



HEAD

HEART

HANDS

HEALTH



# Cake Decorating Unit 4-6

## 4-H MANUAL



## Acknowledgements

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This manual was revised again in 2024 by Kathy Hettinger, Julia Hurdelbrink, and Karen Johnson. Reviewed by Lisa Sholten, Extension State Program Specialist, 4-H Youth Development, Civic Engagement & Curriculum.



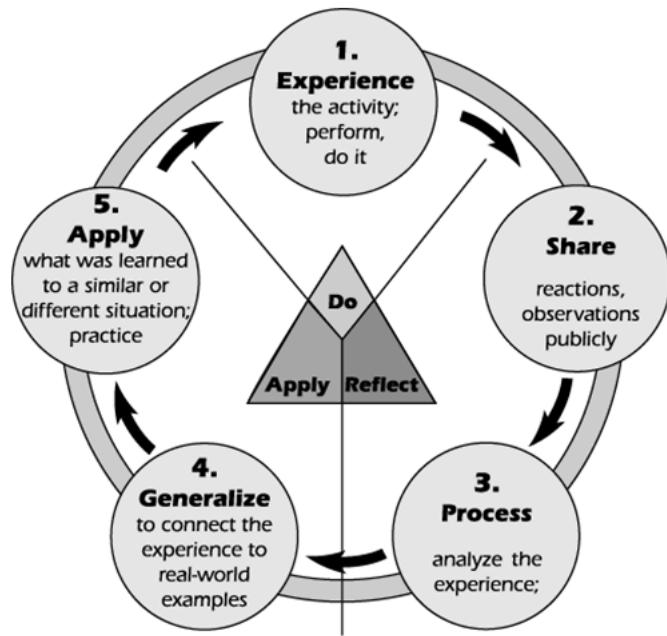
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The 4-H program encourages a process that allows youth to first learn by doing before being told or shown how, and then to examine the experience. The experiential learning model developed by Pfieffer and Jones (1985), modified by 4-H, includes five specific steps:



The Experiential Learning Process guides youth through a process of discovery with little guidance from others. A situation, project or activity is presented that allows for individual thought and problem solving. Outside assistance is provided only at a minimum and supports learning by questioning at each stage. Youth in activities reflect on what they did, how they learned and what could be applied to a life situation.

- 1) Experience Questions: How is it working? What else might you try? What might make it easier?
- 2) Share Questions: What happened? How did you feel? What was the most difficult part?
- 3) Process Questions: What problems seemed to reoccur? What similar experiences have you had?
- 4) Generalize Questions: What did you learn about yourself? What did you learn about the activity? How does this relate to something else in life? How did you decide what to do?
- 5) Apply Questions: Where else can this skill be used? How will you use this in the future? What will you do differently after this experience?

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# Creative Cake Decorating Manual Units 4-6

## Learning Experiences Emphasized

(Refer to manuals and state fair 4-H requirements for exhibit requirements.)

### Cake Decorating Units Covered in This Manual

**Unit 4** – One real decorated character pan cake (an entire cake which resembles the shape of a character or object made without cutting or stacking and other than a classic square, round, oblong, heart, hexagon, oval or petal cake shape.) Three-dimensional shapes are acceptable; they should be primarily decorated with star tips and/or other tips appropriate to the design. Tip work needs to be finished to the board.

**Unit 5** – Small Treats is divided into three sections: Decorated Cupcakes, Decorated Cookies, and Decorated Cookie Construction.

A. **Decorated Cupcakes** – using decorating tips and edible items.

There are three classes in this unit that can be chosen for an exhibit.

1. Themed Cupcakes
2. Stacked Cupcakes
3. Character Cupcakes using multiple cupcakes (no stacking)

B. **Decorated Cookies** – using decorating tips and edible items.

There are two classes in this unit that can be chosen for an exhibit

1. Themed Decorated Cookies
2. Stacked Decorated Cookies

C. **Cookie Construction** – using decorating tips and edible items.

There is one class in this unit.

1. Decorated Cookie Construction

**Unit 6** – One decorated real cut-up or sculpted cake using three different types of decorating tips (not different sizes of the same tip) and edible materials for decorations. (Non-edible items can NOT be used). (Fondant or royal icing can be used only for decorations). Non-edible internal supports are allowed but must not show. Base border is required.

**Note:** Units 4 and up do not have to be taken in order as numbered.

## Creative Cake Decorating Unit 4—Character Cakes

This year you will use cake decorating tips and character pans. It will take practice to learn to control the tips, but many fun and interesting cakes can be created. Practice does not always have to be done on a cake. It can be done on waxed paper, a smooth plastic place mat or cutting board, or practice board. Then the icing can be scraped up and used over and over.

### Goals for Unit 4

1. Learn to use a character cake pan (a pan with shaped sides and molded top).
2. Begin to develop skill in using the tips recommended for decorating the cake selected. Example: star tips, grass tip, round tip, leaf tip, also #2010-triple star tip.
3. Develop skill in mixing colors and using them effectively.
4. Bake and decorate a minimum of three character cakes plus your exhibit cake (total of 4).

### Exhibit for Unit 4

1. One decorated character pan cake (an entire cake which resembles the shape of a character or object made without cutting or stacking and other than a classic square, round, oblong, heart, hexagon, oval or petal cake shape). Three-dimensional cakes are acceptable. The cake should be placed on a board that is cut to the shape of the character. The board must be cut 1½" from the base of the border, not the cake. The cake is to be primarily decorated with the star tip or other tips appropriate to the design. Fondant, gum paste, marzipan, or royal icing can be used only for decorations. No non-edible decorations can be used in units 1–6. A defined bottom base border that frames the cake is required for any smooth icing. Defined borders should be included if it finishes the overall aesthetic of the character (i.e. grass around an animal). Otherwise, all tip work should be completed to the cake board.
2. Your completed Cake Decorating Record Book in a sturdy binder/notebook should accompany the cake. Note: Take a picture or make a simple drawing. Then write a short explanation of what you did and what you learned with each cake you decorated. Include the following information in the Cake Decorating e-Record on the three required character cakes plus the exhibit (TOTAL of 4) (All four character cakes must be real cakes): 1. occasion for use, 2. shape, 3. real

character cakes, 4. techniques used, 5. tips used and where, 6. cost to buy similar cake, 7. any problems you had. Be sure to put the cost of your three cakes and exhibit cake in the expense page in the eRecord. Include photos or drawings of the four required cakes in addition to photos of you working on your project in the record photo page.

3. Fair Secret — Let the cake air dry; DO NOT FREEZE or refrigerate.

### **Decorated Cake**

1. The cake must be baked by the exhibitor. This should be noted in the Record Book. It also may be discussed at interview judging.
2. The cake should be placed on a very firm disposable surface (foam core, cardboard, particle board, etc.) which will not sag with the weight of the cake. Cut the base board to be approximately the shape of the cake and 2 inches larger on each side of the cake (1 ½" from the base of the border, not the cake). Note: this is required so the member and/or the judge do not accidentally put their finger into the border.
3. The cake board must be covered with a food safe material – examples are aluminum foil, *Wilton --Fanci-Foil wrap*. If you use a decorative or gift wrap paper or fabric, it must be covered in food quality plastic wrap. Be sure covering is firmly secured on the back of the cake board.

### **Frosting**

1. All areas should be covered with frosting with no cake showing through. Frosting neatly piped for a base border.
2. Decorator icing should be the proper consistency for work being done. n. Fondant, gum paste, marzipan, or royal icing can be used only for decorations.)

### **Design**

1. Decorations covering each area of the cake should be uniform in size and evenly spaced.
2. Colors should not “bleed” into each other.
3. Non-edible items (plastic, paper, toothpicks) cannot be used on the cake.

4. Tips used should be appropriate for the design selected. Example: Star tips – large or small stars depending on the detail; grass tip—for hair. #2010 triple star tip (remove the coupler from the bag and drop the tip in the bag), outline with a round tip, etc.
5. Edible items may be used for decorations. Example: gum drops or mini-Oreos for eyes on an animal pan, etc.

### **Tips for Record Book**

1. Cake Decorating record book should be neat and complete. Instructions should be followed.
2. Cake Decorating record book should show that a minimum of three cakes plus the fair exhibit have been made (total 4).
3. Cake Decorating record book will count 25 percent of the placing score.

### **Be Creative**

Look at pictures in books and online to see how you can use one pan for several characters. For example, a panda bear might be made into many different “care” bears. Experiment with different decorating tips to see how you can use them to create different effects on the cake.

### **Selecting Your Character Pan**

Many choices of pans are available to you. They may be light or medium weight, aluminum or old cast iron pans. They may just have the outline of the character or they can be shaped on the bottom to give contours. They can be flat or stand-up characters.

1. If you are not sure that you want to get into cake decorating on a large scale, you might want to choose a character pan kit as found in craft stores or online. This contains:

- A light-weight aluminum pan
- Plastic decorating bags
- Plastic decorating tips
- Food coloring for this design
- Directions

2. If you are sure that you want to continue in Cake Decorating, you will probably want to get a permanent set of cake decorating tools and a regular weight character pan. You could exchange pans with other club members or your leader

to have different characters available and different experiences in decorating. You might also want to watch garage sales for character pans.

**NOTE:** If you can stack or layer them, they are not character pans (i.e. petal pans, heart, round or square pans).

## Baking the Cake

Refer to the Units 1-3 manual for information on baking the cake. You will want to keep the following points in mind for character cakes.

Use pound cake or Bundt cakes for 3-D or stand-up character cakes. Other types of cakes are too fragile. If you use Helen's Box Cake recipe from Units 1-3, substitute milk for water (1-1/3 cup) and add an additional egg (for a total of 4 eggs) and a small box of instant pudding and pie filling mix (your choice of flavor) and required vegetable oil according to mix instructions. Bake according to instructions. This makes a great pound cake.

### Helen Sembra's Pound Cake Recipe

1 Cake Mix

2 Tablespoons Meringue Powder

$\frac{1}{3}$  cup Wesson or Crisco Oil

1 (3.4 ounce) Instant Pudding & Pie Filling Mix

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup Flour

1 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup Milk

Combine all the above ingredients and beat at medium speed until satiny smooth and thick.

Add:

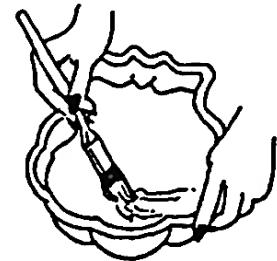
4 Eggs

Beat on low speed only until eggs are incorporated. Do not over beat.

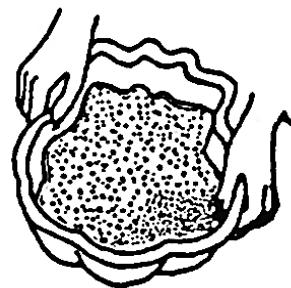
Bake at 325° for approximately 60-minutes. Test cake for doneness with toothpick.

1. Preheat oven to temperature specified in recipe or on packaged mix.

2. Generously grease the inside of the character cake pan with solid vegetable shortening. Use a pastry brush or paper towel to spread the shortening evenly, and make sure that all inside surfaces (sides, corners, indentations) are well covered.

