Raise the tip slightly and continue to squeeze. The icing will flow out of the tip while you direct it along the surface. To end an outline, stop squeezing, touch the tip to the surface, and pull away.

2. *Fill in.* With thinned icing, squeeze out tip 2 or 3 side-by-side icing strings to fill the area. For larger areas, use tip 4 or 5. Immediately smooth over the strings with a dampened decorator's brush, spatula, or finger dipped in cornstarch.
3. *Pipe in.* Follow the same procedure as fill in, but do not thin the icing. Squeeze with heavier pressure, allowing the icing to build up slightly. When necessary, shape with a fingertip dipped in cornstarch.



## Decorating comb

Combing is a fast way to cover a large area with texture (for example, the sides of a cake). Specially designed cake combs have teeth of different sizes that create ridges in the icing.

1. Use medium to thin buttercream icing. Cover the cake with a slightly thicker coating of icing so the comb's ridges do not dig into the cake. Comb immediately after icing the cake, while icing is soft. Using a turntable helps to keep the movement smooth.
2. Run the edge around your cake side to form beautiful ridges. Keep the pressure even as you move the comb around the cake.



# LEVEL 1 & 2

## Sugar molding

### Basic recipe

2 cups granulated sugar

3 teaspoons water (if you are tinting the sugar, add icing color to the water)

2 tablespoons confectioners' sugar

### Extra strength recipe

5 cups sugar

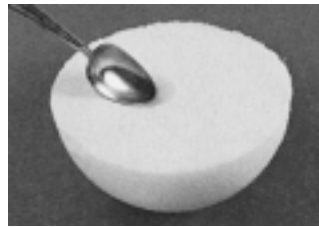
1 lightly stirred egg white

1. Mix by hand, for approximately 1 minute using a fork or pastry blender. For larger amounts, use an electric blender on slow speed. If the sugar mixture begins to get lumpy and dry out, use a blender. Cover the sugar mixture with a damp cloth or keep it in an airtight container.
2. Pack the sugar into molds, pressing with the heel of your hand. Scrape off the excess with a spatula. When making a large mold or more than four of the same small mold, dust the pattern with cornstarch to prevent sticking.
3. Unmold immediately. Place the cardboard on the mold, turn it over, tap the bottom of the mold, and lift the mold straight up and away from the sugar.
4. For panorama eggs, make a small hole about the size of a half dollar in the small end of the egg's top and bottom before drying. Gently insert a piece of scrunched plastic wrap in the openings to keep the sugar from drying out too much.
5. Dry sugar molds at room temperature for 3 to 4 hours or place them on a cookie sheet in a 200° oven for 5 minutes.
6. At this point, solid molds can be used on your cake.
7. When hollow molds are dry, turn the sugar mold over and carefully hold it in the palm of

your hand. Do not squeeze or move the molded sugar or it will crack. Use a spoon to mark a ¼-inch shell on the inside rim.



8. Gently scoop out the remaining soft sugar. Smooth the inside edge with your fingers.



9. Place the molded sugar, round side down, on a cardboard circle to dry for about 24 hours, or place it on a cookie sheet in a 200° oven for 20 minutes. Allow it to cool to room temperature before you touch it.



*Note: Many different containers may be used for sugar molding. Try using small margarine tubs, dessert dishes, and candy molds. The main criterion is that the opening of the container is larger than the base. Experiment with items you have around the house.*

can pipe figures directly on your cake. Royal icing shapes dry very hard, so they can be difficult to eat, but you can make them well in advance. Pipe them ahead of time on waxed paper, let them dry, then position the figures on a cake or sugar mold. Use royal icing for decorations to be used with sugar molds.

Remember to store pre-made royal icing decorations in a cool, dry, dark place. Exposure to bright sunlight or constant fluorescent lighting can cause colors to fade. Buttercream figures may be frozen.

Use two basic positions (upright and horizontal) for figure piping. Once you've piped the basic body or bottom portion of your figure, you can add other elements directly onto that basic shape.

#### ***Upright position.***

Hold the tip at a 90° angle with the end of the tip slightly above the surface.

Start squeezing, applying a steady, even pressure. As

the icing begins to build up, raise the tip with it, but keep its end buried in the icing. To complete your shape, stop squeezing as you bring the end of the tip to the surface.



