



HOW TO
**Decorate
Your First
Cake**

gain confidence in the kitchen
by building baking & cake
decorating skills

BY KATIE ROSARIO



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WHY THIS EBOOK?

While using this eBook, you'll gain confidence in the kitchen by learning the basics of baking and cake decorating. As a bonus, you'll get cake recipes that start with boxed cake mix and from there we'll begin to build the foundations.

Being confident in the kitchen is not the same as knowing everything before starting. Building your confidence starts with a feeling of self-assurance. I'm here to give you that support so you can do it.

With a few basic techniques, you will be able to bake and create any cake you want. As you're learning and growing in your abilities to bake, you'll be ready to go from foolproof semi-homemade cake mixes to full scratch made recipes.

Conquer your fears and just bake! It's important not to be afraid of the oven. I know it can be overwhelming learning something new but don't worry, I'm here to walk you through everything. Your baking journey starts here!



Hi, I'm Katie - After working in restaurants and bakeries that were unfulfilling, I started a home baking business so I could be the boss. This led to years of trial and error before getting clients to hire me for private events.

When I started 12 years ago, I knew nothing about cake decorating. It took years to figure everything out. Now, I'm obsessed and humbled to say I'm very successful at it.

I created this course to save you time and show you exactly what mistakes to avoid. I created a unique flow for teaching the successful way to help home bakers go from beginners to confident decorators. It's not taught anywhere else.

I teach foundational baking and cake decorating techniques that will help my students become more confident so you can make any cake creation.

The kitchen is my happy place and I hope you will find the same joy in yours. I'll be your biggest supporter, your number one fan, and the baking mentor you've been looking for all along.

If you want to learn how to decorate cakes at home, then you're in the right place.
Love and Cake,
Katie



GET THE MOST FROM THIS EBOOK

For starters, it's important to follow the sequence of the eBook. I answer many questions before you even get to the tutorials, so take notes along the way or bookmark pages, or however you learn best. You will see many techniques used over and over again, that's on purpose to help you practice your skills.

A big tip is to make sure to read through the recipes before starting. This way, you understand the whole process before beginning, which helps eliminate any nerves before starting.

We will go over the following topics in great detail.

- Common Baking & Decorating Terms
- Essential Decorating Tools You'll Need
- Cake Basics & Buttercream Tips
- Step-by-Step Tutorials:
 - How to Make Foolproof Vanilla Cake
 - Made from Scratch Vanilla Buttercream
 - Build & Crumb Coat Cakes
 - How to Get Smooth Sides
 - How to Prepare a Piping Bag
 - Decorating Techniques
- Basic Kitchen Conversions Chart & Equivalents
- Bonus: 6 Foolproof Cake Recipes
 - Vanilla Cake with Vanilla Buttercream
 - Dark Chocolate Cake with Chocolate Buttercream
 - Red Velvet Cake with Cream Cheese Buttercream
 - Funfetti Birthday Cake
 - Classic Yellow Cake with Chocolate Buttercream
 - Pink Lemonade Cake

Baking fails will happen along the way, and that's okay, it's a part of your journey. Enjoy your first wins and making ANY cake creation is a win. It's more important to focus on building a great foundation that will allow you to let go of nerves and stress less about baking overall. The only failure you can have is giving up.

You'll still be measuring out ingredients, so you'll learn how to measure, but you don't have to worry about a leavening agent like baking powder since that's in the cake mix already.

Expect to work hard. Baking might not come naturally, but no great skill does, it takes practice and patience.

This ebook will be your reference guide, so take your time and continue to go through this book slowly to soak up all the information. My promise to you is if I could do this, then you can do this. By the time you work your way through this cake book, you will become a more confident baker ready to take on any baking or cake decorating challenge.



COMMON BAKING & DECORATING TERMS

Here are common baking and cake decorating terms that you should know before starting. These terms will make sure you can be the best possible baker and cake decorator. This lesson will also help you understand baking recipes and tutorials. Some of these terms are common sense like references or phrases, while others can be a head-scratcher, and that's why I created this list to help you avoid any frustration.

MIX BY HAND: meaning to mix in using a rubber spatula or wooden spoon and using your own power versus using an appliance like a mixer.

ROOM TEMPERATURE: refers to the ideal room temperature, which is probably cooler than you think it is—around 68°F-70°F. If the ingredients are any warmer than that, it'll be harder to work with and most likely too warm.

ZEST: the colored rind on fruit such as citrus. You'll need to use a Microplane or a zester to scrape off the zest but not going too deep into the bitter white pith.

TO FOLD: means to gently stir in an ingredient into something else (typically the batter). You'll see it like this, Next, fold in the sprinkles into the batter. (gently stir in to combine).

COOLING RACK: a wire rack used to cool baking goods when hot out of the oven.

INVERTING YOUR CAKE: means turn the cake pan over and allow the cake to slide out of the pan and let cool on a cooling rack.

ONE AT A TIME: typically refers to eggs being added to the batter. You can add another one, one at a time means that as soon as the egg breaks into the batter.

CAKE BORDER: is just what it sounds, a border that goes around the cake either on the top of the cake or the bottom. It can be piped with frosting.

CAKE LAYERS: are the individual baked cakes. When you fill a cake pan, that's one layer. (Cake tiers are different, and we'll get to that next.) When putting a cake together, you'll generally have two-three layers of cake filling in between them.

CAKE BOARDS: (or Cake Base) are the actual cake circles (or squares if it's a square cake) under each tier. They are the same size as the cake tier. You need a cake board under every cake tier, especially if you'll be stacking cakes. Cake boards can be just cardboard cake rounds or made out of foam core boards.

CHILLED: (or chilling) place the cake into the refrigerator or freezer to get cold from the inside out.