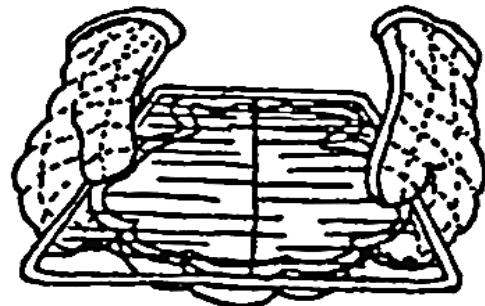


3. Sprinkle flour inside the pan and shake the pan back and forth so the flour covers all the greased surfaces. Tap out excess flour, and if any shiny spots remain, touch up with more shortening and flour. This important step will help prevent the cake from sticking to the pan.



You may also use an aerosol spray product that has the grease and flour mixed in it.

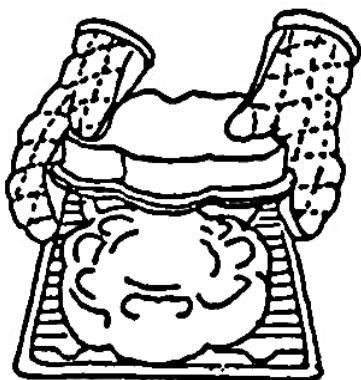
4. Bake the cake according to the temperature and time specifications in the recipe or on the package instructions.
5. Before removing the cake from the pan, check to make sure that the sides are released (pulled away from the pan). If the cake has a slightly risen top, place wax paper over the cake and put the cake rack on top and slightly press down, holding down for a minute or two to even the cake. Or you may cut it off with a long-serrated knife or a long piece of dental floss while the cake is in the pan to be sure it is level. To remove the cake from the pan, place the cake rack against the top of the cake and turn both the cake pan and the rack over.



Lift pan carefully.

If the cake will not release from the pan, return it to a warm oven, 250°, for a few minutes and repeat the procedure.

Cool the cake completely or freeze. Placing the cake in the freezer until frozen will keep the cake moist and firm and easier to decorate. Then brush the loose crumbs off the cake and it's ready to ice.



## 3-D Cakes

3-D pans are also available for your character cakes and are acceptable for this unit. The two-piece pans form both sides of a stand-up figure. Be sure to use a pound or Bundt cake or a recipe which produces a very firm cake.

Prepare the mold by generously greasing both inside halves. If the mold has a hollow baking core, grease the outside. Then lightly dust all surfaces with flour.



Picture taken from Wilton Website:  
[www.wilton.com](http://www.wilton.com)

1. Shake off excess flour and make sure there are no shiny parts of the mold or baking core exposed. It is important to have all the mold's indentations and the baking core well coated as it prevents the cake from sticking.
2. Fasten the mold with the clamps provided, making sure both halves fit snugly together. Invert the assembled mold and place on a baking pan or aluminum foil to catch any batter that may seep through or overflow during baking. Pour the amount of cake batter called for in pan directions into the inverted mold.
3. Insert the hollow baking core, which has been greased and floured, into the center of the 3-D mold and twist flanges to secure.
4. Bake the 3-D cake in a 325°F oven for 60 minutes or until done. When finished baking, remove cake mold from the oven and cool upright for about 10 minutes.
5. After cooling for 10 minutes, gently turn the center core clockwise, easing it out of the cake. With the baking core removed, place mold face down, release clamps and tap the back of the mold free with the handle of a spatula. Replace mold on this loosened back half, turn the mold face up and tap the front of the mold free. Now remove the front half of the mold and let the cake rest face up until cool to the touch. This will prevent cracking. Total cooling time should be at least 35 minutes. Stand the cake upright, remove the other half of the mold and place the cake on a board for decorating.
6. Spaghetti sticks may be used inside stand-up characters to reinforce weak areas (ears, etc.).
7. Decorate the cake as recommended with recipe instructions or use your own ideas.

## Preparing the Cake Board

Your shaped cakes will look best on a cake board that follows the contours of the pan.

1. Select smooth, clean corrugated cardboard, foam core board, plywood or particle board.
2. Measure and cut one piece of base material to the desired size. Turn your pan upside down on the base material and draw a line 1½ to 3 inches (2 inches is good) from the edge of the pan on all sides. Cut out board with a knife.



3. If using cardboard turn a second piece so the corrugation is going in the opposite direction. Cut the same shape. Having the pieces go in opposite directions will make the finished board stronger and prevent warping. Glue the boards together. If using foam core board or wood, only one thickness is needed.
4. Trace board shape onto foil, or other covering material, making outlines 2 inches larger than the board all the way around.



5. Put a circle of glue on side and center of board. To secure the covering to the surface of the board, outline the board with glue as well as placing glue in multiple places throughout the board. Be sure it is centered on the covering.



6. Slash to within  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch of the board about every  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch around the edge. Be sure there is a slash where the pan changes direction sharply.
7. Put glue around back side of board and glue all pieces to the back.
8. Cut a piece  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 inch smaller in diameter than the board being covered. Glue on back of board to cover the bottom and edge which have been turned back.

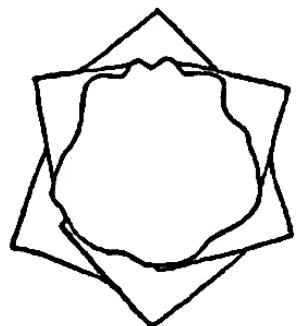
## Frosting the Cake

### Select a Good Frosting

Use one of the recipes you found in Units 1-3 or one which your instructor or leader recommends.

### Suggested Steps to Follow When Frosting a Character Cake

1. Cool cake thoroughly before frosting. If possible, bake the cake the day before decorating day and freeze in foil or a plastic bag. Freezing helps eliminate crumb problems. Be sure to thaw the cake slightly before beginning to frost.
2. Place a “dob” of frosting on cake board. Place the cake on top and center the cake on the board. Gently twist to secure. This prevents the cake from slipping.
3. Be sure the contoured side of the cake is on top.
4. Brush loose crumbs from sides and top of cake.
5. Use a crumb coating, if needed. This is made by slightly thinning the frosting to a soft consistency and applying a thin layer to the cake. Crumb coating done in the color to be used will help to prevent cake showing through if stars, etc., are not close enough. Air dry the cake before applying the finish coat of frosting.
6. Be sure to clean the edge of your board.



### Decorating Help

Refer to the cake decorating tutorial websites listed on this spreadsheet:

<https://co4h.colostate.edu/projects/other/CakeDecorating-Wilton-Resource-List-4-H.xlsx>

## **Pressure**

The steadiness and amount of pressure applied to the decorating bag will determine the size and uniformity of any frosting design. Some decorations require an even pressure, others a varying application of light, medium or heavy pressure. The more you control the pressure, the more exact your decoration will be.

## **Frosting Your Character Cake**

The shape and design of your cake will determine the techniques you use in decorating. Basic steps will include the following:

1. Ice any larger background areas which will be smooth when finished. Areas to be completely covered with stars, etc., need not be iced.
2. With a toothpick, mark the dividing lines on the design. Cover these marks with a string (outline) of frosting using a round tip.
3. Fill in the areas with the tip suggested, keeping the size consistent and lines straight. Dark colors should be allowed to dry before adding adjoining colors so the colors will not "bleed."
4. Some shaping can be done with a spatula dipped in cornstarch or your finger dipped in cornstarch.

### Buttercream Recipe 1

1½ cup Crisco or Sweetex

1½ sticks of butter, softened but not melted

2 pounds confectioners' sugar

2 tablespoons milk or water

1 teaspoon flavoring

Pinch of salt

Cream shortening, butter, flavoring, water and salt. Add sugar and blend slowly. Beat on medium speed until color becomes a little whiter, about 3 to 5 minutes. **Note:** If beaten on high speed, too much air will be incorporated into the frosting and it will be more difficult to smooth.



Picture taken from Wilton  
Website: [www.wilton.com](http://www.wilton.com)

### Chocolate Buttercream Recipe 1

Add to Buttercream Recipe 1:

¾ cup cocoa or three 1-ounce unsweetened chocolate squares, melted and slightly cooled

1 to 2 additional tablespoons of milk if needed to soften.

Mix until well blended.

If the icing is too thin add more powdered sugar. If the icing is too thick, add small amounts (½ teaspoon at a time) of milk or water until proper consistency is reached.

## Buttercream Recipe 2

1½ cups Crisco or Sweetex

1 teaspoon salt

2 teaspoons flavoring (clear or no color)

2 pounds confectioners' sugar sifted (pure cane confectioners' sugar if available)

(¼ cup of milk if you are going to use lavender color)



Picture taken from Wilton Website:  
[www.wilton.com](http://www.wilton.com)

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 2

Add to Buttercream Recipe 2:

½ to ⅔ cup cocoa powder. If the icing is too thin add more powdered sugar. If the icing is too thick, add small amounts of milk or water until the proper consistency is reached

### **Snow White Buttercream Recipe**

$\frac{2}{3}$  cup water  
4 tablespoons meringue powder  
12 cups sifted confectioners' sugar (approximately 3 pounds)  
 $1\frac{1}{4}$  cup Crisco or Sweetex  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  teaspoon salt  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon almond flavoring  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon clear vanilla flavoring  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  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.

### **Helen Sembra's Buttercream for Fondant Looking Cakes Recipe (Stiff Consistency)**

2 pounds powdered sugar  
4 tablespoon meringue powder  
1 teaspoon salt (popcorn salt preferred—finer in texture so will dissolve quickly)  
1 cup Crisco  
 $\frac{1}{3}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup water (lukewarm)  
2 teaspoon vanilla or flavoring of your choice

Combine powdered sugar, meringue powder and salt together. Add remaining ingredients and mix at low to medium speed until smooth.



Easter Bunny  
Picture taken from Wilton Website:  
[www.wilton.com](http://www.wilton.com)

**Note:** Experiment with each of these recipes until you decide which recipe works best for you. Snow white buttercream icing has an ideal consistency for frosting cakes to exhibit at shows and fairs.

## References

[www.wilton.com](http://www.wilton.com)

[www.bettycrocker.com](http://www.bettycrocker.com)

<https://co4h.colostate.edu/fcs/>

Key words:

Character Cakes

Also, YouTube has videos on character cakes that you might want to check out.

## **Creative Cake Decorating Unit 5—Small Treats (Cupcakes, Decorated Cookies & Cookie Construction)**

### **Goals for Unit 5**

#### **Decorated Cupcakes**

1. Learn to bake cupcakes that are uniform in size and suitable for decorating.
2. Practice skills in using frosting and edible food items to create attractive and tasty individual cake portions (cupcakes).
3. Practice skills in using decorating tips, mixing colors, textures, sizes, and edible add-ons to effectively create a design or theme.
4. Bake and decorate a minimum of three batches of cupcakes plus your exhibit cupcakes (total of 4). One batch = 12 cupcakes.

