

Indiana 4-H Cake Decorating Skills and Techniques

Youth and their mentor/volunteer leader/instructor should use this chart as a guide when deciding appropriate skills to incorporate in a decorated cake for exhibit. While this list is a guide, it is not meant to be an all-inclusive list and youth should demonstrate skills they are most comfortable mastering. For example, some youth in the intermediate level might feel comfortable attempting advanced level skills, but it is unlikely a beginner level exhibitor will be able to successfully master the advanced level skills. Exhibited cakes must demonstrate the minimum five techniques from their given level but may also include higher/lower level techniques that have been mastered. Any higher/lower level techniques will not be counted as part of the minimum five, but nevertheless will be evaluated for quality. Youth are encouraged to utilize a number of resources such as web sites, print material, social media, and television shows when learning cake decorating skills. Skills learned from these types of resources may be demonstrated provided they are age/grade appropriate.

The X indicates suggested level to learn respective skill.

Skill	Beginner	Intermediate	Advanced
Icing			
Achieve proper consistency of icing for frosting the cake	X		
Tablespoon imprint	X		
Teaspoon swirl	X		
Coloring Techniques (only one coloring technique can be counted toward the minimum 5)			
Basic color blending	X		
Deep color effects			X
Painting			X
Borders and Side Decorations			
“C” motion	X		
Balls	X		
Bead	X		
Dots	X		
Leaf	X		
Loop	X		
Pull dots	X		
Pullout star	X		
Rosette	X		
Ruffle border	X		
Ruffle leaf	X		
Shell with star tip	X		
Shell with writing tip (beads)	X		
Star	X		
Star puff	X		
Stripes	X		
Vines	X	X	
Wavy lines	X		
Zigzag	X		
Zigzag puff	X		
Brush embroidery		X	

"e" motion		X	
"S" scroll		X	
Horizontal "C"		X	
Plume		X	
Puff		X	
Reverse shell		X	
Ribbon		X	
Rope		X	
Ruffle		X	
Zigzag puff		X	
Combination Borders and Side Decorations			
Leaf and drop flower	X		
Rosette and star	X		
Shell and flute	X		
"S" scroll and drop flower		X	
Dot and heart		X	
Puff and drop flower		X	
Shell puff and ruffle or zigzag		X	
Basket weave		X	X
Bow trimmed strings			X
Crown			X
Drop strings			X
Fleur-de-lis			X
Flower and vine			X
Lambeth method			X
Ribbon and ball fringe			X
Ribbon swag			X
Shirred ribbon and shell			X
String lace			X
Triple drop strings			X
Zigzag garland and ruffle			X
Leaves			
Holly	X	X	
Plain leaf	X	X	
Ruffled leaf	X	X	
Stand up leaf	X	X	
Violet leaf		X	
Flowers			
Drop flowers, one squeeze star	X		
Drop flowers, swirl	X		
Free hand (star tip)	X		
Petals	X		
Ribbon rose	X		
Rosette	X		
Rosette with star center	X		
Shaggy mum	X		
Star puffs	X		
Stars	X		
Variety (writing tip)	X		

Zinnia	X		
Rosebud	X	X	
Sweet pea	X	X	
Bleeding heart		X	
Half carnation		X	
Half rose		X	
Lilly of the valley		X	
Other flat surface flowers		X	
Apple blossom		X	X
Aster		X	X
Bachelor button		X	X
Brown-eyed susan – daisy variation		X	X
Chrysanthemum		X	X
Daffodil and jonquil		X	X
Daisy	X	X	X
Dogwood		X	X
Forget-me-not		X	X
Full carnation		X	X
Narcissus		X	X
Pansy		X	X
Poinsettia		X	X
Poppy		X	X
Rose		X	X
Sunflower	X	X	X
Violet		X	X
Wild rose		X	X
Other flat flower nail		X	X
Bluebell			X
California poppy			X
Easter lily			X
Morning glory			X
Nasturtium			X
Petunia			X
Other lily nail flowers			X
Lettering (only one lettering technique can be counted toward the minimum 5)			
Dots	X		
Lettering forms – fill in with dots or lines	X	X	
Printing	X	X	X
Script (cursive)		X	X
Special Effects			
Combing	X		
Grass, fur or hair	X	X	
Outline and star fill in	X		
Paper pattern	X		
Star filled pattern	X		
Stencil applications	X	X	
Color striping – either brush or spatula	X	X	
Color flow		X	
Comelli lace		X	
Figure piping		X	

Haystacks		X	
Lattice design		X	
Pine cones		X	
Pine needles and cat whiskers		X	
Piping gel	X	X	
Royal icing lace		X	
Sotas		X	
Sugar mold, solid	X	X	
Trees		X	
Wheat		X	
Airbrushing or painting			X
Austrian lace			X
Candy clay			X
Chocolate molding – flowers			X
Chocolate molding – leaves			X
Fondant, cooked			X
Fondant, rolled, cake covering			X
Fondant, rolled, flowers and decorations			X
Gum paste			X
Loops			X
Marzipan			X
Pulled sugar			X
Sculptured cake			X
Sugar mold, hollow			X
Sugar paste			X
Quilling			X
Wires with assorted decorations attached			X
Other advanced skills			X