CAKE TIERS: Cake tiers are made up of cake layers. I usually use about three cake layers to make a tier. Wedding cakes are generally tiered cakes.

CRUMB COAT: is just a super thin layer of buttercream on your cake, once it's filled, to seal in the crumbs. You'll do a crumb coat first, let it settle a bit, then add the final coat of buttercream. You'll see this process in the Step by Step Tutorials lesson.

BUILD A CAKE: refers to the filling and stacking of cake layers, adding filling and frosting.

LEVELING A CAKE: refers to cutting off the tops of the cake layers to make it flat and even. It's important when building a cake as it'll prevent the cake from falling over or being slanted.

FILLING A CAKE: is just what it sounds like. You're just adding filling between the cake layers. You'll add one cake layer to your cake base and spread on filling, then add another cake layer and repeat it. A filling is a specialty filling like a berry jam, citrus curd, pastry cream, or caramel.

ICING DAM: is a line of icing that is piped just around the inside of each cake layer, then either buttercream, fruit filling, or another type of filling is added inside that dam. The dam is piped so that the filling between the layers doesn't squish out and forms a barrier around the cake layer's edge. You'll see these techniques being used in the Step by Step Tutorial.

ICING SPATULAS: refers to the offset, straight-edge, or flat spatula. You'll see these tools in the next lesson, Essential Tools.

PIPING: is just squeezing icing out of a piping bag, generally onto a cake or a flower nail. You can pipe words like "Happy Birthday", flowers, and other designs.

AMERICAN BUTTERCREAM: is a frosting made up of some sort of combination including but not limited to - butter, salt, vanilla extract, powdered sugar, and heavy cream. It's typically sweet and super easy to make, especially for beginners.

SWISS MERINGUE BUTTERCREAM (or SMBC): is a frosting made from egg whites, granulated sugar, and butter. The egg whites and sugar cooked in a double boiler then whipped into a meringue before adding the butter. It makes for a delicious light and fluffy frosting.

GANACHE: is made up of chocolate and heavy cream. It's super easy to make, plus there are variations like pouring (or drippy) ganache, whipped ganache, and firm ganache.



ESSENTIAL DECORATING TOOLS

To be a successful baker, it starts with the proper tools. These essential baking tools are ones you will use every time you want to bake and decorate cakes. Think of these tools as an investment into your baking career or hobby. Many of these tools you have to buy once, and you'll have them forever. It's definitely worth the investment to get high-quality tools from the beginning. You can purchase these baking tools at a cake specialty store, or you can find them on Amazon.

TURNTABLE - a cake turntable makes cake decorating a breeze. The spinning table allows you to smooth the sides of the cake quickly. It's undoubtedly easier to frost and makes sure all sides are even while stacking and frosting your cakes.

CAKE SCRAPER - this cake scraper (or a bench scraper) is a straight wide metal tool best used for smoothing the edges of the sides of the cake. It also helps with getting those sharp edges on the tops of cakes. The scraper comes in many sizes, but for starters, you'll see me using the 6-inch, it certainly gets the job done.

OFFSET SPATULA - an offset spatula is a tool used every time I make a cake. It will help smooth cake batter in pans for even baking, spread frosting between cake layers while stacking cakes, and add buttercream around the cake for the crumb coat. Offset spatulas come in many sizes, and I recommend using 4.5-inch or 10.5-inch spatulas. Pick one that feels most comfortable for you.

CAKE BOARDS - cake boards are best for decorating on and moving from the refrigerator or freezer back to the turntable. They are light cardboard but strong enough to support heavy cakes. Cake boards come in many sizes, start with a board 2 inches wider than the cake itself, this gives more room for adding frosting and decorating cakes.

PIPING BAGS & PIPING TIPS - piping bags (or pastry bags) are used to fill and decorate cakes. You can get 12-inch or 16-inch disposable or silicone reusable bags that can be cleaned easily with very hot water. The piping tips go inside the piping bags to create different designs. In the tutorials, I use large Ateco® #844 star tip and Ateco® #806 round tip. If using Wilton® large piping tips, you'll use a 2D/1M star tip or 2A round tip.

SQUEEZE BOTTLES - they come in handy when making the chocolate drips on the sides of cakes or used for drizzling fillings like caramel or ganache between cake layers.

BAKING SHEET PAN - The baking sheet pan (or sometimes called a cookie sheet pan) comes in handy when adding sprinkles, nuts, or cookie crumbs to the sides of the cake without making a mess.



CAKE BASICS & BUTTERCREAM TIPS

Over the last twelve years of baking and cake decorating, I have found that these simple tips and tricks make for the best cakes and buttercreams. The process starts with simple ingredients, easy techniques, and lots of practice to make fluffy cakes and velvety smooth buttercreams.

ALWAYS SIFT DRY INGREDIENTS - for cakes, sift together the cake mix, flour and/or cocoa powder together. Sifting helps to eliminate any clumps of flour that tend to stick together. It creates a fluffy and creamy cake batter that will bake more evenly. For buttercreams, sift the powdered sugar and/or cocoa powder. Powdered sugar tends to clump together easily in humid climates or when they are stored for a while. Sifting makes velvety buttercreams. Use a flour sifter or use a whisk, either one will do the job.

MUST USE FULL-FAT INGREDIENTS - the full-fat ingredients like butter, whole milk, and cream cheese, make the cake taste delicious but also give the cakes and buttercreams the correct texture we want.