#### **Decorated Cookies**

1. Learn to bake cookies that are uniform in size and suitable for decorating.
2. Practice skills in using frosting and edible food items to create attractive and tasty cookies.
3. Practice skills in using decorating tips, mixing colors, textures, sizes, and edible add-ons to effectively create a design or theme.
4. Bake and decorate a minimum of three batches of cookies plus your exhibit cookies (total of 4). One batch = 12 cookies.

#### **Constructed Cookies**

1. Learn to bake cookies that are suitable for constructing.
2. Practice skills in using frosting and edible food items to create attractive and sturdy sound structures.
3. Practice skills in using frosting tips, mixing colors, textures, sizes, and edible add-ons to effectively create a design.
4. Bake and decorate a minimum of 3 structures plus your exhibit structure (total of 4).

#### **Exhibit for Unit 5**

Cupcakes or cookies are decorated using frosting and edible items. Fondant, gum paste, marzipan, and royal icing can be used only for decorations. Frosting must cover

the cupcake and provide a base for decorations in the three cupcake classes and in the themed cookies class. Spatula painting and brush striping are optional. No non-edible decorations can be used.

There are three cupcake classes and three cookie classes in this unit that may be chosen for an exhibit.

## 1. Cupcakes

- A. **Themed Cupcakes.** A minimum of 3 and maximum of 6 regular size (2 $\frac{3}{4}$ -inches) cupcakes in liners. Cupcakes should be of a similar design or theme, meaning there is a central idea between all the cupcakes. Place each decorated cupcake in a disposable muffin tin or a disposable container that matches the theme and is no larger than 10-inch round (example: teacups, ice cream cones, etc.) and placed on sturdy paper/plastic plate. Frosting must cover the cupcake and provide a base for decorations.
- B. **Stacked Cupcakes.** A minimum of 4 and a maximum of 8 cupcakes creating one design or theme where cupcakes are stacked on top of each other and decorated. Cupcakes (at least 2 and not more than 4 stacked cupcakes) should be secured with frosting to a sturdy covered board for display. Board size should be appropriate to design (use guideline for cakes). Non-visible supports can be used to hold stacked cupcakes.
- C. **Character or Design Cupcakes.** Using multiple cupcakes, a character design is created by grouping and decorating several cupcakes. Regular or mini-sized cupcakes or a combination may be used to create a character. Character cupcakes are multiple, individually decorated cupcakes that come together to create the character. Another way to describe character cupcakes is any design that cannot be displayed in a cupcake pan as individual cupcakes. The design should be one dimension – no stacking. The character must be displayed on one cake board with a maximum size of 9 x 13 inches.

## 2. Decorated Cookies

- A. **Themed Cookies.** A minimum of 3 and maximum of 6 regular size (3 inches) cookies displayed on a disposable base/platter no larger than 12 inches. Cookies should be of a similar design or theme.
- B. **Stacked Cookies.** A minimum of 6 inches in height and maximum 12 inches in height cookies creating one design or theme where cookies are stacked on top of each other and decorated. Cookies may vary in size

according to the type of stacking being done. Cookies should be secured to a sturdy covered board for display not to exceed 12 x 12 inches.

### 3. **Cookie Construction**

- A. A cookie structure that is no more than 11 inches square with a maximum height of 20 inches. The structure should be placed on a 14 x 14-inch disposable base. The structure may be placed in a glass case.

### **Tips for Record Book**

Your completed Cake Decorating Record Book in a sturdy binder/notebook should accompany the cupcakes, cookies and cookie structure. Note: Take a picture or make a simple drawing. Then write a short explanation of what you did and what you learned with each batch you decorated.

#### **Cupcakes**

1. Cake Decorating Record Book should be neat and complete. Instructions should be followed.
2. Cake Decorating Record Book should contain evidence of the skills learned in this unit. Include photos or drawings of the four required batches in addition to photos of you working on your project in the record photo page. Write a short explanation of what you did and what you learned with each batch you decorated.
3. Cake Decorating Record Book should show a minimum of three batches of cupcakes from any cupcake class (example stacked and themed, etc.), plus the fair exhibit cupcakes, for a minimum of four baking and decorating experiences.
4. Cake Decorating Record Book will count 25 percent of the placing score.

#### **Decorated Cookies**

1. Cake Decorating Record Book should be neat and complete. Instructions should be followed.
2. Cake Decorating Record Book should contain evidence of the skills learned in this unit. Include photos or drawings of the four required batches of cookies in addition to photos of you working on your project in the record photo page. Write a short explanation of what you did and what you learned with each batch you decorated.
3. Cake Decorating Record Book should show a minimum of three batches of cookies from any cookie class (example stacked and themed, etc.), plus the fair exhibit cookies, for a minimum of four baking and decorating experiences. Be

sure to put the cost of your three cookie batches and exhibit cookies on the expense page in the e-Record.

4. Cake Decorating Record Book will count 25 percent of the placing score.

### **Cookie Construction**

1. Cake Decorating Record Book should be neat and complete. Instructions should be followed.
2. Cake Decorating Record Book should contain evidence of the skills learned in this unit.
3. Cake Decorating Record Book should show a minimum of three structures, plus the fair exhibit structure, for a minimum of four structures. Be sure to put the cost of your three cookie structures and exhibit cookie structure on the expense page in the e-Record.
4. Cake Decorating Record Book will count 25 percent of the placing score.

## Cupcakes

### Tips for Baking Cupcakes

- Use a proven scratch cake recipe or brand name cake mixes such as Duncan Hines or Betty Crocker for best results.
- Do not use generic cake mixes.
- One cake mix will usually make 22 to 24 cupcakes.
- Use a medium cookie scoop to consistently fill the liners.
- Bake at 325°F, test for doneness. To test for doneness, press gently down on top of the cupcake. If it springs back when it is done.
- Put cupcakes in freezer while warm to hold in moisture, if not used immediately.
- Use Crisco or Sweetex in the icing.
- Follow high altitude adjustments, if needed.

### Perfect Cake Mix Cupcakes

Use any of the brand name cake mixes for a firm cupcake. Avoid cake mixes with pudding in the mix and lighter kinds such as angel food; cupcakes require a firm cake.

#### Cupcake Mix

1 box (18.25 ounces) cake mix (such as classic vanilla or devil's food)

1 cup buttermilk (in place of the water called for on the box)

Vegetable oil (the amount on the box)

4 large eggs (in place of the number called for on the box)

Combine all the ingredients in a large bowl. Beat using an electric mixer until moistened, about 30 seconds. Increase the speed to high and beat until thick, about 2 minutes longer.

Bake at 325°F. Test cake for doneness with toothpick.

24 cupcakes can be baked side by side in the oven.

Remove from oven and place in freezer on wire racks

From [www.wilton.com](http://www.wilton.com)

### **Helen Sembra's Pound Cake Recipe**

1 cake mix  
2 tablespoons meringue powder  
 $\frac{1}{3}$  cup Wesson or Crisco Oil  
1 (3.4 ounce) instant pudding and pie filling mix

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup flour

1  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup milk

Combine all the ingredients and beat at medium speed until satiny smooth and thick.

Add:

4 eggs

Beat on low speed only until eggs are incorporated. Do not over beat.

Bake at 325-degrees for approximately 12-15-minutes. Test cake for doneness with toothpick.

When using scratch recipes, use the information on [High Altitude Cooking](#), if applicable, found on the Colorado State University Extension website.

### **Preparing the Pan**

If you are baking in a pan with a dark or non-stick surface, you should lower the recommended recipe temperature by 25°F to avoid overbrowning. Dark pans give your cakes a darker finish when baked at 325°F.

### **Baking Tools**

- Muffin Pan
- Baking Cups
- Silicone Cups
- Cookie Sheet

### **With Paper/Foil Cups (in metal muffin pan)**



Cups create a pretty fluted surface and allow you to bake without grease or pan spray. They also help keep cupcakes from drying out. Be sure to spread cups evenly in pan cavities and check that cups are level before filling. When using foil cups, remove paper liners, if included, before filling and baking. Liners are included to help separate the thin foil cups. (**Note: Themed Cupcakes are to use liners.**)

### **Without Paper/Foil Cups (in metal muffin pan)**



Even non-stick pans must be prepared before baking. Prepare pan cavities by spraying with non-stick vegetable oil pan spray. Or brush cavities with vegetable shortening and flour for perfect release without sticking. (**Note: Themed cupcakes are to use liners.**)

### **With Silicone Cups**



These are oven-safe flexible cups. These cups release cupcakes with ease and are dishwasher safe. Prepare the cups with a non-stick pan spray before baking. Place cups on a cookie sheet or sheet pan for level baking and easy removal from the oven. To remove cupcakes, invert cup and apply gentle pressure to the bottom while gently peeling cup away. You may need to add more baking time for some shapes. (**Note: Themed cupcakes are to use liners.**)

Pictures and Information taken from  
Wilton Website: [www.wilton.com](http://www.wilton.com)

## **Cupcake Pans and Paper Liners**

Cupcake baking pans are available in three sizes: small (mini – about 2 inches), medium (regular – about 2 $\frac{3}{4}$  inches), and large – about 3 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches. This variety allows you to experiment with different decorating ideas. Recipes can be baked in any size pan, but the baking time will need to be adjusted for mini and large pans. Mini cupcakes usually take 5-7 minutes less than the medium-sized cupcakes, and the large cupcakes usually take 5-10 minutes more than the medium-sized pans.

Pan Size	Batter Amt.	Baking Temp	Baking Time	Yield – 1 mix
Standard Muffin Pan	1/4 – 1/3 cup	325°F	18-20 minutes	About 2 dozen
Mini Muffin Pan	1 heaping tablespoon	325°F	8-10 minutes	About 5 dozen
King-Size Muffin Pan	Slightly less than 1 cup	325°F	24-26 minutes	About 6
Jumbo Muffin Pan	1/2 – 2/3 cup	325°F	20-22 minutes	About 1 dozen
Mini Fanci-Fill Pan	1/2 cup (per pan)	325°F	18-20 minutes	

Taken from Wilton Website: [www.wilton.com](http://www.wilton.com)

Cupcakes can be baked in greased cupcake pans or in paper liners. When using the paper liners, the cupcakes are easier to handle and stay fresh longer. Paper liners are available in a wide range of sizes, colors and patterns. If you want the sides of the cupcake to be smooth or if it will be completely frosted in a design or grouping, then bake the cupcakes directly in the pan. Grease the cups with shortening or cooking spray, and then lightly flour the cups. You might need to run a knife around the edge of the cupcakes to release them from the pan.

## Filling the Cupcake Liners or Pans

For a consistent cupcake size, fill cups  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{2}{3}$  full.

### Decorating Bag



The best way we've found to add the batter is to squeeze it into the cup using a decorating bag. Just fill the bag about halfway with batter and squeeze perfect portions into your cups. Using a bag will give you better control, especially when making mini cupcakes. The bag keeps batter from spilling over the cavities.

### **Cookie Scoop (Portion Scoops)**



Another way to fill is by using a standard cookie scoop in half-circle shape with lever handle. Fill the scoop with batter and place in baking cup and repeat until cavity is filled 1/2 to 2/3 full.

