

# Cake Decorating

## Exhibit Guidelines:

Specific techniques are required for each division classification. Use the number of techniques as listed under the individual division. ALL CAKES exhibited with more advanced techniques than those listed will be scored down and WILL NOT be eligible for a Merit Ribbon. All BEGINNER AND INTERMEDIATE CAKES must be on a triple thick (approx. 3/8") cake board that is three (3) inches larger than the cake, covered neatly and well taped underneath (8" cake + 3" = 11" cakeboard). To support the weight of a real cake, all ADVANCED CAKES must be on one-half inch thick cake drum or stacked cake boards that are four (4) inches larger than the base cake (10" cake + 4" = 14" cakeboard). The upper tier plate and sizes will vary. Tiered cakes may be exhibited only in the Advanced Division and must be assembled as if they were real.

All exhibits must have a Cake Decorating Exhibit sheet attached to the cake board listing the categories and tips used in your exhibit. Cut-up cakes and stacked or tiered cakes must also have a diagram on the card showing how the cake project was assembled (i.e. cake sizes, dowel rod placement, separator plates, etc.).

A cake decorating exhibit sheet (4-H 710Eb-W for beginner Level; 4-H 710Ei-W for Intermediate Level, 4-H 710Ea-W for Advanced Level) is to be attached to each Cake Decorating exhibit for judging. These exhibit sheets are available from the 4-H website [www.four-h.purdue.edu](http://www.four-h.purdue.edu) or your County Extension office. Complete the exhibit card as it instructs by checking the category completed, circling the skill(s) exhibited and recording the tip(s) used in making your exhibit.

**NOTE:** Royal icing is not required, but is highly recommended on State Fair Exhibits to increase stability while being transported to the fair.

WSDC = *The Wilton School Cake Decorating - A Reference and Idea Book*. The reference book is available at your local county Extension office or at local cake decorating supply stores.

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Level: Beginner (grades 3-5)

Last Modified: 10/01/10

## Exhibit

Decorate and exhibit one (1) round or square 8"x2"; 8"x3"; 9"x2" or 9"x 3" cake dummy (Styrofoam or foam) **OR** single layer cake, that has at least one (1) technique from three (3) different categories as listed in Categories (a) through (g). (Example-a star top and bottom **Border** with a swirled **Drop Flower With a Center** and simple **Leaves.**) No character or shaped pans.

Category a) **Basic Borders** - (a top and a bottom border is required) Dots, Balls, Stars, Rosettes, (not the flower) Shells or Zigzag. (Each border should be of one color only).

Category b) **Message** - PRINTED, may use round or star tips.

Category c) **Drop Flower with Center** -Star drop or Swirl drop, pg 27 of WSDC.

Category d) **Leaves** - Simple and usually attached to flowers.

Category e) **Sugar Molds** - Simple, one color, no more than two different shapes (one color per mold).

Category f) **Star-Filled Pattern** -outlining optional.

Category g) **Side Decorations** -for 2nd year cake decorator and above - Dots or Stars ONLY, one tip only; cannot be combined into shapes, such as flowers, etc.

**A Cake Decorating Exhibit Skills Sheet (4-H 710Eb-W for Beginner Level) is to be attached to each Cake Decorating exhibit for judging. Sheet is available from the 4-H website [www.four-h.purdue.edu](http://www.four-h.purdue.edu) or your county Extension office. Complete the exhibit sheet as it instructs checking the category completed, circling the skill(s) exhibited and record the tip(s) used in making your exhibit.**

Exhibit

Decorate and Exhibit one of the Following: One (1) cake dummy (Styrofoam or foam) OR one (1) real cake from the following size options ONLY:

SINGLE LAYER OPTIONS = 9"x13"x2"; 9"x13"x3"; 10"x2"; 12"x2" or

DOUBLE LAYER OPTIONS = 8"x4"; 9"x4". You may choose to decorate a character pan, **OR** a 3-D cake (made in a two-piece cake pan and exhibited on a cake board not on a cake), **OR** a cut-up cake from either the round, square, heart, rectangles or heart basic shape(s). You will cut cake(s) into three or more pieces and assemble to form a "NEW SHAPE" (Example-a butterfly). The "NEW SHAPE" is to be exhibited only on a suitably-thick cake board not on another cake. The cake board should match or be approximate shape of the finished cake (i.e. heart cakes should be placed on a heart-shaped cake board)

Your exhibit must show at least one (1) technique from four (4) different categories as listed (a) through (i). [Example-a **Figure-piped** clown (a) with a **Written Message** (e) add a reverse shell top and bottom **Border** (c) and with a **Color-striped** (f) clown suit, flower, border, side decoration, or message.] Additional techniques mastered in the Beginners Division may be added.

**Category a) Figure Piping** - Clowns, People, Animals, etc..

**Category b) Flowers (made on a flat surface, not on a flower nail; stem or vine are optional)**- Sweet Peas, Rosebuds, Half Carnation (pg. 56 of WSDC), Half Roses and the Rosette Flower, which requires a center (pg 30 of WSDC).

**Category c) Borders (Use one tip per border)**- Reverse Shells, Grass, Ruffles, Puffs, Zigzag. You may have a different base border than your top border, when using two borders.

**Category d) Side Decorations - only use:** Scrolls, Reverse Shell, "C" Scroll or Fleur-de-lis, Zigzag Garland or Zigzag puff using one tip only.

**Category e) Message** - Written NOT printed, may use round or star tips.

**Category f) Color Striping** - Stripe bag with colored icing, gel or paste food color.

**Category g) Transparent/Piping Gel** - Use for water or accents. See additional resources for directions and ideas.

**Category h) Sugar Molds**- Two or more colors in same mold; more than one mold design may be used.

**Category i) Other Techniques** - May add bows and ribbons in a top design only (i.e. floral spray, animal or person).

A Cake Decorating Exhibit Skills Sheet (4-H 710Ei-W for Intermediate Level), is to be attached to each Cake Decorating exhibit for judging. These exhibit sheets are available from the 4-H website [www.four-h.purdue.edu](http://www.four-h.purdue.edu) or your county Extension office. Complete the exhibit sheet as it instructs checking the category completed, circling the skill(s) exhibited and record the tip(s) used in making your exhibit.

NOTE: Character pan decorating, you must adapt the category requirements to the pan design to meet cake decorating requirements.

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## Exhibit

Decorate and exhibit any cake or cake dummy that is single, tiered, multi-dimensional, sculptured, or a doll mold, using at least one (1) technique from five (5) different categories, three (3) must come from the advanced categories listed (a) through (i); other two may come from previous levels to fulfill advanced level of five techniques. All **base cake boards** that sit on the table must be 1/2" thick to support the weight of the cake, covered well, taped securely and four (4) inches larger than the cake you put on it (10" cake + 4"= 14"cake board). Assemble all cakes/dummies as though they were a real cake and attach a diagram showing how it was assembled. (i.e. dowel rod placement, proper size plates, etc.) and the five or more techniques used. The overall size of the total exhibit is to be no larger than 36" x 36".

A Cake Decorating Exhibit Skills Sheet (4-H 701Ea-W for Advanced Level), is to be attached to each Cake Decorating exhibit for judging along with your assembly diagram. These exhibit sheets are available from the 4-H website [www.four-h.purdue.edu](http://www.four-h.purdue.edu) or your county Extension office. Complete the exhibit sheet as it instructs checking the category completed, circling the skill(s) exhibited and record the tip(s) used in making your exhibit.

**Category a) Nail Flower** - Daffodils, Violets, Lily, Bluebells, Daises, Chrysanthemums, Roses, Wild Flowers, etc.

**Category b) Fancy Borders** - Ruffled Garland and Reverse Shells, Shell and Flute, Puff and Flower, Zigzag Garland and String Work or Other Border Combinations.