ROOM TEMPERATURE IS IMPORTANT - to mix cake batters and buttercreams properly, use room temperature ingredients like butter, eggs, milk, and cream cheese. The ideal room temperature is when the ingredients are about 30 to 40 minutes out of the fridge, semi-cold is ideal (not melted or warm). If you're short on time, heat the cold butter in the microwave for 15 seconds. Then put the butter into the mixer and whip for an additional 5 minutes. To get eggs to room temperature quickly, place the eggs into a medium bowl filled with hot water for 5 minutes.

PREPARE CAKE PANS - to prevent the cakes from sticking to the cake pans, use a combination of cooking spray and parchment paper. Cut a circle of parchment paper that is the same diameter of the bottom of the cake pan. After spraying the pans, place the circle of parchment paper on the bottom of the cake pans.

DON'T OVER MIX OR OVER BAKE - over mixing cake batter will cause the gluten to produce a more dense and chewy cake texture instead of light and fluffy. If you over bake the cake, it will still taste great but will be dry and crumbly. There are two ways to check if your cake is done baking. One is to bake according to directions (for example, the instructions say to bake for 30-35 minutes). Set the timer for 30 minutes and check with a toothpick, if the cakes are still wet, then add 5 minutes to bring it to 35 minutes for total baking time. At that point, check again and remove cakes from the oven. The benefit of these cake recipes is that you can overbake and overmix, but you will still end up with a delicious cake.

CUT THE DOME OFF FOR EASY STACKING - remove the cakes from the freezer and thaw for 5-10 minutes. Then carefully use a serrated knife or a cake leveler to cut the dome off on top of the cakes and make the cakes flat. Now you can use the extra cake crumbs for making cake pops in the future.

KEEP CAKES COLD FOR BEST RESULTS - before stacking and filling the cake, start with cold cake layers, preferably from the freezer. To make decorating a breeze, crumb coat the cake then place the cake back into the freezer to chill and set. Crumb coating a cake is frosting a thin layer of buttercream to seal in the cake crumbs and preventing the crumbs from getting into the final buttercream layer. You'll learn more about crumb coating in the Step by Step Tutorials section.

MAKE IT COLORFUL - when coloring cake batter or buttercream, start with a small dot of Gel Food Color. Gel Food Coloring is a highly concentrated food color. Gradually add a small dot of gel color to a spatula knowing it's easier to add color then it is to take it away. Stir on medium in a mixer for 10 seconds or mix by hand until well combined.

DON'T FORGET TO ADD SALT - in any cake batter and buttercreams add salt to balance any sweetness and make each bite more balanced. With these cake and buttercream recipes, you will be using unsalted butter, which is easy to control the saltiness. You can always add salt, but you can't take it away.

WHIP IT GOOD - whip the semi-cold room temp butter on medium-high until light in color and fluffy in texture for about 5 minutes. This process ensures the butter has doubled in size and will absorb the powdered sugar nicely to make the velvety smooth buttercream.

REMOVE AIR BUBBLES - stir the buttercream on low for 2-4 minutes before frosting the cake to remove any air bubbles which makes it smoother before frosting. Once the buttercream is on the cake, then use your cake scraper with slight pressure to press out any air pockets.

TIPS FOR CREAM CHEESE - use the block of full-fat cream cheese for best results. The tub of cream cheese tends to be too soft since it's intended for spreading, so it doesn't hold the same way. Also, make sure the cream cheese based buttercreams have had enough time to chill before frosting a cake. Keep the cream cheese buttercream in the fridge until ready to frost. Then stir the buttercream on low for 2-5 minutes to remove the air bubbles and soften slightly before using.

CONSISTENCY IS KEY - whether you are frosting a cake/cupcakes or piping decoration, the consistency of your buttercream is key to getting the right results. Too soft and your decorations will droop and sag off the cake, add more powdered sugar to adjust the softness. Too stiff and your buttercream will be challenging to spread, add milk or heavy cream to loosen the buttercream.

STORING BUTTERCREAM - when storing buttercream, place the buttercream into an airtight container then place it in the refrigerator overnight. When ready to use, transfer the buttercream container to the counter to warm up to room temperature for about 30 minutes. Then re-whip for 3-5 minutes to remove any air bubbles before using.



STEP BY STEP TUTORIALS

Here is the Step by Step Tutorials that will set you up for success. First you will learn How to Make Foolproof Vanilla Cake and Vanilla Buttercream which is the base for the 6 bonus recipes.

Next we get into decorating, you'll learn How to Build & Crumb Coat, How to Get Smooth Buttercream on the Sides of your Cake, How to Prepare a Piping Bag, and Decorating Techniques to make impressive cakes. Refer back to these tutorials whenever you have questions.



HOW TO MAKE FOOLPROOF VANILLA CAKE



1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray three 6-inch or two 8-inch round cake pans with non-stick cooking spray. Line the bottom of each pan with parchment paper and spray again. Set aside.



2. In a medium-size bowl, whisk or sift together the cake mix, all-purpose flour, and salt. Set aside.



3. In the stand mixer bowl fitted with a paddle attachment, beat the butter, oil, and sugar on medium-high for 5 minutes until it's light and fluffy in color.



4. Add eggs, one at a time to the stand mixer bowl and beat on medium until well incorporated.



5. Turn the mixer on low and add half of the flour mixture to the butter mixture until fully incorporated.



6. Add the vanilla extract and whole milk, beat on low until incorporated. Scrape down the sides of the bowl.



7. Finish by adding the remaining flour mixture and mix on medium for another 30 seconds. Evenly distribute the cake batter using an ice cream scooper among the cake pans.



8. Place the cake pans into the preheated oven. Bake for about 30-35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center of each cake comes out clean or with just a few moist crumbs.



9. Remove cakes from the oven and let cool in pans for 10 minutes before inverting onto cooling racks to cool completely. Wrap cakes in plastic wrap and place into the freezer to chill for 30 minutes.