#### ***Horizontal position.***

Hold the tip at a 45° angle and lightly touch the tip to the surface.

Apply pressure as you move the tip to let the

shape build. It's essential that the tip remain buried in the icing as it is squeezed out. Stop squeezing as you bring the end of the tip to the surface.



## LEVEL 2

### Figure piping

Figure piping lets you create whimsical three-dimensional figures and decorations with icing. Unlike borders and flowers that require decorators to perfect specific techniques, figure piping leaves room to experiment and apply imagination. Since most of the figures you'll be making are caricatures, they do not have to be perfect. Icing consistency, pressure control, and practice are essential for successful figure piping. Stiff icing is the key element to successful figure piping. For softer figures that are more fun to eat, use buttercream icing. With buttercream, you

**Additional piping.** Add other elements (like arms, legs, heads, fruit stems, etc.) directly onto either basic shape. Tuck the tip into the basic figure, apply pressure, and move the tip to create the shape you need. Stop squeezing and pull the tip away.

### Animals sitting

1. Basic upright torso: Use a large round tip for the torso: 12, 1A, or 2A. Use heavy pressure, gradually relaxing as you move up. Stop the pressure completely and pull away.



2. Adding limbs: Use tip 10 to pull out arms and 12 for legs. Add the head and features for the animal you are piping.



### Teddy bear

1. Tips 1A, 2A, 5, 12, 10, and 2. Use brown and black icing.
2. Pipe a tip 1A brown body, a tip 2A head, a tip 5 muzzle, tip 12 legs, tip 10 arms, and tip 2 ears.
3. Add a tip 2 black dot and string facial features and toes.



### Chick

1. Tips 2A, 2, 349, and 67. Use yellow, orange, white, and black icing.
2. Pipe a tip 2A yellow body and head and tip 2 yellow cheeks.
3. Add tip 2 white dot eyes.
4. Pipe a tip 2 pull-out orange beak and feet, tip 349 stand-up top feathers, and tip 67 string wings.



### Elephant

1. Tips 1A, 2A, 12, 104, 2, and 1. Use pink or gray, black, and white icing.
2. Pipe a pink or gray body using body tip 1A, pipe a tip 2A head and tip 12 legs and trunk.
3. Pipe tip 104 ruffled ears.
4. Add tip 2 white dot eyes with a smaller black dot using tip 1.
5. Pull out white dot tusks and white string features for toes.



### Penguin

1. Tips 12, 6, 4, and 3. Use black, white, and orange icing.
2. Pipe a tip 12 black body and head. Add tip 6 black flippers.
3. Pipe a fill-in tip 4 white stomach and face mask.
4. Pipe orange tip 3 feet and a pull-out dot beak.



### Animals lying

1. Body: Use a large round tip for the body: 12, 1A or 2A. Use heavy pressure, gradually relaxing as you move up. Stop the pressure completely and pull away.
2. Head: Use a large round tip for the head, the same size as for the body or smaller. Place the tip at the top of the body and pipe a smaller round ball.

### Pig

1. Tips 2A, 12, 6, 8, 2, and 81. Use pink and black icing.
2. Pipe a tip 2A body, a tip 12 head, a tip 6



snout, tip 8 legs, tip 2 dot eyes and curly string tail, and tip 81 ears.

3. Use a toothpick to indent the snout for the nostrils and mouth.

### Lamb

1. Use tips 2A, 12, 13, 5, 3, and 81. Use white, black, and pink icing.
2. Pipe a tip 2A white body, a tip 12 black or white head, tip 13 zigzag wool, tip 5 legs and muzzle, tip 81 ears, tip 3 black hooves, and tip 1 dot facial features.



### Cute little chicks for hollow sugar molds



1. Use tips 6, 3, and 1. Use white or yellow and orange icing.
2. Use tip 6, hold the bag at a 90° angle to the surface, and use heavy pressure to pipe the body. Ease the pressure as you taper to the tail. Tuck tip 3 into the body and squeeze to form the face.
3. At a 45° angle, tuck tip 3 into the body and pipe the lower wing using the shell technique. Pipe another tip 3 wing on top of the first one.
4. Add a tip 1 pull-out beak and dot eyes (flatten the eyes with a fingertip dipped in cornstarch).