### **Spoon**



When using a heaping tablespoon, it will take 3 to 4 tablespoons of batter to fill a cavity 1/2 to 2/3 full.

### **Measuring Cup**



The purpose of using a measuring cup is to give you a small and convenient container into which to put the batter. You will not be using it to actually measure the amount of batter going into cavities. Follow the same procedure as with the decorating bag, ice cream scoop and spoon; fill the cavity with batter 1/2 to 2/3 full.

Pictures and information taken from  
Wilton Website: [www.wilton.com](http://www.wilton.com)

### **Perfect Fill Batter Dispenser – [www.wilton.com](http://www.wilton.com)**



Fill cups and pan cavities easily with no drips or mess! Built-in valve controls batter flow for uniform filling, so you get great-looking cupcakes and cakes every time.

Picture and information taken from  
Wilton Website: [www.wilton.com](http://www.wilton.com)

## Frosting

For a smooth experience, keep the frosting at room temperature and stir before using.



Place a dollop of frosting at the center of the cupcake.



Spread frosting across the top, pushing out toward the edges. For a smooth look, run a small (4 to 4½ inch) spatula edge across the top.



For a fluffier look, lightly touch the iced surface with a small spatula blade and lift-up.

Pictures and Information from Wilton  
Website: [www.wilton.com](http://www.wilton.com)

## How to Pipe a Cupcake Swirl

### Instructions



#### Step 1

Using a decorating bag fitted with tip 1M, 2D or 2A, hold the bag straight up, with the tip about half an inch above the surface of the cupcake.



#### Step 2

Squeeze to form the center of the swirl. Without releasing pressure, raise the tip a little bit and move it slightly to the side. This will be the starting point of your swirl.



#### Step 3

Pipe a line of frosting toward the top of the star. Using a circular motion, pipe a "C" until it connects to the starting point.



#### Step 4

After completing the first rotation, move the tip slightly inward and repeat the circular motion. Continue spiraling until you reach the desired height. End the spiral at the center of the cupcake. Stop squeezing before pulling tip away.

How to Pipe a Cupcake Swirl

Pictures and Information from Wilton Website: [www.wilton.com](http://www.wilton.com)

## How to Pipe a Rosette

### Instructions

#### **Step 1**

Using a decorating bag fitted with a star tip, hold the bag straight up, with the tip just slightly above the surface.

#### **Step 2**

Starting at the center of the cake, squeeze to form a star. Without releasing pressure, raise the tip a little bit and move it slightly to the side. This will be the starting point of your rosette.

#### **Step 3**

Pipe a line of icing moving toward the top of the star. Using a circular motion, pipe a tight circle around to the starting point of your rosette.

#### **Step 4**

To prevent a tip from forming, decrease pressure as you close your rosette. Stop squeezing right before you connect, then pull away.



Picture taken from Wilton Website: [www.wilton.com](http://www.wilton.com)

### **Buttercream Recipe 1**

1¼ cup Crisco or Sweetex

1½ sticks butter, softened but not melted

2 pounds confectioners' sugar

2 tablespoons milk or water

1 teaspoon flavoring

Pinch of salt (only if using unsalted butter)

Cream Crisco or Sweetex, butter, flavoring, water & salt. Add sugar and blend slowly. Beat on medium speed until color becomes a little whiter, about 3 to 5 minutes. **Note:** If beaten on high speed, too much air will be incorporated into the frosting and it will be more difficult to smooth.

### **Decorating Your Character Cupcake**

The shape and design of your cake will determine the techniques you will use in decorating. Basic steps will include the following:

1. Ice any larger background areas which will be smooth when finished. Areas to be completely covered with stars, etc., need not be iced.
2. With a toothpick, mark the dividing lines on the design. Cover these marks with a string (outline) of frosting using a round tip.
3. Fill in areas with tip suggested, keeping size consistent and lines straight. Dark colors should be allowed to dry before adding adjoining colors, so the colors will not "bleed."
4. Some shaping can be done with a spatula dipped in cornstarch or your finger dipped in cornstarch.

### **Designs and Themes**

#### **Designs**

There are various techniques that can be used to design cupcakes. Think about the theme or occasion that you want the cupcakes for, then decorate your cupcakes

according to the theme. For example: if you are doing a garden theme party, decorate your cupcakes as butterflies, ladybugs, flowers, spiders, etc. If your theme is Halloween, then you can decorate your cupcakes as witches, ghosts, pumpkins, etc. The possibilities are endless.



Pictures taken from Wilton Website: [www.wilton.com](http://www.wilton.com)

For more ideas on designs and themes for your cupcakes go to: [www.wilton.com](http://www.wilton.com) and search cupcakes. Also, there are many books on the market about cupcakes such as: *Hello, Cupcakes! What's New?* And *Crazy About Cupcakes*. The internet has many interesting sites on cupcakes.

### **Cupcake Characters**

Cupcake characters use multiple, individually decorated cupcakes that come together to create the character. That is, if a cupcake is removed, the design or character will be ruined. Or any design that cannot be displayed in a cupcake pan as individual cupcakes. The design should be one dimension with no stacking. A variety of sizes of cupcakes may be used to create your design.



Pictures taken from Pinterest.

Key words:

- Theme cupcakes
- Character cupcakes
- Stacked Cupcakes
- Pull apart cakes

Books: *Hello, Cupcake! What's New?* and *Crazy About Cupcakes*

## Stacking Cupcakes

Stacking cupcakes can be a fun way to create new designs and themes. For ideas, use keyword “stacked cupcakes”.

### 2 Layered Stacked Cupcake (Example)

Bake a standard and a mini cupcake and cool.

Cover standard cupcake with tip #16 pull-out stars in green buttercream icing. Stack mini cupcake on top of standard cupcake and cover with tip #16 pull-out stars in green buttercream icing. Sprinkle both with nonpareils and position star on top.



Picture taken from Wilton  
Website: [www.wilton.com](http://www.wilton.com)

### Cupcake Tower (Example)



Picture and Information  
taken from Wilton Website:  
[www.wilton.com](http://www.wilton.com)

This cupcake tower uses a giant cupcake pan, jumbo muffin pan, standard muffin pan and mini muffin pan.

Bake and cool 1 of each size pan and trim off crowns. Bake and cool 2 additional swirl tops for tiers 2 and 3. Use only 1/2 cup cake batter for tier 2 then 1/3 cup for tier 3.

Trim off pointed tops and trim sides to match diameters of Jumbo and Standard muffins. Ice bottoms smooth in assorted colors.

Tint 2 oz fondant in each color. Roll out 1/16 inch thick. For bottom tier cut 17 wavy strips, 3-1/2-inch long fitted with 2 wavy wheels and 1/4-inch spacer. Brush backs with damp brush and attach, about 1 inch apart. Cut 17 plain strips, 3½-inch long, using cutter fitted with 2 straight wheels and ¼ inch spacer. Attach over wavy strips. For 2<sup>nd</sup> tier, cut 12 circles using wide end of tip 12; attach. Use frosting to pipe tip 2 swirls. For 3<sup>rd</sup> tier, cut 12 zigzag strips, 1-1/2 inch long, using cutter fitted with 2 zigzag wheels and no spacer. Attach about ½ inch apart. For top tier, cut 10 dots using small end of tip 12; attach. Frost tops fluffy for bottom 3 tiers.

Assemble bottom tiers. Insert wooden dowel rod into stacked cupcakes. Ice mini muffin top and position on tower.

## **Storing Cupcakes**

Store your cupcakes in an airtight plastic container in the refrigerator. They will stay fresh for several days. Cupcakes also keep well in the freezer in an airtight plastic container. You also can freeze the cupcakes before frosting. Then, frost and decorate them before serving.

## **Fair Secret**

For exhibit let cupcakes air dry and do not freeze or refrigerate before or after decorating

## **Transporting Cupcakes**

Use plastic packaging designed for cupcakes to transport to events or other locations. Look for these special containers at cake and restaurant supply stores or online suppliers.

Also, a clean cupcake pan is a good way to transport your cupcakes. Be sure to lightly cover the decorated cupcakes with aluminum foil, being careful not to touch the top of the cupcakes. Carefully remove the cupcakes onto a platter or serving tray.

Cupcakes can be packed in a cake box, using tissue paper between cupcakes.

## **Attaching Cupcakes to a Board**

A dab of frosting or piping gel on the bottom of the cupcake will secure it to the cake board.

## **References**

[www.wilton.com](http://www.wilton.com)

[www.bettycrocker.com](http://www.bettycrocker.com)

Key words: cupcakes, stack cupcakes

## Decorated Cookies

### Tips for Baking Cookies

- Use a proven scratch cookie recipe or brand name cookie mixes such as Krusteaz, Pillsbury, or Betty Crocker for best results.
- Do not use generic cookie mixes.
- One cookie mix will usually make approximately 24 3-inch cookies.
- Use a medium cookie scoop to make a round cookie, or roll them, or slice them into a round.
- Bake according to recipe.
- Use Crisco or Sweetex if using buttercream frosting.
- Follow high altitude adjustments, if needed.

## Cookie Recipes

### Sugar Cookie

1 cup (8oz) unsalted butter

1 cup (8oz) granulated sugar

2 large eggs

1 tsp vanilla extract (can use other flavors such as lemon, almond, anise, etc.)

15 oz all-purpose flour

2 tsp baking powder (adjust for altitude: 1tsp at 5000- 6500',  $\frac{3}{4}$  tsp above 6500')

1 tsp Kosher salt

1. Preheat oven to 325°F.
2. Cream butter and sugar until light yellow and well blended.
3. Add in eggs one at a time, scraping bowl in between additions of eggs. Mix well.
4. Add in vanilla extract.
5. Combine flour, baking powder and salt in a separate bowl.
6. Add flour mix into egg and sugar mix and combine well into a dough.
7. Remove from bowl and roll out to 1/4 -inch thickness on well-floured surface.
8. Cut into desired shapes and place on parchment-lined or nonstick baking pan.
9. Bake for 8 minutes or until just golden brown on the edges.
10. Remove from pan and cool on wire rack.
11. Decorate as desired.

## **Shortbread: King Arthur Flour Baker's Companion, All Purpose Baking Cookbook**

1 cup (8oz) unsalted butter

1 tsp Kosher salt

¾ cup (5-1/4 oz) granulated sugar

2 cup (8-1/2 oz) all-purpose flour

1. Preheat oven to 300°F.
2. In medium bowl, cream butter, salt and sugar together with a mixer or by hand.
3. Add the flour and blend until the mixture resembles fine cornmeal.
4. To shape: roll the dough into 1½ inch balls, press with a cookie stamp or the bottom of a glass dipped in sugar to prevent sticking. Chill in the freezer for 30 minutes before baking. If pressing dough into a shortbread mold, no need to freeze it.
5. Bake on ungreased baking sheets for about 20 minutes. Watch cookies carefully. When bottoms are a light sand color, remove them from the oven and transfer to a rack to cool.
6. Store cookies in tins lined with waxed or parchment paper.

