

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.