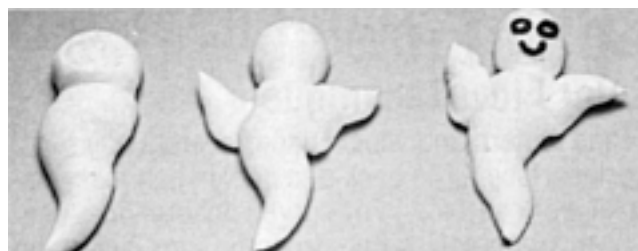
### Spooky spider

1. Use tips 2, 4, 10, and 233. Use black and white icing.
2. Hold tip 10 upright and pipe a ball for the body.
3. Add a tip 4 ball head. Tuck tip 4 into the body and pull out string legs and a tip 2 black outline mouth.
4. Cover the body with tip 233 pull-out hair.
5. Add tip 2 white dot eyes.



### Ghost

1. Tips 6 and 1. White and black icing.
2. Pipe a ball shape for the head and pull out the body, tapering off the end as you gradually decrease the pressure.
3. Tuck the tip into the body and pull out the arms.
4. Add tip 1 black dot facial features.



### Clown

1. Tips 22, 103, 18, 12, and 2 (use multi-opening grass tip 233 for hair if not using a purchased head).
2. Use open star tip 22 or larger for the body. Clowns can be a combination of bright colors.

3. Apply heavy pressure to squeeze out the body in a short up-and-down motion to form a ruffled body.
4. Add arms and legs using open star tip 22 by tucking the tip into the body base and squeezing while moving the tip out. Trim the figure with ruffles using tip 103 or open star tip 22. Pipe slippers with a pull-out star using tip 18. Pipe hands with tip 5 using a mitten shape or pull-out stars with tip 18.
5. Pipe the head to the body using a round tip 12. Add the hair using either star tip 22 or multi-opening tip 233. Add round tip 2 facial features.
6. Insert a small dowel rod in the cake to help support the sitting body.
7. For extended arms and legs, insert a toothpick or bamboo “shish-ka-bob” stick in the appropriate length.



*Note: Purchased clown heads also can be used instead of piping the head and face.*

## Panorama Easter eggs

Use the sugar egg and small figure piped royal icing critters (chicks, bunnies, ducks, nest with eggs) to create panorama Easter eggs. Prepare the royal icing critters and flowers in advance. They will need to dry for several hours before they can be removed from the waxed paper and placed in the sugar egg.

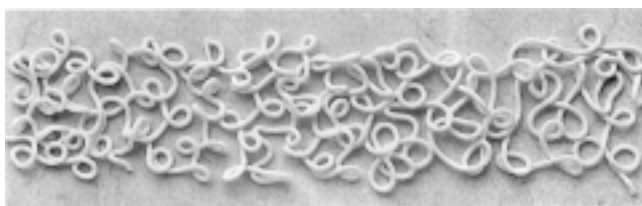
1. Use royal icing and prepare the following colors: green for grass, blue for a pond, two or three colors for flowers and borders, white for ducks and rabbits, yellow for chicks, and brown for the bird’s nest and the lamb’s face.
2. You will need to make two or three small ducks, chicks, rabbits, lambs, and bird’s nests.
3. Make small drop flowers or simple flat flowers (for example: forget-me-not, violet, apple blossom) ahead of time and allow to dry completely. Some may break, so make plenty!
4. Pipe a pond directly in the bottom of the egg mold using blue icing. Completely cover the bottom of the egg.
5. Make grass using multi-opening tip 234. Pipe at least two rows of grass around the pond from one edge of the opening to the other.
6. Gently place the little animals in the damp icing in a pleasing arrangement. Keep in mind where the window is. Check the placement of the animals by laying the egg top in place while you look through the window.
7. Use open star tip 14 to pipe a line of white icing around the edge of the egg bottom. Use enough icing to secure the top and bottom, but be sure it does not ooze out on the inside of the egg. Place the two halves together.
8. Cut a small circle of clear plastic wrap to fit the opening.
9. Use round tip 3 to pipe a white line around the window. Place plastic wrap over the opening, and smooth any wrinkles.
10. Allow icing to dry before finishing the egg. (Be sure to keep royal icing covered with a damp towel while working).
11. Use a small star tip to pipe a zigzag or shell border around the seam from opening to opening. Use the main icing color for this border.
12. Use the same tip and color to pipe a border around the window. Be sure to cover the edges of the plastic wrap and hide the edges of the egg where the two halves meet.