HOW TO MAKE VANILLA BUTTERCREAM



1. In the stand mixer bowl fitted with the paddle attachment, beat the room temperature butter on medium-high until light and fluffy, about 5-7 minutes.



2. Turn the mixer to low, gradually add the sifted powdered sugar, followed by the heavy cream.



3. Then add the vanilla extract and salt.



4. Mix until incorporated completely. Scrape down sides of the bowl.



5. Turn the mixer to medium-high and beat the buttercream for about 5 minutes until light and fluffy. Scrape down sides of the bowl.



6. Turn the mixer on low and mix for 2 minutes to push out any air bubbles.



BUILD & CRUMB COAT LAYERED CAKES



1. Use a serrated knife or a cake leveler to cut the dome off the tops of the chilled cake layers and make the cakes flat and even. Place the cake layer onto the turntable and use your hand to turn the cake slowly.



2. Gently saw back and forth while turning the cake around. Be patient and go slow! (If you are using a serrated knife, keep the knife blade horizontal and watch your fingers). Repeat for all cake layers.



3. On a turntable, place a small dollop of buttercream onto the center of a cake board. Place one cake layer, cut side facing up.



4. Filling with Buttercream: Then place a ½ cup of buttercream from a piping bag on top of the cake layer.



5. Use an offset spatula to spread and smooth buttercream.



6. Then place another cake layer on top of the frosting layer cut side down over the top. Repeat process for another layer. Then press down on top to make sure all the layers are even.



7. For Specialty Filling (i.e., jams, caramels or curds): Place a thin layer of buttercream on top of the cake then pipe a ring of buttercream.



8. Add 1/4 cup of filling inside the circle of buttercream. Use an offset spatula to spread and smooth filling.



9. Place another cake layer cut side down over the top. Repeat process for another layer. Press down on top to make sure all the layers are even.



10. While spinning the turntable, squeeze a thin layer from the buttercream-filled piping bag, starting from the top of the cake and working your way down the cake.



11. Use an offset spatula to spread the buttercream into a thin layer all over the cake, trapping the cake crumbs and preventing them from getting into the final layer of buttercream.



12. Then use a cake scraper to make the buttercream layer smooth and even. Place the cake into the freezer to chill and set for 20-30 minutes.



HOW TO GET SMOOTH SIDES



13. After crumb coat is cold and set, add a thicker layer of buttercream all over the cake starting with the top and working your way down the side of the cake.



14. Use an offset spatula to add more buttercream until the buttercream layer is thick and smooth. Add enough buttercream to go over the top edge of the cake to make it easier to create nice clean edges later.



15. Next, use a cake scraper starting on the sides of the cake, use slight pressure while spinning the cake to smooth the sides and removing any air bubbles without removing too much buttercream.



16. Continue to press buttercream to release any remaining air bubbles and use the cake scraper and offset spatula to smooth the sides. Repeat this process until sides are smooth.



17. Use an offset spatula or cake scraper to create sharp edges on top of the cake, starting from the outside and pulling the spatula inwards.



18. Continue to spin and smooth the top of the cake with the spatula and cake scraper.



19. Please Note: At this point, add any sprinkles, or toppings on the sides of the cake. Must add while the buttercream has set or developed a crust. See more in **COVERING THE SIDES** in **DECORATING TECHNIQUES** in Step by Step Tutorials.



20. Place back into the freezer for an additional 20 minutes to set.



21. Remove from freezer and continue to decorate with chocolate or caramel drip down the sides of the cake. Use a prepared piping bag to pipe buttercream decorations on top or as a decorative border to complete the cake. See more in **DECORATING TECHNIQUES** in Step by Step Tutorials.

HOW TO PREPARE A PIPING BAG

Piping bags (or sometimes referred to as pastry bags) will make decorating a breeze. Use it to distribute buttercream between cake layers evenly, to pipe a circle and fill with jam, curd or ganache, or pipe buttercream all over the cake.

Piping bags come in many sizes that are either disposable or reusable bags such as silicone. This tutorial is for using large piping tips like Ateco® #844 star tip and #806 round tip, (if using Wilton® large piping tips you'll need 2D/1M star tip or 2A round tip).



1. Select a 12-inch or 16-inch piping bag and select a star or round piping tip. Fold down the sides of the piping bag then drop the piping tip inside the bag and push down as far as it can go.



2. Draw a small horizontal line on the outside of the piping bag right above the opening of the piping tip inside the bag. If you mark/cut it too high, then the piping tip will slide out of the bag when decorating.



3. Push up the piping tip from the bottom of the bag. Use scissors to trim off the top of the piping bag along the line you had previously marked.



4. Push the piping tip back down into the bag so that the opening of the tip protrudes through the hole in the bag.



5. Fill the prepared piping bag 2/3 of the way up with buttercream.



6. Set aside until ready to use. Note: if not using a piping tip then complete the same steps without a piping tip. Start by cutting a small hole and cut more off as needed.

DECORATING TECHNIQUES

ROPE BORDER with #844 Star Tip



1. Start with a prepared piping bag and prepared cake, lightly place the piping tip to the cake a 1/4 inch from the edge of the cake.



2. Squeeze the piping bag, moving your wrist into a circle to create a continuous swirl.



3. The goal is to pipe a circle on top of the previous circle until you have covered the top of the cake. (For example, you'll use this technique for the Vanilla Bean Cake).

STAR SWIRLS with #844 Star Tip



1. Start with a prepared piping bag and prepared cake, hold the bag straight up, with the tip about half an inch above the surface of your cake. Without releasing pressure, move your wrist in a tight circular motion.



2. After completing the first rotation, move the tip slightly inward and repeat the circular motion. Continue spiraling until you reach the desired height.