**Category c) Design Techniques** - Basket Weave, String Work, Lattice Work, Cornelli and other Laces, Wired Flowers and Leaves, etc.

**Category d) Color Flow** - (also known as run sugar) See page 89 of WSDC for method.

**Category e) Fondant Icings** - Try Chocopan or use RTR (Ready-To-Roll) or make your own to cover the cake as icing or to make decoration items.

**Category f) Gum Paste or Sugar Paste** - Try ready-made or make your own.

**Category g) Sculptured Cakes** - Same or different size layers of cake that are stacked together, then cut and contoured to make one uniform shape such as a turkey or seashell.

**Category h) New and Improved Techniques & Methods** Use a new method, such as sugarveil, marzipan, luster dust, brush embroidery, pastillage, airbrushing, painting on fondant, etc. Bring your book, reference source or a photocopy to show the judge the selected new/ improved technique.

**Category i) Chocolate Molding or Candy Clay** This is a heat sensitive category that may or may not work for your county Fair.

NOTE: Royal icing is not required, but is highly recommended on State Fair Exhibits to increase stability while being transported to the fair. Remember, you must send the Advanced Level Cake Decorating Exhibit Skills Sheet (4-H 710Ea-W) with your cake listing the categories and tips used in your exhibit and a drawing of how you assembled the cake.

## Hints and Helps

Ask your Cake Decorating or 4-H leader's advice before purchasing any of the cake decorating supplies as you do not need to purchase every item listed.

1. Use solid Crisco shortening to lightly grease pans, and then shake a light coat of flour on top. Tap the pan and shake out excess flour. This method will help the cake to come out easier. Or you can line the bottom of the cake pan with waxed paper, or use a commercial spray or use a blend of equal parts Crisco solid, Crisco Oil and flour that you brush on pans with a pastry brush. Store this mixture in refrigerator.
2. To quickly crumb coat a cake; use thinned buttercream icing. Ask your leader for additional methods.
3. Large amounts of paste colors may weaken royal icing so it crumbles.
4. To obtain deep red icing;
  - a. Red color penetrates buttercream icing better than royal because oil base of buttercream absorbs color better.
  - b. If royal icing is used, cut down on the amount of water to 2 ½ oz.
  - c. To obtain a rich red royal icing or buttercream, you need to add Christmas Red for brightness and red-red for darkness.
  - d. Try brushing entire inside of decorating bag with paste color and filling it with medium shade.
  - e. Sifted powdered candy color can be added with paste color.
  - f. New; Wilton has a "no-taste" no stain red called "Wilton Red".
  - g. Start with chocolate icing; add black color and some red.
5. Practice flowers on top of an inverted cookie pan and border on cake pans.
6. Use turntable for ease in frosting cake and achieving a smooth cake.
7. If string work breaks, add a tablespoon of liquid glucose to each 3 ½ to 4 quart batch of frosting or add white corn syrup – 1 teaspoon to each cup of stiff frosting.
8. For exhibit design ideas, refer to resource books. Combine with your own ideas.
9. The cake can be made from scratch or from a 2-layer size cake mix.
10. For cut-up cake pattern, take a brown paper sack; draw your 11" x 15" rectangle, 14" x 14" square or 14" round board size. Measure in ½ " to 1" and mark. Connect these marks with pencil to form the required border allowance. Take another brown paper sack and trace around the cake pans. Draw the cake design within the cake pan patterns, cut out and fit within the board pattern on the first sack. If OK use; if not, cut design pattern down to fit. Use patterns to cut cake pieces or dummy for your cake design.
  - a. **\*\*Most cut-ups begin with 8 or 9 inch layers or 9x13 inch cakes, however, refer to resource books for specific pan size. Cutting up is best accomplished by measuring and marking the cakes with wooden picks before actually cutting.**
  - b. **\*\*It's best to chill or freeze the cake before cutting to prevent crumbling when cutting patterns for cake design.**
11. Coordinate your colors and cake design,
12. When covering a display board with your own idea, make sure the design and color compliments and does not distract from the overall appearance of the cake.