- Decorate the egg's top with an attractive arrangement of the royal icing flowers you made in advance. Use drop flowers, flower nail flowers, leaves, and vines.
- Allow the egg to dry for several hours. It will become very hard and keep indefinitely. **Do not** store in the refrigerator or freezer.

*Note: If you like, you may purchase tiny animals and flowers from a craft store to use inside the egg; however, if you are using this for an exhibit in Level 2, you will need to make sure you meet the requirements for the unit.*

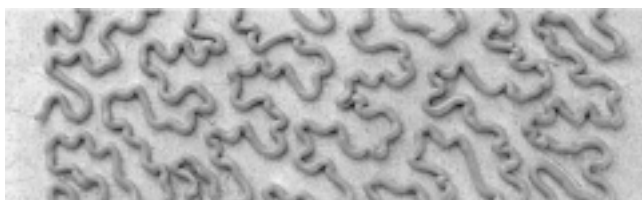
## Sotas



This technique looks like needle stitching at its finest. Cake embroidery is the art of decorating the top and sides of a cake using a series of curved lines.

- Prepare a bag with tip 1.
- Fill the bag half full with thin consistency buttercream icing.
- Hold the bag above the surface at a 90° angle, squeeze to allow the icing to drop randomly in a series of overlapping loops. Cover the area edge-to-edge.

## Cornelli lace



The precise, lacy design of this free-hand technique depends on continuous curving strings that do not overlap or touch.

- Use a toothpick to draw the design's outline on the cake's top or sides.
- Use thinned icing and round tip 1 or 2. Place the decorating bag at a 90° angle with the tip slightly above the surface so the icing attaches without scraping the cake with the tip and without flattening the icing strings.
- Beginning and ending at the edges, pipe a continuous string of icing, curving it up, down, and around until the area is covered. Stop the pressure and pull the tip away. Make sure the strings never touch or cross.
- Cover the edges of the Cornelli with a string or star tip border.

## Lattice designs



Lattice can cover garland sections, imprinted areas, or entire sides of the cake with spectacular results. Vary your tip selections for different looks—try round, star, or basketweave tips.

- Use a toothpick to draw the design's outline on the cake's top or sides. Cookie cutters or pattern presses also may be used. Press the design gently into the cake.
- Use buttercream icing thinned with corn syrup (1 teaspoon corn syrup to 1 cup icing). Hold the bag at a 45° angle with the tip slightly above the surface. Outline the shape to be covered using tip 2.
- Starting at the center of the outlined shape, pipe tip 2 diagonal strings to the right and attach them to the outline (not over the top of the icing outline).
- Drop more lines of string work diagonally in the opposite direction on top of the first set of diagonal strings. Start again at the center,

working first to one edge and then to the other edge, to complete the design.

5. Cover lattice edges using either a string or a star tip border.

### Lattice variation

1. Use basketweave tip 47 and buttercream icing. On the side of the cake, pipe a lattice design going completely around the side of the cake in one direction.



2. Repeat piping the lattice design, crossing over in the opposite direction.
3. Pipe a tip 5 string in between the lattice design.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### Grass or fur

1. Use tip 233 or 234 and medium buttercream icing.
2. Hold the bag at a 90° angle. Squeeze out the icing, pulling the tip up and away from the surface. When the icing strand is long enough (about ½ inch), stop the pressure and pull the tip away.
3. For a more natural look, sometimes pull the tip slightly to the right or left, instead of straight up.
4. Remember to keep the icing strand clusters close together so the cake doesn't show through.



### Variation-hair

1. Use tip 233 or 234 and medium buttercream icing thinned with clear corn syrup.
2. Squeeze icing strands in lengths necessary to cover the area. Touch the tip at the beginning, lift it away from the cake, and pull while continuing to squeeze until the hair is as long as you want. Stop squeezing and pull away. Continue the same process until the area is covered.