3. End the spiral at the center of buttercream swirl. Stop squeezing before pulling the piping tip away. (For example, you'll use this technique for the Dark Chocolate Cake).

RUSTIC TEXTURE LINES



1. Start with a chilled crumb coat cake, then add a thicker layer of buttercream and smooth the sides out using a cake scraper.



2. While turning the cake, press and move your offset spatula from the bottom to the top holding the offset spatula perpendicular to the cake.



3. Continue turning and make lines on top for a rustic look. (For example, you'll use this technique for the Red Velvet Cake).

SHELL BORDER with #844 Star Tip



1. Start with a prepared piping bag and prepared cake, hold the piping tip lightly touching the bottom edge of the cake at a 45° angle. Squeeze hard, letting icing fan out generously as it forces the tip up and away from you.



2. Then pull the bag toward you until tip reaches the surface. Quickly release the pressure as you lower the piping tip to the surface to form a point.



3. Start the next shell on top of the previous shell tail. Repeat the process to form a chain. (For example, you'll use this technique for the Yellow Cake with Chocolate Buttercream).

COVERING THE SIDES with Sprinkles, Nuts, etc.



1. Place a baking sheet pan onto the center of the turntable with a freshly frosted cake in the center of the pan.



2. Then starting from the bottom add the sprinkles, nuts or other toppings to the side of the cake. The sheet pan will catch whatever doesn't stick to the cake.



3. Continue to spin the cake as you are adding more toppings. (For example, you'll use this technique for the Funfetti Birthday Cake).

DRIP LINES



1. Start with a prepared cake and prepared squeeze bottle filled with chocolate or caramel.



2. Squeeze the drip over the sides of the cake, allowing it to drizzle down sides.



3. Pour the drip over the top of the cake to fill in the top of the cake. Use an offset spatula to smooth it out. (For example, you'll use this technique for the Funfetti Birthday Cake).

CONGRATULATIONS

Give yourself a round of applause for making it this far. You have completed the main part of this eBook. Now you have the proper tools, tips, and tricks to make amazing cakes at home.

As there is a lot of information in this eBook, it's easy to get overwhelmed and feel lost, but it's important to remember that you can do this!

As you decorate your first cake, you will feel a rush of emotions. But no matter what, you will create delicious cakes that your friends and family will love while you improve and gain confidence in your decorating skills.

Keep this eBook as your guide to refer back to as you bake your way through the 5 bonus Foolproof Cake Recipes. I've also included a Basic Kitchen Conversion chart to help you navigate through any kind of recipe.

With these necessary steps, you will be one step closer to being a confident baker and cake decorator.

Here's to the Cake You Will Make!
Love and Cake,
Katie



BASIC KITCHEN CONVERSIONS

CHART & EQUIVALENTS

Dry Measurements Conversion Chart

3 teaspoons = 1 Tablespoon = 1/16 Cup
6 teaspoons = 2 Tablespoons = 1/8 Cup
12 teaspoons = 4 Tablespoons = 1/4 Cup
24 teaspoons = 8 Tablespoons = 1/2 Cup
36 teaspoons = 12 Tablespoons = 3/4 Cup
48 teaspoons = 16 Tablespoons = 1 Cup
1 teaspoon + 5 Tablespoons = 1/3 Cup
2 teaspoons + 10 Tablespoons = 2/3 Cup

6 tablespoons = 3/8 Cup

Liquid Measurements Conversion Chart

8 Fluid Ounces = 1 Cup = 1/2 Pint = 1/4 Quart
16 Fluid Ounces = 2 Cups = 1 Pint = 1/2 Quart
32 Fluid Ounces = 4 Cups = 2 Pints = 1 Quart =
1/4 Gallon

Weight

128 Fluid Ounces = 16 Cups = 8 Pints = 4 Quarts
= 1 Gallon

WHAT DOES 1 CUP EQUAL?

1 Cup = 8 Fluid Ounces
1 Cup = 16 Tablespoons
1 Cup = 48 Teaspoons
1 Cup = 1/2 Pint
1 Cup = 1/4 Quart
1 Cup = 1/16 Gallon
1 Cup = 240 ML

WEIGHT OF INGREDIENTS

1 Cup All-Purpose Flour = 4.5 oz
1 Cup Rolled Oats = 3 oz
1 Large Egg = 1.7 oz
1 Cup Butter = 8 oz
1 Cup Milk = 8 oz
1 Cup Heavy Cream = 8.4 oz
1 Cup = Granulated Sugar = 7.1 oz
1 Cup Packed Brown Sugar = 7.75 oz
1 Cup Vegetable Oil = 7.7 oz
1 Cup Powdered Sugar (Unsifted) = 4.4 oz

Butter

1 Cup Butter = 2 Sticks = 8 Ounces - 230 Grams
= 8 Tablespoons

METRIC TO US COOKING CONVERSIONS

Oven Temperatures

120 °C = 250 °F
160 °C = 320 °F
180 °C = 350 °F
205 °C = 400 °F
220 °C = 425 °F

Baking In Grams

1 Cup Flour = 140 Grams
1 Cup Granulated Sugar = 150 Grams
1 Cup Powdered Sugar (unsifted) = 160 Grams
1 Cup Heavy Cream = 235 Grams

Volume

1 Milliliter (ML) = 1/5 teaspoon
5 ML = 1 teaspoon
15 ML = 1 Tablespoon
240 ML = 1 Cup or 8 Fluid Ounces

1 Liter = 34 Fluid Ounces
1 Gram = 0.035 Ounces
100 Grams = 3.5 Ounces
500 Grams = 1.1 Pounds
1 Kilogram = 35 Ounces

US to Metric Cooking Conversions

1/5 teaspoon = 1 ML
1 teaspoon = 5 ML
1 tablespoon = 15 ML
1 Fl. Ounces = 30 ML
1 Cup = 237 ML
1 Pint = 2 Cups = 473 ML
1 Quart = 4 Cups = 0.95 Liter
1 Gallon = 16 Cups = 3.8 Liters
1 oz = 28 Grams
1 Pound = 454 Grams