## **Recipes/Information Located at the Wilton Website**

- How to make sugar cookies - <https://blog.wilton.com/how-to-make-sugar-cookies/>
- Gingerbread cookies - <https://wilton.com/gingerbread-cookies/wlrecip-287/>
- Shortbread cookies - <https://www.kingarthurbaking.com/recipes/shortbread-cookies-recipe>
- Common cookie problems - <https://bakeorbreak.com/2018/11/common-cookie-problems/>

## **Tips for Rolling Out Cookie Dough**

- Roll dough out on back of cookie sheet or on parchment so you don't have to pick up cut cookie dough. Cookies may become misshaped when moved.
- Lift excess dough away from cookies rather than lifting cookie from dough.
- Dip cookie cutter in flour before cutting. Make cut, then wiggle the cutter slightly to make sure you have a clean cut.
- Roll out dough on a floured surface. Flour rolling pin before each use. Use flour sparingly as adding too much flour into the dough will make it tougher. Try using confectioner's sugar instead as it will not toughen the dough.
- If rolled cookie dough puffs too much when baking, add a little flour to dough. Excess moisture in the dough will over activate the baking powder.

## Preparing Baking Pans

Follow the recipe for pan preparation.



Non-stick bakeware large cookie pan



Non-stick bakeware cookie sheet (medium)

Use for medium sized cookies.

Pictures taken from Wilton  
Website: [www.wilton.com](http://www.wilton.com)

Make sure that your pans are flat and not warped. Darker pans will heat up faster and will hold the heat therefore taking less time to bake the cookies. Lighter pans take longer to heat up therefore the baking time will be a little more. When using a stone pan you will need to cool the stone before putting another set of cookies on it. Baking stones retain heat longer than metallic pans do, so this might take a while. Make sure you adjust your baking time depending on the type of pan used.

## Baking Tools

Cookie Spatula

Cookie cutters

Cookie scoop

Parchment

Flat cooling racks

Sharp paring knives

Rolling pins

## Tips for Successful Cookies

- Spacing—1-inch between cookies and edges of pan
- Roll cookies out on parchment paper or on a silicon mat
- Flour surface before rolling out the cookie dough
- Move cookies onto baking pan with spatula or you can place the parchment paper with the cookies onto the baking pan

## Icing Recipes

### Buttercream Recipe 1

1¼ cup Crisco or Sweetex

1½ sticks butter, softened but not melted

2 pounds confectioners' sugar

2 tablespoons milk or water

1 teaspoon flavoring

Pinch of salt (only if using unsalted butter)

Cream Crisco or Sweetex, butter, flavoring, water & salt. Add sugar and blend slowly. Beat on medium speed until color becomes a little whiter, about 3 to 5 minutes. **Note:** If beaten on high speed, too much air will be incorporated into the frosting and it will be more difficult to smooth.

### Poured Cookie Icing Recipe

1 cup confectioners' sugar (sifted)

2 teaspoons of milk

2 teaspoons light corn syrup

Place sugar and milk in bowl. Stir until mixed thoroughly. Add corn syrup and mix well. For filling in areas, use thinned icing (add small amounts of light corn syrup until desired consistency is reached).

Some character designs require run-in sugar or flood work. This should be done with a Royal Icing.

### **Royal Icing (Wilton Recipe)**

3 level tablespoons meringue powder

4 cups (approx. 1 lb.) sifted confectioners' sugar

6 tablespoons water\*

Yield: 3 cups

Beat all ingredients at low speed for 7-10 minutes (10-12 minutes at high speed for portable mixer) until icing forms peaks.

\*When using large countertop mixer or for stiffer icing, use 1 tablespoon less water.

### **Helen Sembra's Special Royal Icing**

Mix together in a large bowl...

½ tsp. cream of tartar

1 ½ tbsp. \*Gum Arabic

2 pounds powdered sugar (lump free—sift if necessary)

In a large electric mixing bowl, Combine...

⅔ cups lukewarm water

¼ cup meringue powder

Mix the meringue and water until frothy at a medium speed. Add at low speed the dry ingredients and beat until it holds a firm peak for flowers made with royal, medium peak for extension and drop work and finally, soft peak for embroidery and scripting on cakes.

***Caution: All utensils and equipment must be absolutely grease free.***

\*Specialty cake stores or online websites.

Remember that all utensils and tools must be grease free.

## Run-In Sugar or Flood Work

To use run-in sugar or flood work for eyes, nose, etc., on cookies:

1. Seal the area to be covered with run-in sugar or flood work with piping gel.
2. Outline the area with a round tip using either butter cream or royal icing. This creates a dam or dike to hold the run-in sugar.
3. Prepare run-in sugar by taking the quantity of royal icing needed for the design area. Add one drop of water at a time until thinned to the consistency of heavy cream. (When dropped from a spoon it will dissipate or smooth out to the slow count of 10.) Make certain all utensils are free of grease when preparing run-in sugar.
4. Fill in the area desired. Do not break the outline (dam) or icing will overflow onto cookie.

## Decorating

- Covering a Cookie with Cookie Icing – Wilton (<https://wilton.com/covering-a-cookie-with-cookie-icing/wltech-286/>)
  - How to thin royal icing for cookie decorating
  - Outline and fill in method
  - Dragging method
  - Wet on wet method
- How to Color Cookie Dough – Wilton (<https://wilton.com/how-to-color-cookie-dough/wltech-201/>)

## Transporting

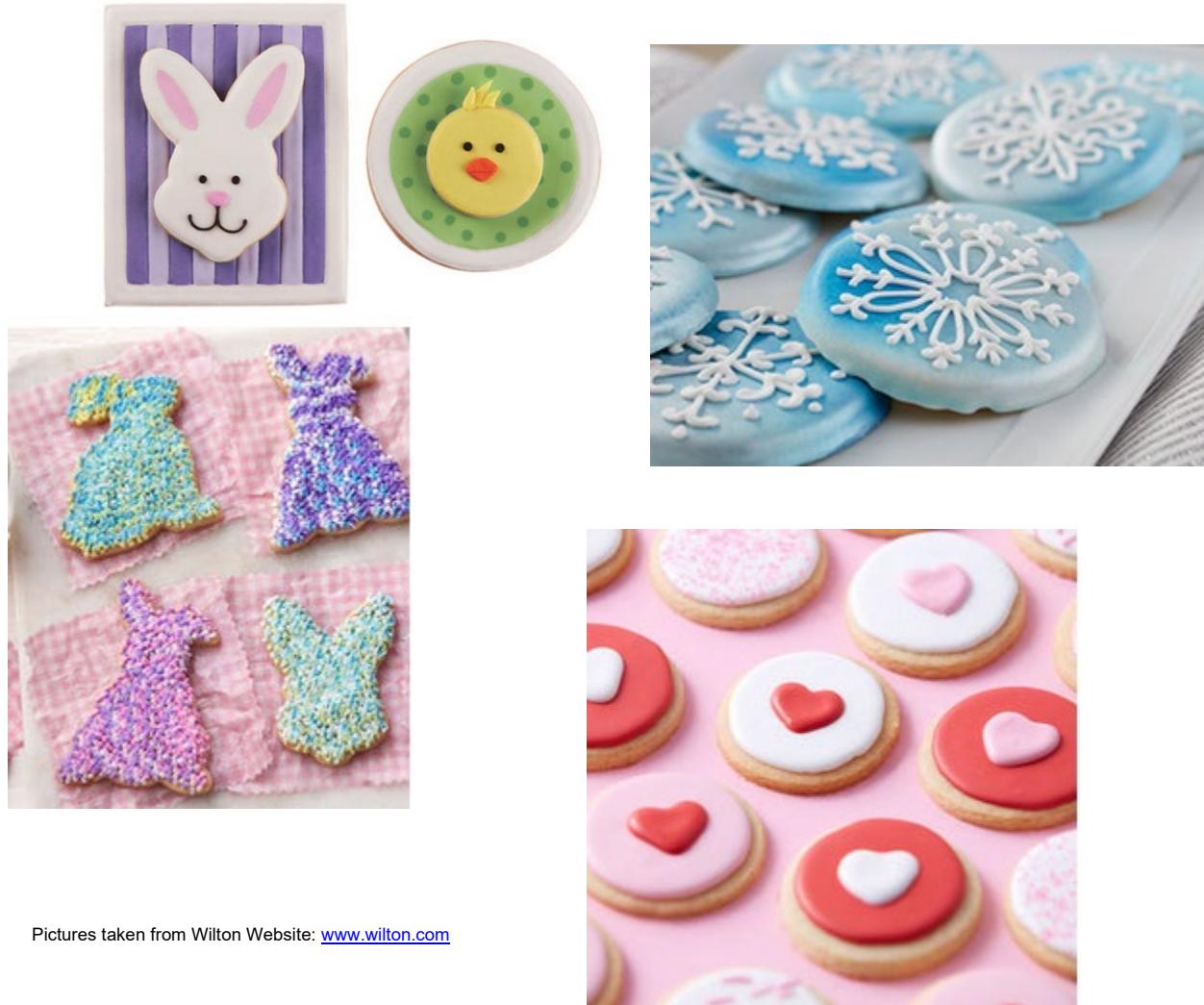
- Bake cookies 2 days before transporting.
- Always cool before packing to prevent sticking.
- Line cardboard containers with foil or plastic wrap to keep cookies fresh.
- Place sheets of parchment between layers of cookies, especially those which are iced or decorated with royal icing. Cookies iced with buttercream don't stack well.
- Pack delicate and decorated cookies in shallow containers; the fewer layers, the better.
- Wrap cookies singly or in pairs and group wrapped cookies in a pretty box, bag or basket.

## How to Make a Cookie Box

- How to Make a Cookie Box (<https://www.sweetambs.com/tutorial/how-to-make-a-cookie-box/>)

## Themed Cookies

There are various techniques that can be used to design cookies. Think about the theme or occasion that you want the cookies for, and then decorate your cookies according to the theme. For example: if you are doing a garden theme party, decorate your cookies as butterflies, ladybugs, flowers, spiders, etc. If your theme is Halloween, then you can decorate your cookies as witches, ghosts, pumpkins, etc. The possibilities are endless.



Pictures taken from Wilton Website: [www.wilton.com](http://www.wilton.com)

## Stacked Cookies (Example - Christmas tree)

### Step 1

Mold bases. Use Cordial Cups mold to make 1 solid candy cup for each tree. Chill until firm. Can also be stacked without candy cup.

### Step 2

Prepare dough. Roll out small amount for yellow stars (1 per tree); cut using smallest cutter from set. Tint remaining dough green. For each tree, cut 2 stars with each of the 4 smallest cutters from set. Bake and cool.



Picture taken from Wilton  
Website: [www.wilton.com](http://www.wilton.com)

### Step 3

Brush cookies with Piping Gel; sprinkle with green or yellow sugar. Assemble tree using melted candy in cut parchment bag. Attach confetti trims with melted candy.

## Cookie Construction

### Tips for Construction

- Plan your design well ahead.
- Cut out pattern pieces and make sure that they fit .
  - Plastic file folders or card stock paper are the best template for cutting patterns.
- Keep the design simple.
- Creativity can come from the decorating of the structure.
- No pre-made kits are allowed.
- Be aware that this is a multi-day project. It cannot be rushed.
- Prepare a base that is sturdy, at least 1/2 inch thick using cardboard, foam core, particle board, or plywood, and cover with food safe aluminum.