## Haystacks

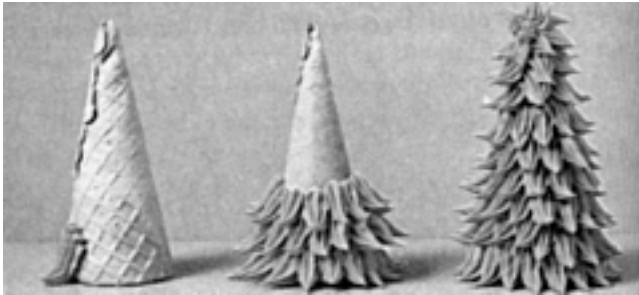
1. Use tip 233 or 234 and medium buttercream icing.
2. For the base of the haystack, use rounded cupcakes with the wide end down. Ice the cupcakes with the same color you are using for the haystack.
3. Start the first row of hay (or straw) on the side of the cupcake about ½ inch from the bottom. Hold the bag at a 90° angle and squeeze, pulling out and then down, to form an icing strand about ½ inch long.
4. Start the next row about ½ inch above the first and repeat the procedure, making sure to cover the top of the first row with the bottom of the second row.
5. Continue until the cupcake is completely covered.

## Pinecones

1. Use round tip 10 and specialty tip 79 with stiff brown buttercream icing. Pinecones can be piped on waxed paper, on a cookie sheet, or directly on the cake.
2. Holding the bag at a 45° angle, pipe a horizontal mound of icing the size you want your pinecone to be with round tip 10. One end needs to be slightly larger than the other.
3. Hold the tip at a 45° angle with the curve of the tip up. Starting at the narrow end, pipe

tip 79 short petals in rows. Start each row about ¼ inch from the bottom of the previous row. Overlap the bottom of each row with the top of the next.

## Trees



1. Use tip 16 or tip 75 and pointed ice cream cones or plastic tree formers.
2. Use medium buttercream on ice cream cones or stiff royal icing on tree formers. Color icing green.
3. Trim the ice cream cones in varying lengths. Spread a very thin coat of icing over the ice cream cone so the cone won't show through. Cover the plastic tree formers with waxed paper and use royal icing.
4. Beginning at the bottom, pipe tip 16 pull-out stars around the base while turning the cone. Repeat, overlapping each successive row until the cone is covered.
5. Pipe an upright pull-out star at the tree top. Let it dry thoroughly.

## Corn stalks

1. Use leaf tip 68.
2. Follow steps 2 and 3 for trees, using pale golden yellow or pale buttercup yellow icing.
3. From the bottom to the top of the form,

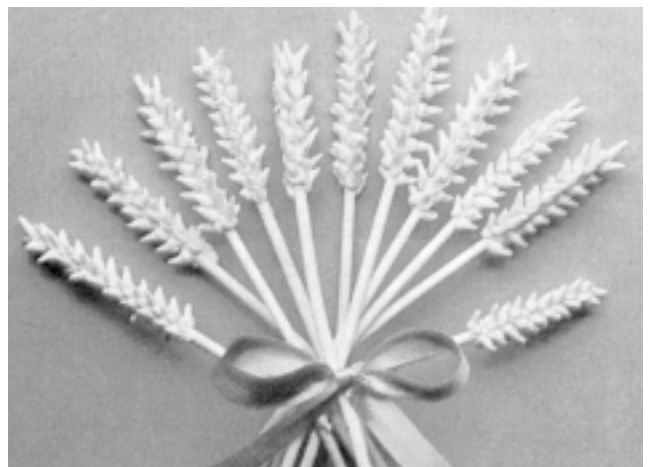


pipe tip 68 side-by-side stripes and floppy leaves for corn stalks.

4. Set aside to air dry for about 5 hours.

## Wheat stalk

1. Insert a 6-inch length of florist wire into a decorating bag filled with yellow royal icing. Use round tip 4.
2. Squeeze and pull the wire out of the tip, coating it with icing. Stick it in Styrofoam® to dry.
3. Use round tip 1 to pipe yellow points around two inches of coated wire. Start at the base of the cluster, and pipe a pair of points on each side of the wire. Pull them out at an angle and slowly roll the wire between your fingers as you move up to the top of the stalk.



## Pine needles and cat whiskers

Use the same technique as for the wheat stalk (brown or black icing for cat whiskers and green icing for pine needles). Coat a 3-inch piece of uncooked spaghetti. If using royal icing, dry it in a Styrofoam® block or on waxed paper. If using buttercream icing, push it directly into the cake.