ABBREVIATIONS TO KNOW

tsp = teaspoon (t), TBSP = Tablespoon (T)
C = Cups, lbs = Pounds
°F = Degrees in Fahrenheit
°C = Degrees in Celsius
ML = Milliliters, L = Liters
G = Grams, Kg = Kilograms
OZ = Ounces, FL Ounces or Fl Oz = Fluid
Ounces

BONUS: 5 FOOLPROOF CAKE RECIPES

Now you might be wondering why box cake mix? This choice was a conscious decision to give beginner bakers the tools and know-how of cake decorating. Below are a few examples of why I choose to go in this direction.

Boxed cake mixes are super cost effective. Let's face it, they are cheap and can usually be found on sale. It's beneficial when you are just starting and you don't want to spend too much money on ingredients.

Baking takes a lot of time and practice. When your starting, boxed cake mixes give you the freedom to make mistakes without costing an arm and a leg. Plus, these cakes are quick to make.

These bonus doctored box cake mix cakes will taste great every time and bake perfectly. I have created these 6 bonus Foolproof Cake Recipes to withstand common mistakes like overmixing, undermixing, over baking, and more.

From this foundation in this eBook, you will be ready to tackle multiple tiers and even covering cakes with fondant. The buttercream is quick to fix and often doesn't have many ingredients. The scratch made buttercreams are easy to adjust or fix if anything goes wrong instead of starting over by baking another cake.

There are over 5 recipes in this book, made up of cakes, buttercreams, and fillings. The cake flavors are the most popular flavors you would find anywhere. Using these cakes are a sure fire way for you to be successful.





VANILLA CAKE WITH VANILLA BUTTERCREAM

Vanilla Cake Layers with Creamy Vanilla Bean Buttercream

PREP TIME 30 MIN | COOK TIME 35 MIN | TOTAL TIME 65 MIN | YIELDS: 1 (3 LAYER) 6-INCH OR (2 LAYER) 8-INCH CAKE

INGREDIENTS

Vanilla Cake

- ½ cup (or 1 stick) unsalted butter, room temperature
- ⅓ cup vegetable oil
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 4 whole eggs
- 1 box of chocolate cake mix, sifted
- ¾ cup all-purpose flour, sifted
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons vanilla bean paste (or extract)
- 1 cup whole milk

Vanilla Buttercream

- 2 cups (or 4 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 7 cups powdered sugar, sifted
- 2 Tablespoons heavy cream
- 1 Tablespoon vanilla bean paste (or extract)
- 1 teaspoon salt

INSTRUCTIONS

Vanilla Cake

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray three 6-inch round cake pans with non-stick spray, line the bottom of each pan with parchment paper and spray again. Set aside.
2. In a medium-size bowl, whisk and stir together the cake mix, all-purpose flour, and salt. Set aside.
3. In the stand mixer bowl fitted with a paddle attachment, beat the butter, oil, and sugar on medium-high for 5 minutes.
4. Add eggs, one at a time to the stand mixer bowl and beat on medium until well incorporated.
5. Turn the mixer on low and add half of the flour mixture to the butter mixture until fully incorporated.
6. Add the vanilla and milk, beat on low until incorporated. Scrape down the sides of the bowl. Finish by adding the remaining flour mixture and mix on medium for another 30 seconds.
7. Evenly distribute the cake batter among the three cake pans and bake for about 30-35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center of each cake comes out clean or with just a few moist crumbs.
8. Remove cakes from the oven and let cool in pans for 10 minutes before inverting onto cooling racks to cool completely. Wrap cakes in plastic wrap and place into the freezer to chill for 30 minutes.

Vanilla Buttercream

1. In the stand mixer bowl fitted with the paddle attachment, beat the butter on high until light and fluffy, about 5 minutes.
2. Turn the mixer to low, gradually add the powdered sugar, followed by the cream. Then add vanilla extract and salt. Mix until incorporated completely. Scrape down sides of the bowl.
3. Turn the mixer to medium-high and beat the buttercream for about 5 minutes until light and fluffy. Scrape down sides of the bowl. Turn the mixer on low and mix for 2 minutes to push out any air bubbles.

Assemble

1. Layer one vanilla bean cake, cut side up onto the cake board. Add a 2/3 cup of vanilla bean buttercream over the cake. Place another cake layer cut side down over top. Repeat process for another layer. Crumb coat and freeze for 20 minutes.
2. Then add a thicker layer of buttercream and smooth the sides out using a cake scraper. Finally, with a piping bag fitted with #844 star tip, pipe a rope border.