### Tips for Baking Cookie Structures

- Use a proven gingerbread cookie recipe.
- Bake according to recipe. Adjust as needed for High Altitude.
- Roll dough to  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch thick.
- For minimum distortion, roll dough on parchment or silicon mat or on the back side of the cookie sheet.
- If rolling on parchment, transfer pieces on the parchment to baking pan.
- Label piece name on parchment (not on gingerbread).
- Keep similar sizes together on baking pan.
- Bake according to recipe. Larger sizes may take longer to cook.
- Pieces may spread slightly as they bake. Carefully recut the pieces while they are warm (cooled pieces may be trimmed with a separated bread knife if necessary).
- Allow pieces to cool overnight.
- Use Crisco or Sweetex if using buttercream frosting.

### **Gingerbread Recipe for Cookie Construction**

15 oz all-purpose flour

2 tsp ground ginger

1 tsp ground cinnamon; 1/2 tsp ground nutmeg

1 tsp baking soda (adjust for altitude: 1/2 tsp at 5000- 6500', 1/4 tsp above 6500')

1/4 tsp Kosher salt

6 oz unsalted butter at room temperature

6 oz brown sugar

6.5 oz molasses

1 large egg

1 tsp vanilla extract

1. Combine all dry ingredients in a bowl.
2. Cream butter and brown sugar in medium bowl using a mixer or by hand.
3. Add molasses, egg, and vanilla to creamed mixture and mix to combine. Scrape sides of bowl to make sure all ingredients are blended.
4. Add dry ingredients to wet ingredients slowly, blending well with each addition. Remove dough from bowl and shape into a ball or log. Wrap tightly with plastic wrap and refrigerate a minimum of 4 hours or overnight.
5. Preheat oven to 350°F when ready to work with dough.
6. Work with half the dough at a time and keep the other half refrigerated. Place dough onto a well-floured surface. Roll dough to 1/4 inch thick. Cut dough into desired shapes using a knife or cutters.
7. Bake for 8-10 minutes on ungreased baking sheets. Cookies will still be slightly soft when done. Cookies will firm up as they cool.

## **Wilton Gingerbread House Recipe**

### Ingredients:

5 to 5½ cups all-purpose flour  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
1 teaspoon salt  
2 teaspoon ground ginger  
2 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1 teaspoon ground nutmeg  
1 teaspoon ground cloves  
1 cup solid vegetable shortening  
1 cup granulated sugar  
1¼ cups molasses  
2 eggs (beaten)

Note: Recipe can be halved for smaller houses.

### Instructions:

Preheat oven to 375°.

Thoroughly mix flour, soda, salt and spices.

Melt shortening in large saucepan over low heat until just melted, not hot. Add in order, sugar, molasses and eggs; mix well. Cool slightly, then add four cups dry ingredients and mix well.

Turn mixture onto lightly floured surface. Knead in remaining dry ingredients by hand. Add a little more flour, if necessary, to make a firm dough.

If you're not going to make your gingerbread house right away, wrap dough in plastic and refrigerate. Refrigerated dough will keep for a week but be sure to remove it 3 hours prior to rolling so it softens and is workable.

After cutting out house, wrap any remaining gingerbread dough in plastic. This extra dough can be used in case one of your house pieces cracks or breaks. Small cracks can be repaired with icing.

Bake at 375° for 10-15 minutes for large pieces, 6-8 minutes for average to small sizes. Check frequently for over-browning. After baking, loosen gingerbread pieces with spatula to prevent sticking. While warm, place your patterns on gingerbread pieces to check sizes. If a piece has baked too big or crooked, trim excess or uneven edges with a sharp knife. Then let cool for 10 minutes. Remove gingerbread pieces from cookie sheet and cool uncovered overnight on cooling rack.

### **Rolling out and cutting gingerbread**

Note: Gingerbread should be baked 48 hours before assembling.

Working with one recipe of kneaded gingerbread dough, place a third of the dough on a lightly floured cookie sheet surface. Large pieces can be cut out directly on a cookie sheet or on the back of a cookie pan. Or you can roll it out on parchment, then transfer the pieces on the parchment to the cookie sheet for baking. Place dampened towel under cookie sheet or pan to prevent slippage as you roll out dough. Keep remainder of dough wrapped in plastic to prevent drying. Press dough to flatten. Lightly dust rolling pin with flour to keep gingerbread from sticking and roll out dough to approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch thickness. As you roll, work dough out from the center. Do not worry about thin edged; these will be trimmed.

Place patterns on top of the rolled-out dough. Cut around the patterns with a sharp knife or pizza cutter. Carefully remove pattern and excess dough. Lift smaller pieces on to cookie sheet with spatula. Be sure to bake small sizes together to avoid burning. Repeat rolling and cutting procedures, using additional cookie sheets as needed.

### **Building Basics**

Use royal icing for all construction. See following instructions for assembly.

## Baking Tools

Patterns

Flat baking sheets

Rolling pin

Rolling mat or parchment paper

Pizza cutter

Paring Knife

Cookie cutter

Exacto knife

Ruler

Serrated bread knife for trimming

## How to Assemble a Gingerbread House

Pictures and Information taken from the  
Wilton Website: [www.wilton.com](http://www.wilton.com)

### Step 1

Join one side wall to one peaked wall. Pipe icing along the bottom of the side wall and along the bottom and inside of the peaked wall. Join the panels so that the side wall is positioned on the inside edge of the peaked wall. Press the sides together and attach to the base. Hold in place for several minutes until the icing begins to set.



### Step 2

Attach the other side wall and peaked wall in the same way.



### **Step 3**

Press together and let dry at least one hour before going to the next step.



### **Step 4**

Pipe the icing along the roof angle of both peaked wall panels and along the top side walls. Pipe icing along one long side of one roof panel. (This will be the peak of the roof.) Position one roof section, so it meets the peaked wall and side wall edges.



### **Step 5**

Hold this half in place while you add the other roof section.



### **Step 6**

Adjust so that each side is evenly pitched, and the center seam meets. Press and hold in place several minutes to allow the icing to set.



### **Step 7**

Let your house dry at least two to three hours before decorating.

### **Prepare Icing**

You may use royal icing or IsoMalt to put your structure together.

#### *Tips for Structure*

- Use cans, foams, or books for support
- Cover icing with damp towel over the top of it so it won't dry out
- Allow walls or bottom to dry thoroughly before adding roof or upper sections
- Allow to dry 48 hours before decorating
- Work from top to bottom when decorating
- Humidity is your enemy
- Put in dry place for storage
- Gingerbread can be decorated for all seasons

#### **Royal Icing (Wilton Recipe)**

3 level tablespoons meringue powder

4 cups (approx. 1 lb.) sifted confectioners' sugar

6 tablespoons water\*

Yield: 3 cups

Beat all ingredients at low speed for 7-10 minutes (10-12 minutes at high speed for portable mixer) until icing forms peaks.

\*When using large countertop mixer or for stiffer icing, use 1 tablespoon less water.

### **Helen Sembra's Special Royal Icing**

Mix together in a large bowl...

½ tsp. cream of tartar

1½ Tbsp. \*Gum Arabic

2 pounds powdered sugar (lump free—sift if necessary)

In a large electric mixing bowl, Combine...

⅔ cup lukewarm water

¼ cup meringue powder

Mix the meringue and water at a medium speed until frothy. Add at low speed the dry ingredients and beat until it holds a firm peak for flowers made with royal, medium peak for extension and drop work and finally, soft peak for embroidery and scripting on cakes.

***Caution: All utensils and equipment must be absolutely grease free.***

\*Specialty cake stores or online websites.

Remember that all utensils and tools must be grease free.

### **Decorating**

- [Ways to Decorate a Gingerbread House](#) (Taken from Wilton Website: [www.wilton.com](http://www.wilton.com))

### **Transporting**

- Make sure all icing is dry and structure is sturdy before transporting.
- Place some kind of padding underneath the structure to absorb vibrations and bumps.

### **Design**

- Look for patterns on the internet or pick a style you like.
- Once you find a pattern, begin by creating a template out of cardboard or plastic.
- Keep proportions in mind.
- Assemble your template with tape to make sure the pieces will fit together correctly.
- Disassemble and use template pieces to cut gingerbread pieces.



Pictures taken from Pinterest.

## Creative Cake Decorating Unit 6—Cut-Up & Sculpted Cakes

In this unit you will cut up or sculpt cakes to form different shapes. Decorator tips should be used in creating your design; however, edible materials may also be used.

A cut-up cake is **cut** into different shapes and assembled to create shapes of animals, vehicles and other items and is generally a single layer. A sculpted cake is layers of cake that are **carved** carefully into shapes (like shoes, pillows, animals, etc.).



Picture taken from Wilton  
Website: [www.wilton.com](http://www.wilton.com)

### Goals for Unit 6

1. Build on skills learned in units 1 through 3.
2. Frost and decorate cut-up or sculpted cakes.
3. Develop skill in using a variety of decorating tips.
4. Learn to cut up flat cakes and put them together to form different shapes.
5. Learn how to sculpt cakes or form cereal treats into different shapes.
6. Learn how to treat cut surfaces to eliminate unnecessary and unsightly crumbs.
7. Develop more skills in mixing colors.
8. Bake and decorate a minimum of three cakes plus your exhibit cake (total of 4).

### Exhibit for Unit 6

1. One decorated cut-up or sculpted real cake using three different types of decorating tips (not different sizes of the same tip) to decorate along with edible materials. Nonedible items can NOT be used on the cake. Fondant or royal icing can be used only for decorations. Nonedible internal supports are allowed but must not show. 16-inch x 16-inch base—12-inch x 12-inch x 12-inch cake size.
2. Diagram or pattern used must be included in the Record Book.
3. Your completed Cake Decorating Record Book in a sturdy binder/notebook should accompany the cake. Note: Take a picture or make a simple drawing. Then write a short explanation of what you did and what you learned with each cake you decorated.
4. Fair Secret — Let the cake air dry; DO NOT FREEZE or refrigerate.

### Decorated Cake

1. The cake must be baked by the exhibitor. This should be noted in the Record Book. It also may be discussed at interview judging.

2. The cake should be placed on a firm disposable surface (foam core, cardboard, particle board, etc.) which will not cause the cake to crack in transportation.
3. The shape of the board should be the shape of the cake. Board should be 2-inches larger than bottom border of cake on all sides.
4. The cake board must be covered with food safe materials--examples: aluminum foil or *Wilton-Fanci-Foil*. If you use a decorative or gift wrap paper or fabric to cover your board, it must then be covered in food quality plastic wrap to make it food safe.

### **Frosting Your Cake**

1. All areas should be covered with frosting or edible materials with no cake showing through. Fondant and royal icing can only be used for decorations.
2. The cut pieces should be attached securely to each other and the board to form the design.
3. There should be no crumbs showing through the frosting.
4. Frosting should be the proper consistency for the work being done.