## Pictures using thinned icing (Color Flow®)

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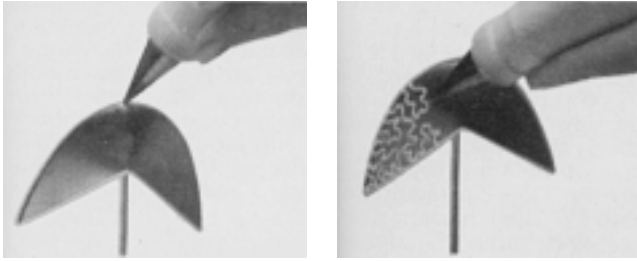


This technique creates a glossy, smooth design using both stiff and runny icing made with powdered egg whites. Color Flow® is a magical way to copy a picture or design in icing.

1. Choose a pattern, preferably one with a fairly open design without too much detail.
2. Place the design on a smooth cake circle, cake board, or cookie sheet. Cover the design with waxed paper and smooth out all the wrinkles. Tape it down securely.
3. Mix icing in a glass or stainless steel bowl. Follow the directions on the Color Flow® package. Set your mixer at a slow speed to avoid whipping in air bubbles. Keep the icing covered with a damp towel at all times to prevent hardening. Color the icing to complement your design and use it full strength to outline the design.
4. When softening the icing to fill in outlined designs, place a portion of the icing in a glass or stainless steel container and add a few drops of water, stirring by hand (never beat), until the icing flows properly. To test, spoon out a small amount and let it drop back into the bowl. When it takes a full count of 10 for the icing to sink back into the mixture and the outline ring to disappear, the icing is ready. Always use parchment or freezer paper bags for meringue-based icing. Grease causes any egg white icing to break down.
5. Fill a decorating bag only half full of softened icing or it might squeeze out the top and drip on the design. For a larger area than one bag will fill, have a second bag filled and ready. Color Flow® icing crusts quickly and crust marks show, so you must work quickly.
6. Use Color Flow® icing and round tip 2 or 3 to outline the design. If you will be filling in with a contrasting color, let the outline dry thoroughly (an hour or two) so the softened icing won't feather. If filling in with the same or similar color, proceed after a few minutes.
7. Fill a parchment bag only half full of softened icing. Do not use a tip because it might break the outline. Cut a small opening at the paper cone's tip. Begin filling in along the outlines first, aiming the bag opening toward the outside in, top to bottom. Gently press out the icing, letting it flow up to the outline almost by itself. (Use a small artist's brush to help it along if necessary.) Fill in the section immediately. Pop any air bubbles with a pin while the icing is wet. Check for any low spots and fill them in. Color Flow® should dry with a slight pillow effect.
8. Make test puddles beside your design and let them dry. Remove the puddles first and check for dryness. Test puddles eliminate the possibility of removing a Color Flow® piece too soon and breaking it.
9. After you have filled in the complete design, dry it thoroughly (48 hours at room temperature or two hours under a heat lamp at a distance of two feet, then without a lamp for 12 hours). This gives the icing a high shine.
10. After your Color Flow® piece is dry, you may want to add a message or trim to it. Use your leftover Color Flow® icing (full strength) in a parchment bag fitted with tip 2.

# LEVEL 3

## Australian net nails



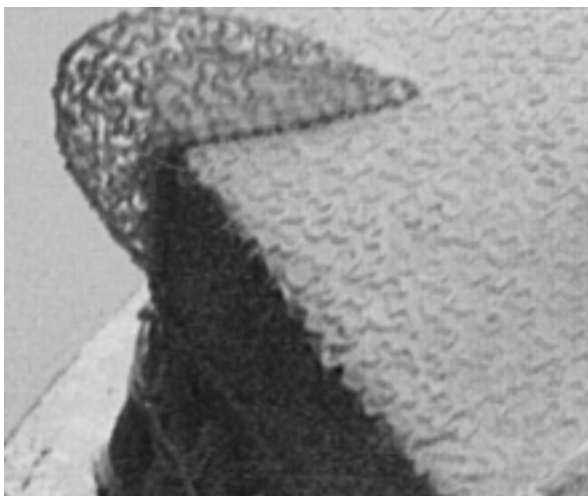
Make lacy shapes using a variety of Australian net nails.