DARK CHOCOLATE CAKE WITH CHOCOLATE BUTTERCREAM

Chocolate Cake Layers with Creamy Chocolate Buttercream

PREP TIME 30 MIN | COOK TIME 35 MIN | TOTAL TIME 65 MIN | YIELDS: 1 (3 LAYER) 6-INCH OR (2 LAYER) 8-INCH CAKE

INGREDIENTS

Dark Chocolate Cake

- ½ cup (or 1 stick) unsalted butter, room temperature
- ⅓ cup vegetable oil
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 4 whole eggs
- 1 box of chocolate cake mix, sifted
- ⅓ cup all-purpose flour, sifted
- ⅓ cup dark cocoa powder, sifted
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 cup whole milk

Chocolate Buttercream

- 2 cups (or 4 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 7 cups powdered sugar, sifted
- ½ cup dark cocoa powder, sifted
- 4 Tablespoons heavy cream
- 1 Tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon salt
- chocolate curls, for garnish

INSTRUCTIONS

Dark Chocolate Cake

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray three 6-inch round cake pans with non-stick spray, line the bottom of each pan with parchment paper and spray again. Set aside.
2. In a medium-size bowl, whisk together the cake mix, all-purpose flour, cocoa powder, and salt. Set aside.
3. In a stand mixer bowl fitted with a paddle attachment, beat the butter, oil, and sugar on medium-high for 5 minutes.
4. Add eggs, one at a time to the stand mixer bowl and beat on medium until well incorporated.
5. Turn the mixer on low and add half of the flour mixture to the butter mixture until fully incorporated.
6. Add the vanilla and milk, beat on low until incorporated. Scrape down the sides of the bowl. Finish by adding the remaining flour mixture and mix on medium for another 30 seconds.
7. Evenly distribute the cake batter among the three cake pans and bake for about 30-35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center of each cake comes out clean or with just a few moist crumbs.
8. Remove cakes from the oven and let cool in pans for 10 minutes before inverting onto cooling racks to cool completely. Wrap cakes in plastic wrap and place into the freezer to chill for 30 minutes.

Chocolate Buttercream

1. In a stand mixer bowl fitted with a paddle attachment, beat the butter until light and fluffy, for 5 minutes.
2. Turn the mixer to low, gradually add the powdered sugar and cocoa powder, followed by the cream. Then add the vanilla extract and salt. Mix until incorporated completely. Scrape down sides of the bowl.
3. Turn the mixer to medium-high and beat the buttercream for about 5 minutes until light and fluffy.
4. Turn the mixer on low and mix for 2 minutes to push out any air bubbles.

Assemble

1. Layer one chocolate cake, cut side up onto the cake board. Add a 2/3 cup of chocolate buttercream over the cake. Place another cake layer cut side down over top. Repeat process for another layer. Crumb coat and freeze for 20 minutes.
2. Then add a thicker layer of buttercream and smooth the sides out using a cake scraper. Add chocolate curls to the bottom of the cake. Finally, with a piping bag fitted with #844 star tip, pipe swirls and sprinkle with chocolate curls.





RED VELVET CAKE WITH CREAM CHEESE BUTTERCREAM

Spiced Red Velvet Cake Layers with Cream Cheese Buttercream

PREP TIME 30 MIN | COOK TIME 35 MIN | TOTAL TIME 65 MIN | YIELDS: 1 (3 LAYER) 6-INCH OR (2 LAYER) 8-INCH CAKE

INGREDIENTS

Red Velvet Cake

- ½ cup (or 1 stick) unsalted butter, room temperature
- ⅓ cup vegetable oil
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 4 whole eggs
- 1 box of red velvet cake mix, sifted
- ¾ cups all-purpose flour, sifted
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 Tablespoons red food color
- 1 cup whole milk

Cream Cheese Buttercream

- 2 cups (or 4 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 2 cups (or 16 ounces) cream cheese, room temperature
- 8 cups powdered sugar, sifted
- 1 Tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon salt

INSTRUCTIONS

Red Velvet Cake

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray three 6-inch round cake pans with non-stick spray, line the bottom of each pan with parchment paper and spray again. Set aside.
2. In a medium-size bowl, whisk together the cake mix, all-purpose flour, cinnamon, and salt. Set aside.
3. In the stand mixer bowl fitted with a paddle attachment, beat the butter, oil, and sugar on medium-high for 5 minutes. Add eggs, one at a time to the stand mixer bowl and beat on medium until well incorporated.
4. Turn the mixer on low and add half of the flour mixture to the butter mixture until fully incorporated.
5. Add the vanilla extract, red food color, and milk beat on low until incorporated. Scrape down the sides of the bowl. Finish by adding the remaining flour mixture and mix on medium for another 30 seconds.
6. Evenly distribute the cake batter among the three cake pans and bake for about 30-35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center of each cake comes out clean or with just a few moist crumbs.
7. Remove cakes from the oven and let cool in pans for 10 minutes before inverting onto cooling racks to cool completely. Wrap cakes in plastic wrap and place into the freezer to chill for 30 minutes.

Cream Cheese Buttercream

1. In a stand mixer bowl fitted with a paddle attachment, beat the butter and cream cheese until smooth and fluffy, about 4 minutes. Scrape down sides of the bowl.
2. Turn the mixer to low and gradually add the powdered sugar, followed by the vanilla extract and salt. Mix until well incorporated. Don't overmix or well become soupy. Scrape down sides of the bowl.

3. Place the mixer bowl in the refrigerator for 20 minutes to chill buttercream before decorating the cake. Turn the mixer on low and beat for 2 minutes to push out any remaining air bubbles.

Assemble

1. Layer one red velvet cake, cut side up onto the cake board. Add a 2/3 cup of cream cheese buttercream over the cake. Place another cake layer cut side down over top. Repeat process for another layer. Crumb coat and freeze for 30 minutes.
2. Then add a thicker layer of buttercream and smooth the sides out using a cake scraper. Finally, while turning the cake, press and move your offset spatula from the bottom to the top holding the offset spatula perpendicular to the cake. Continue turning and make lines on top for a rustic look.