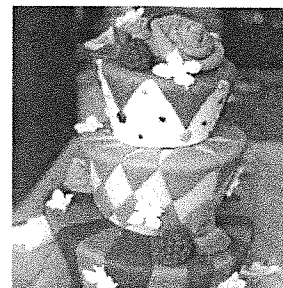


## Ways to Make Your Own Cake Dummies

**Real Cake**– Bake the cake as you normally would with your favorite recipe. When done, invert onto a cookie sheet and bake another two hours at 250 degrees. The cake should be rock hard. Or, you may let it air dry for several days until hard. Decorate as desired.

**Shaped Pan** – Decorate directly on the pan with your choice of icing.

**Sugar Mold** – Measure the volume of the pan by pouring cups of water into the pan to the top edge. This will tell you how many cups of sugar are needed. Mix the sugar and water (2 teaspoons of water for each cup granulated sugar) until it feels like wet sand. Press into the pan and level down. Release from pan immediately onto a cookie sheet or firm board. Let dry for several days. If the mold breaks, you can use a hot glue to repair the mold. After the mold is dry, paint it using thinned royal icing. This seals the sugar mold. Decorate as desired.



**Cardboard** – It takes approximately 23 single-thick cardboards to make a 4” high cake. Tape them together then cut a strip of poster board 4” high by the circumference of your board, place this around the cake boards and tape to secure. Cover with royal icing and decorate as desired.

**Styrofoam** – This old standby can be cut into many different shapes. Decorate as desired. This type of “cake dummy” can be washed, dried and reused. You can also purchase various sizes from cake decorating and hobby shops.

**Expandable Urethane Foam** – This product is available in hardware stores and possible craft stores. It does not contain fiber glass and is used for insulation, to pack breakables, etc. It is lightweight and makes a great “foam” mold for displaying character cakes decorated with royal icing.

- Cut cardboard to fit the outline of the pan.
- Spray pan thoroughly with “Pam”
- In a well ventilated area (outdoors!) squirt foam in pan. Fill pan with foam until approximately 1/3 full.
- Place cardboard cutout on top of foam in pan, press down firmly.
- Weigh down the cardboard (Crisco can works well) to compress the expanding foam and minimize air bubbles in foam mold.
- Let dry for one hour and unmold. Air dry overnight and decorate with royal icing.
- This is a great, lightweight (easy to handle) store display piece with lots of detail that makes it easy to decorate the most intricate designs.

**Paper Mache** – Lightweight display piece and recycles old newspapers at the same time! In addition to regular shaped pans and character pans, this mixture can be packed into candy molds to make pins or for use as party trims.

- Tear newspaper (any type or color will do) into small pieces and soak in water for 3-4 hours. No specific amounts are called for but the paper should be immersed.
- Take some of the paper/water mixture and blend in blender until paper is mushy.
- Drain and pack into all crevices using a terry cloth towel to press the paper thoroughly into the mold and absorb excess water.
- You can make just the shell by backing the paper pulp in bottoms and sides of the pan, or you can fill the mold solid if you wish. (A solid piece will take a lot longer to dry).
- When completely dry, remove from pan.

## **WILTON SPECIAL BUTTERCREAM ICING**

2/3 cup water  
11 ½ cups sifted Confectioner's sugar (4 cups in a pound)  
1 ¼ cups solid vegetable shortening (Crisco is best)  
¾ teaspoon salt  
½ teaspoon clear vanilla flavoring

4 Tablespoons Wilton Meringue Powder  
½ teaspoon almond flavoring  
¼ teaspoon butter flavoring

1. Combine water and Wilton Meringue Powder. Whip at high speed until peaks form.
2. Add 4 cups of sugar, 1 cup at a time, beating after each addition at low speed.
3. Alternately, add shortening and remaining sugar. Add salt and flavorings. Beat at low speed until smooth. Cover bowl of icing with damp cloth to prevent crusting.