1. Select a nail shape, and coat it with solid vegetable shortening.
2. Use royal icing and round tip 2 to outline the edge and the top ridge of the nail.

3. Use round tip 1 to fill in outlined areas with Cornelli lace. Lace should touch only the outlines. The design should never overlap.



4. Put the lace-trimmed nail (suspended from a rack) in a 200° oven for 10 seconds. Then gently slip the lace off the nail onto a paper towel. Let it dry thoroughly (approximately 20 to 30 minutes) before placing it on the cake.



## Royal icing lace



Icing: Medium royal icing.

Tips: Round tip 1. Other: Parchment or freezer paper bags.

1. Trace the lace pattern on the parchment paper, then tape it on the cake board. Cover the pattern with waxed paper. Using tip 1 and a parchment bag, squeeze, pull, and drop the icing string to outline the pattern.
2. Pipe the center design, making sure the lines touch to give the lace stability while removing them from the waxed paper.
3. Embellish as desired. Let dry for several hours. Carefully slide the lace off the waxed paper using a small angled spatula.

4. Make sure the cake frosting is completely dry before attaching the lace to the cake. Place dots of royal icing on the cake to secure the lace to the cake.



## Modeling chocolate

14-ounce package of Chocolate Candy Melts® (not chocolate chips)

½ cup light corn syrup

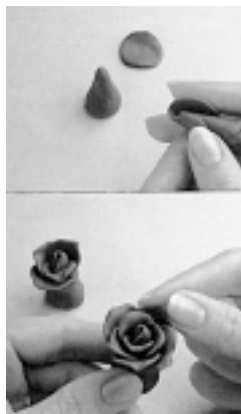
1. Melt Candy Melts® according to the package directions. Add heated light corn syrup and stir until thoroughly mixed. Turn the mixture out on waxed paper and let it sit at room temperature to dry. Wrap it well, and store it at room temperature until needed. Candy handles best if hardened overnight. When

ready to use, knead a small amount until it reaches a workable consistency. This mixture will keep for several weeks at room temperature in a well-sealed container.

2. The chocolate will be very hard at the start. Knead one small portion at a time until it is workable.

## Modeling a rose

1. To make a rose, start with the base. Shape a  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch ball into a cone approximately  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches high.
2. Flatten a  $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch ball of modeling chocolate into a circular petal that's about  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch thick on one side and about the diameter of a dime.



Make several petals this size.

3. Wrap the first petal around the point of the cone to form a bud. Now press three more petals around the base of the bud. Gently pinch the edges of the petals. Make five more petals using slightly larger balls of chocolate. Flatten and then thin the edge with your finger and cup the petals. Press the petals below the first row of petals. Continue adding petals, placing them in between and slightly lower than the previous row. For a fuller flower, continue adding petals in this manner.
4. Make several roses with different amounts of petals for a variety of sizes.



## Leaf modeling



1. Method 1: Roll a  $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch ball and model it into a teardrop shape. Flatten it into a leaf shape. Use a knife to score the veins. Press it onto a rose cone base.
2. Method 2: On the back of a clean, thoroughly dried, grape or rose leaf, paint on melted Candy Melts® with a soft pastry or art brush. Let it set and when it is completely dry, carefully peel the leaf off the candy.

## Marzipan

### Recipe

- 1 cup almond paste (8 ounce can)
- 2 egg whites, unbeaten
- 3 cups confectioners' sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon vanilla or rum flavoring

1. Knead the almond paste in a bowl. Add the egg whites and mix well. Continue kneading as you add the sugar, one cup at a time, and flavoring, until the marzipan feels like heavy pie crust dough.
2. Marzipan will keep for months when refrigerated in a plastic bag inside a covered container. Let marzipan stand at room temperature until soft enough to work. If it is still stiff when you are ready to use it, soften it with one or two drops of warmed corn syrup.
3. Add food color, one drop at a time, and knead it until the right shade is achieved. To

make dark chocolate color and flavor, work in powdered, unsweetened cocoa until it is as dark as you wish. To make a deep golden color and coffee flavor, use powdered instant coffee. If these ingredients make the marzipan dough too stiff, soften it with egg white or an extract, such as almond, until the desired shade is reached.