### **Design**

1. Color and design should be balanced and pleasing to the eye.
2. The design should be applied using at least three different decorator tips of your choice (i.e., closed star tip and open star tip are the same tips). However, parts of the design may be created with edible materials (coconuts, candies, etc.).
3. Only edible items may be used on the cake.
4. Cake is finished with a base border.

### **Tips for Record Book**

1. Cake Decorating Record Book should be neat and complete. Instructions should be followed.
2. Cake Decorating Record Book should show that a minimum of three cakes plus the fair exhibit have been made (total of 4). Be sure to put the cost of your three cakes and exhibit cake on the expense page in the eRecord.
3. Include photos or drawings of the four required cakes in addition to photos of you working on your project in the record photo page. Pattern(s) or diagrams for all required cakes must be included in the e-Record. Be sure to include photos or drawings of the steps in your process.

3. Cake Decorating Record Book will count 25 percent of the placing score.

## Baking the Cake

Most cut-ups begin with 8, 9, or 10-inch layers, or a 9 x13-inch cake. Select the design you want to use, and then select a recipe which will give the size cake needed.

Follow the instructions for baking cakes that you have learned in previous units. Be sure the cake is level before cutting because the pieces need to be the same height when piecing the design together.

### Pound Recipes: Cut-up and Sculpted Cakes

#### Helen Sembra's Pound Cake Recipe

1 cake mix

2 tablespoons meringue powder

$\frac{1}{3}$  cup Wesson or Crisco Oil

1 (3.4 ounce) instant pudding & pie filling mix

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup flour

$1\frac{1}{3}$  cups milk

Combine all the above ingredients and beat at medium speed until satiny smooth and thick.

Add:

4 eggs

Beat on low speed only until eggs are incorporated. Do not over beat.

Bake at 325° for approximately 60-minutes. Test cake for doneness with toothpick.

## **Wilton Classic Pound Cake**

### Ingredients:

1½ teaspoons Wilton Pure Vanilla Extract  
2¾ cups all-purpose flour  
2 teaspoons baking powder  
½ teaspoon salt  
2 cups (4 sticks) butter, softened  
1¾ cups granulated sugar  
6 eggs  
vegetable pan spray

### Instructions:

#### Step 1

Preheat oven to 350° F. Generously grease inside of pan and coat with flour.

#### Step 2

In medium bowl, stir together flour, baking powder and salt.

#### Step 3

In large bowl, beat butter and sugar with electric mixer until light and fluffy. Add eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition. Add vanilla and beat until well combined. Add flour mixture and beat on low speed for 1 minute, scraping bottom and sides of bowl as needed. Pour batter into prepared pan.

#### Step 4

Bake 50-55 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center of cake comes out clean. Cool in pan on cooling rack for 15 minutes. Loosen sides of cake and remove from pan; cool completely on rack.

## Tips for Cut-up and Sculpted Cakes

- Use a sharp knife.
- Crumb coating is very necessary for all cut edges.
- It is very important when attempting to carve a cake that you choose a recipe that is dense enough to carve successfully.
- Cakes that are moist, firm and smooth and soft enough for easy carving will provide the best results. Pound cake or cakes of a similar consistency are highly recommended because they are moist and won't crumble (a necessity) when working with them.
- Choose a pan that best fits the general shape of the cake (i.e. round if carving snowman, square if carving gift box, etc.)
- Consider proportions when designing your cake. That will help you determine how many cakes you will need.
- Avoid recipes that include raisins, nuts or chocolate chips.

## Preparing a Cake Board

Follow instructions in Units 1 and 4 on preparing a cake board. The shape of the design will determine whether you want a shaped board as was done with character cakes or a round, square or oblong board.

The shape of the board should be the shape of the cake. Board should be 1 ½ inches larger than bottom border of cake on all sides.

## Cutting the Cake

1. Draw an actual size pattern of the basic cake and how it is to be cut to form the design. Plan to use most of the cake in your design. This will reduce crumbs.
2. Cool cakes completely before cutting and decorating.
3. Measure and mark the cake with wooden toothpicks before actually cutting. Then cut exactly.
4. Use a large, serrated knife to cut pieces and make a straight vertical cut unless design requires different cut.
5. Crumb coat the cake. (See Cake Decorating Manual for Units 1-3 for information on crumb coating).
6. Freeze the cake before cutting. A frozen cake is easier to carve than a fresh cake. If it is too hard to carve, allow cake to defrost slightly.
7. Use a very sharp, strong knife for cutting. It should not bend when cutting the cake.

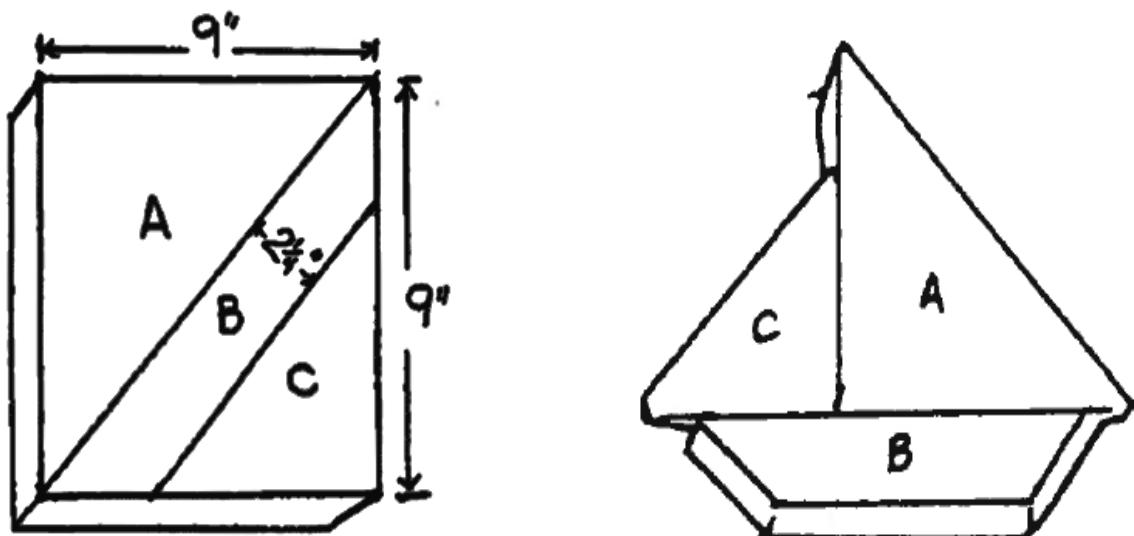
8. Carve the cake on your prepared board so you don't have to move it.
9. Remove cake in small pieces. It is easier to cut more off than try to put pieces back on the cake.
10. Exaggerate the shape when cutting so when you add icing you don't lose the detailed shape.
11. Use dowel rods where needed for stability but must not show.

### **Suggested Patterns for Cut-Up Cakes**

There are many patterns for cut-up cakes. You may want to collect them or develop your own patterns. A few suggestions are given here:

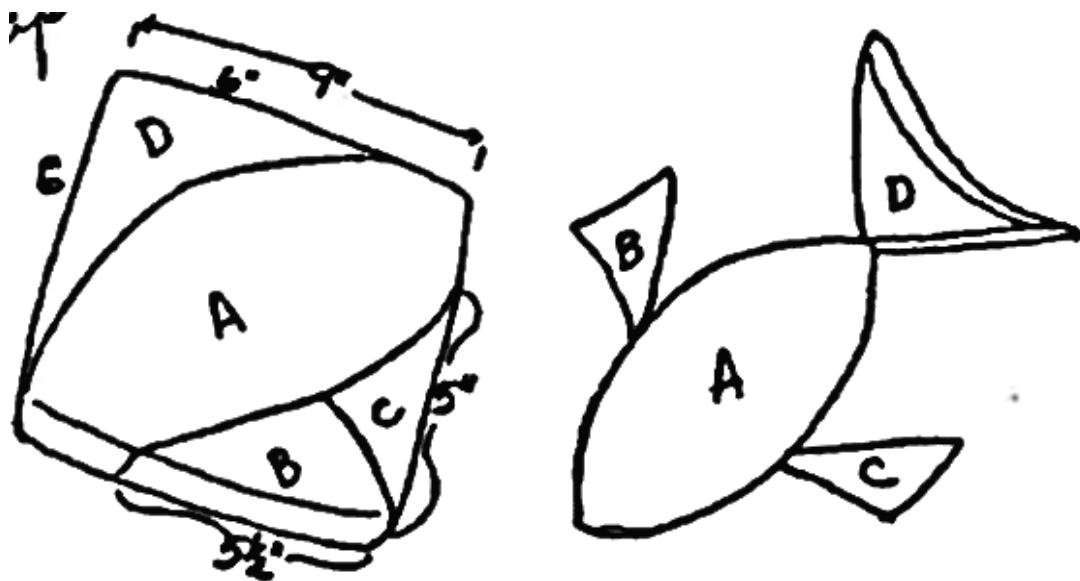
#### **Boat (9-inch Square Pan)**

You may use white frosting on sails, chocolate frosting for hull, licorice or chocolate frosting for mast, round candies for portholes and cut gumdrops for anchor or boat insignia. Or use decorator tips for applying details.



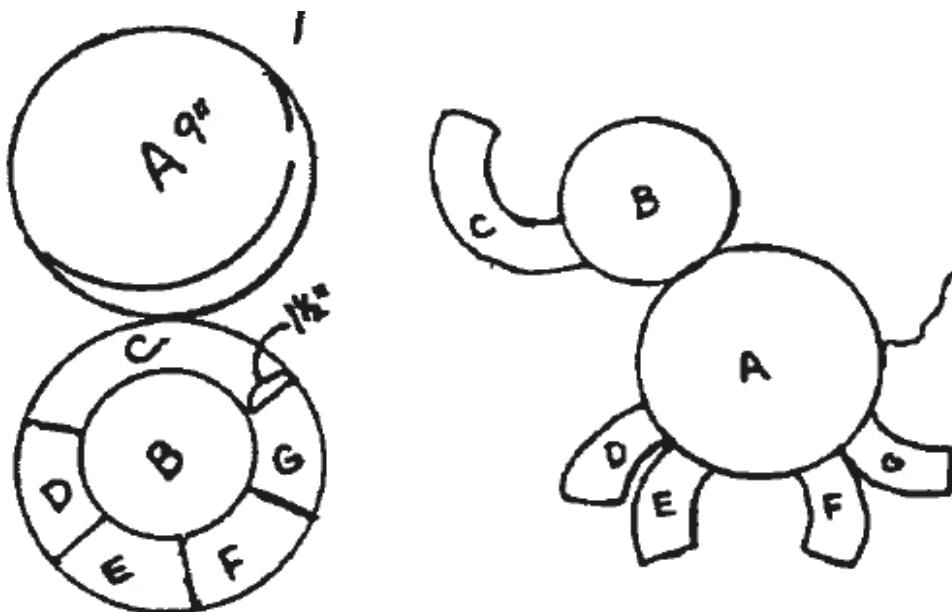
### **Fish (9 x 9-inch Square Pan)**

You may use pale green frosting, gumdrops for eye and mouth, slivers of licorice for a flirty eyelash, candy scales and bubbles. At least three decorator tips should be used.