NOTE: Icing will be pure white with a fine flavor. It covers the cake well, tints to clear and true colors (theses will match the hues of Royal Icing flowers), and pipes precise borders and flowers for the cake top. Icing is firm for making flat surface and nail flowers. Flowers made with this icing may be air dried and have a pretty translucent quality, are good tasting and do not require refrigeration or freezing. May be frozen before dried, and then air dried before ready to be used. However, apple blossoms, violets and drop flowers may be handled after 4 hours of air drying.

YIELDS: 7-8 cups; ½ recipe= 2 2/3 cups; may also be doubled.

This icing may be stored, well-covered, in the refrigerator for several weeks, then brought to room temperature and re-beaten.

Decorations must be air dried for 24 hours to thoroughly dry.



## **Sugar Mold Recipe**



1 cup granulated sugar 2 teaspoons water  
½ teaspoon Meringue Powder (for strength-optional)

Oven dry – 200 degrees – 10 minutes (longer for larger pieces or air-dry 24 hours)

Knead the ingredients together for one minute. (If missing a larger amount of ingredients, you may use an electric mixer at low speed)

To use color in the mold, set aside a small amount of sugar and blend a small amount of the color of your choice into it using your toothpick. When it is well mixed, blend the colored sugar with the remaining white sugar.

NOTE: to prevent drying, keep sugar covered with a damp cloth until you need it.

## Double Batch Re-Usable Frosting

4 Tablespoons water (add more if needed)  
2 cups Crisco Solid  
2 pounds Confectioner's Sugar – sifted

½ teaspoon salt dissolved in the water  
2 teaspoons vanilla flavoring  
1 teaspoon butter flavor (optional)  
1 teaspoon almond flavoring (optional)

Blend with mixer, Crisco solid, salt dissolved in water, and the flavoring. Add and blend approximately 1 cup of confectioner's sugar at a time. Add more water as needed to achieve proper icing consistency. Keep covered to prevent crusting and store in an airtight container in refrigerator. Bring to room temperature when you are practicing flowers, writing, etc. Practice on wax paper so the frosting can be easily scraped off and returned to the refrigerator. Can be kept in refrigerator for an indefinite period. It would be best to leave it white until you do not wish to use it any longer.

## Wilton Royal Icing – Meringue

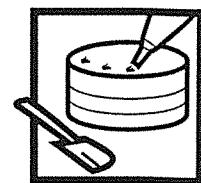
This is a very durable, hard-drying icing, and should not be used for covering the cake. It is perfect for piping long-lasting flowers and for "cementing" sections of trim.

3 level Tablespoons Wilton Meringue Powder  
6 Tablespoons lukewarm water

1 pound Confectioner's sugar – sifted

Combine ingredients mixing slowly, and then beat at high speed for 10-12 minutes if using a hand-held mixer. If using a heavy-duty mixer, beat 7-10 minutes at low-medium speed. Be sure all utensils are completely grease free. Keep covered with damp cloth, icing dries quickly. To restore texture, re-beat. Icing may be stored in air-tight container for up to 4 weeks. Does not need refrigeration-can be stored on the cupboard shelf.

NOTE: for medium or thin consistency, add water a little at a time until the desired consistency is reached.



## Wilton Royal Icing – Egg White

This icing dries even harder than Meringue Royal Icing. It is used for the same purpose as the icing and also for piping lace, fine string work and lattice. Be sure all utensils are free of grease (a touch of bleach to the wash water will cut the grease).

3 egg whites (room temperature)

1 pound Confectioner's sugar

¼ teaspoon cream of tartar

Combine ingredients and beat at high speed for seven to ten minutes.

Dries quickly - keep covered with a damp cloth.

Re-beating will not restore texture and unused icing cannot be kept.