4. When you are making several different fruits, divide the dough equally to keep all of the pieces in proportion. To do this, dust the table with confectioners' sugar and roll the mixture into a 12-inch by  $\frac{7}{8}$ -inch rope.
5. Cut and model all the similar pieces at once. For example, cut 1-inch pieces for apples, larger ones for pumpkins, smaller ones for strawberries, etc. Roll them into ball shapes, then model them between the heels of your hands or roll them with your fingertips.

Glaze the marzipan by brushing on thinned, heated corn syrup. Add texture to oranges and lemons by rolling them over a grater. Make stems from cloves. Roll strawberries in red-tinted granulated sugar. The stem and leaf should be made with marzipan.

Use your imagination for other variations and uses.



## Rolled fondant icing

Rolled fondant has a very smooth appearance and a smooth rounded edge, usually with no border at the top edge. Cover a cake with rolled fondant icing using either cooked or ready-to-use fondant.

1. Prepare the cake by covering it with a crumb coat of buttercream icing.
2. Before rolling out the fondant, knead it until it is a workable consistency. If the fondant is sticky, knead in a little confectioners' sugar. Lightly dust a smooth work surface and rolling pin with confectioners' sugar to prevent sticking.
3. Measure the cake to determine what size fondant you'll need to cover the cake. Measure the opposite sides and top of the cake across the center and add the measurements. For example, an 8-inch two-layer cake, with two sides of 4 inches, equals 16 inches. The fondant would need to be rolled in a circle 16 inches in diameter to cover this cake. Roll the fondant to  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thick with a rolling pin, lifting and moving the pin as you roll. Add more confectioners' sugar if necessary. It is extremely important to remember to lift the rolling pin and move it several times to keep the fondant from sticking to the rolling surface or it will tear when you try to pick it up.
4. Gently lift the fondant over the rolling pin or slide it onto a cardboard cake circle that has been dusted with confectioners' sugar. Lift the circle and the fondant and position them over the cake. Gently shake the circle to slide the fondant off the board and into position on the cake. (Take care not to tear the fondant with your fingernails.)
5. Shape the fondant to the sides of the cake with a smoothing tool. The warmth of your hands can affect the fondant. Mark the

fondant at the base of the cake and trim off any excess using a sharp knife or pizza cutter.

6. Smooth and shape the fondant on the cake using a smoothing tool. Beginning in the middle of the top of the cake, move the smoother out and down the sides of the cake to smooth and shape the fondant to the cake and remove any air bubbles. If an air bubble appears, pop it with a pin and smooth the area again.

## Fondant icing decorations

Fondant decorations can be made by molding the fondant like Play-Doh®. Look through decorating books for examples and experiment with different tools to make ruffles, bows, braids, ropes, flowers, and leaves.

Roll out the fondant to a thickness of about  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch to  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch for most decorations.

1. Flowers can be shaped by making individual petals and forming them around a base into a rose (see *Modeling chocolate*, page 73).
2. Flower variations: Cut a small strip of fondant about 2 inches by 5 inches. Begin rolling the strip lightly from one end, gradually loosening the roll as the flower gets larger. Trim the flower so it is  $\frac{3}{4}$  to 1 inch high.
3. Use small cookie cutters to cut leaf or flower shapes, geometric shapes, or letters and place them on the cake.

## Gum paste

This pliable dough-like mixture molds into beautiful flowers and figures. Purchase a gum paste mix or find a recipe using Glucose and Gum-Tex® Karaya. Leaf and petal cutters and shaping tools are available for making these unique and delicate decorations.

## Adaptations of basic cake decorating techniques

### Petits fours

1. Bake petits fours in shaped pans, or cut a regular-sized cake into smaller pieces before frosting.
2. Find recipes for the special petits fours frosting. Frost the cakes, allow them to dry, and then decorate them. Use some of the same or smaller flowers, leaves, and borders that you have been using on cakes.

### Cupcakes

Use the same decorating techniques, such as flowers, leaves, etc., on cupcakes. Make flowers and figure piping large enough to cover the top of the cupcake.

### Hors d'oeuvres and gelatin salads

Cream cheese or other softened cheeses are similar to frosting in consistency. Make cheese decorations on small sandwiches or on small molded gelatin forms.

### Pulled sugar flowers

Find directions for pulled sugar flowers and decorations in advanced cake decorating or culinary books. Experiment with the technique, and if you are pleased with the results, use them on one of your decorated cakes.