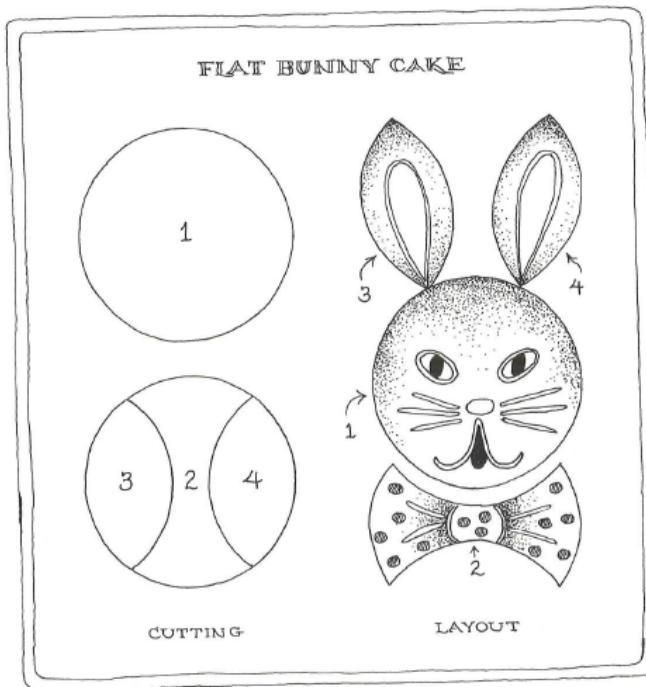


### **Elephant (Two 9-inch Round Pans)**

You may use pink frosting, chocolate cookie for ear, gumdrop for eye and twist of licorice for the tail. At least three decorator tips should be used.



## **Flat Bunny Cake (two 9-inch round cakes)**



## **Completing the Cake**

### **Assembling and Decorating the Cake**

1. Assemble all cake pieces on the board before frosting.
2. Clean the side of the board.
3. Frost the pieces together to hold them in place.
4. Then frost all cut edges, leaving tops and uncut edges for last.
5. A crumb coating may be used to control the crumbs. Use frosting which has been slightly thinned. Let this dry completely, and then apply the regular frosting.

### **Stacking**

- Make sure the layers are level. The thicker, more solid each layer is, the more solid your cake will be.
- Choose a filling that will give you a firm consistency such as a crusting buttercream. Stay away from jams and puddings as they are more likely to cause layers to slip.

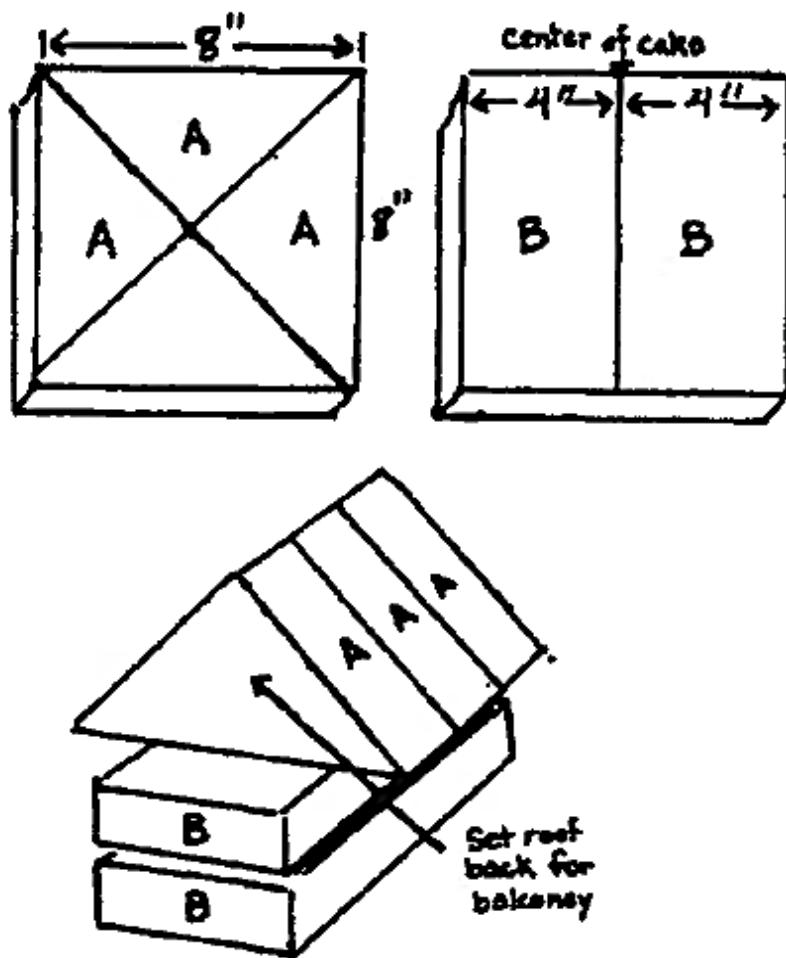
## Decorating

- Chill the cake before crumb coating
- Cover cake with buttercream or fondant
- Smaller pieces of the figure can be molded using rice cereal treats.

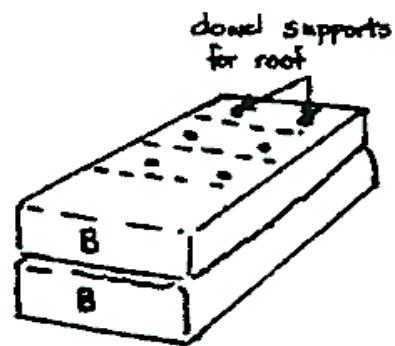
## Sculpting Cakes

If you stack pieces more than two layers high, you may need to put supports inside to hold the weight. The supports do not need to be edible and should not be visible.

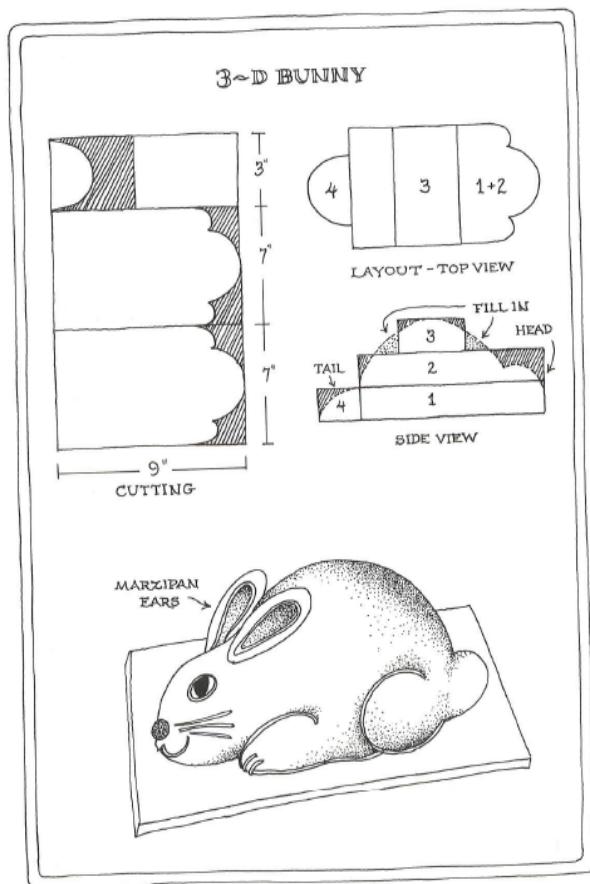
This house pattern would require extra supports under the roof area (two 8-inch square pans).



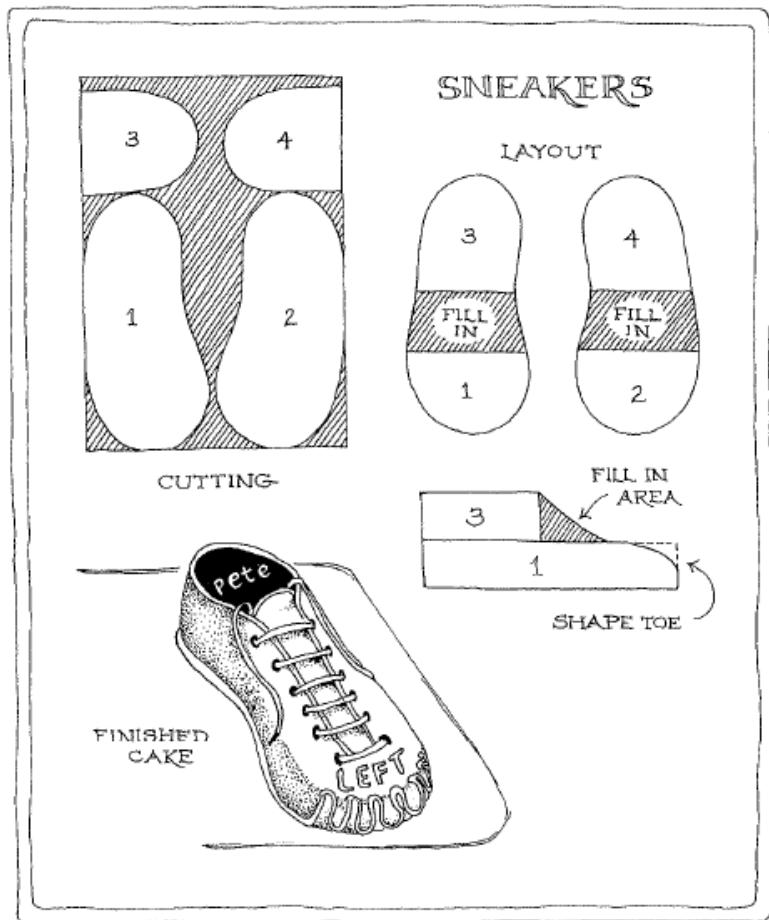
Measure one dowel rod at the cake's lowest point. Using this dowel rod for measuring, cut five other rods (using small saw or wire cutters, or a new dog nail trimmer) the same size. The size must be exact, and the ends smooth to keep the cake level. Push the dowel rods into the cake 2 inches from the sides so they are centered under the upright section of the cake. Two dowel rods should support each of the pieces above. Care should be taken not to shift dowel rods after they have been placed in the cake.



### Sculptured Bunny Cake (13 x 9-inch Cake)



## Sneakers (11x 17-inch Oblong Cake Pan)



(Patterns from Creative Cakes by Stephanie Crookston)

## More Resources for Cut-Up Cakes

*“Bakers Easy Cut-Up Party Cakes”* by Bakers

*“Easy Cut-UP Cakes for Kids”* by Melissa Barlow

## References

[www.bettycrocker.com](http://www.bettycrocker.com)

[www.wilton.com](http://www.wilton.com)

Key words: Cut-Up Cakes, Shaped Cakes, Sculpted Cakes



Pictures taken from Wilton Website:  
[www.wilton.com](http://www.wilton.com)