FUNFETTI BIRTHDAY CAKE

Vanilla Cake Layers Studded with Sprinkles, Creamy Vanilla Buttercream and Pink Chocolate Drip

PREP TIME 40 MIN | COOK TIME 35 MIN | TOTAL TIME 75 MIN | YIELDS: 1 (3 LAYER) 6-INCH OR (2 LAYER) 8-INCH CAKE

INGREDIENTS

Funfetti Vanilla Cake

- ½ cup (or 1 stick) unsalted butter, room temperature
- ⅓ cup vegetable oil
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 4 whole eggs
- 1 box of vanilla cake mix, sifted
- ¾ cups all-purpose flour, sifted
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 cup whole milk
- ½ cup funfetti sprinkles

Vanilla Buttercream

- 2 cups (or 4 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 7 cups powdered sugar, sifted
- 2 Tablespoons heavy cream
- 1 Tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon salt

Pink Chocolate Drip

- 6 ounces (or 1 cup) light pink chocolate candy melts
- 1 ounce (or 2 Tablespoons) warm water
- ½ cup funfetti sprinkles, for garnish

INSTRUCTIONS

Funfetti Vanilla Cake

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray three 6-inch round cake pans with non-stick spray, line the bottom of each pan with parchment paper and spray again. Set aside.
2. In a medium-size bowl, whisk and stir together the cake mix, all-purpose flour, and salt. Set aside.
3. In the stand mixer bowl fitted with a paddle attachment, beat the butter, oil, and sugar on medium-high for 5 minutes.
4. Add eggs, one at a time to the stand mixer bowl and beat on medium until well incorporated.
5. Turn the mixer on low and add half of the flour mixture to the butter mixture until fully incorporated.
6. Add the vanilla and milk, beat on low until incorporated. Scrape down the sides of the bowl. Finish by adding the remaining flour mixture and mix on medium for another 30 seconds. Add funfetti sprinkles and mix by hand.
7. Evenly distribute the cake batter among the three cake pans and bake for about 30-35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center of each cake comes out clean or with just a few moist crumbs.
8. Remove cakes from the oven and let cool in pans for 10 minutes before inverting onto cooling racks to cool completely. Wrap cakes in plastic wrap and place into the freezer to chill for 30 minutes.

Vanilla Buttercream

1. In the stand mixer bowl fitted with the paddle attachment, beat the butter until light and fluffy, about 5 minutes.
2. Turn the mixer to low, gradually add the powdered sugar, followed by the cream. Then add vanilla extract and salt. Mix until incorporated completely. Scrape down sides of the bowl.
3. Turn the mixer to medium-high and beat the buttercream for about 5 minutes until light and fluffy. Turn the mixer on low and mix for 2 minutes to push out any air bubbles.

Pink Chocolate Drip

1. In a medium glass bowl, melt pink candy melts in the microwave by heating in 30 second increments, stirring in between until fully melted.
2. Mix in warm water to the melted chocolate with a rubber spatula. Mix until combined and streak free.
3. Pour the chocolate into a squeeze bottle for decorating. If chocolate drip hardens then heat in the microwave for 5-10 seconds, shake or stir to make all the same temperature.

Assemble

1. Layer one vanilla cake, cut side up onto the cake board. Add a 2/3 cup of vanilla buttercream and sprinkles over the cake. Place another cake layer cut side down over top. Repeat process for another layer. Crumb coat and freeze for 20 minutes.
2. Then add a thicker layer of buttercream and smooth the sides out using a cake scraper.
3. Add sprinkles to the bottom of the cake. Squeeze the chocolate drip starting from the top and let it run down the sides. Finally, with a piping bag fitted with #844 star tip, pipe swirls topped with more sprinkles.





CLASSIC YELLOW CAKE WITH CHOCOLATE BUTTERCREAM

Yellow Cake Layers with Creamy Chocolate Buttercream and Rainbow Sprinkles

PREP TIME 30 MIN | COOK TIME 35 MIN | TOTAL TIME 65 MIN | YIELDS: 1 (3 LAYER) 6-INCH OR (2 LAYER) 8-INCH CAKE

INGREDIENTS

Yellow Cake

- ½ cup (or 1 stick) unsalted butter, room temperature
- ⅓ cup vegetable oil
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 4 whole eggs
- 1 box of yellow cake mix, sifted
- ¾ cups all-purpose flour, sifted
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 cup whole milk

Chocolate Buttercream

- 2 cups (or 4 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 7 cups powdered sugar, sifted
- ½ cup cocoa powder, sifted
- 4 Tablespoons heavy cream
- 1 Tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ cup rainbow sprinkles, for garnish

INSTRUCTIONS

Yellow Cake

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray three 6-inch round cake pans with non-stick spray, line the bottom of each pan with parchment paper and spray again. Set aside.
2. In a medium-size bowl, whisk and stir together the cake mix, all-purpose flour, and salt. Set aside.
3. In the stand mixer bowl fitted with a paddle attachment, beat the butter, oil, and sugar on medium-high for 5 minutes.
4. Add eggs, one at a time to the stand mixer bowl and beat on medium until well incorporated.
5. Turn the mixer on low and add half of the flour mixture to the butter mixture until fully incorporated.
6. Add the vanilla and milk, beat on low until incorporated. Scrape down the sides of the bowl. Finish by adding the remaining flour mixture and mix on medium for another 30 seconds.
7. Evenly distribute the cake batter among the three cake pans and bake for about 30-35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center of each cake comes out clean or with just a few moist crumbs.
8. Remove cakes from the oven and let cool in pans for 10 minutes before inverting onto cooling racks to cool completely.

Chocolate Buttercream

1. In the stand mixer bowl fitted with the paddle attachment, beat the butter until light and fluffy, about 5 minutes.
2. Turn the mixer to low, gradually add the powdered sugar and cocoa powder, followed by the cream. Then add vanilla extract and salt. Mix until incorporated completely. Scrape down sides of the bowl.
3. Turn the mixer to medium-high and beat the buttercream for about 5 minutes until light and fluffy.
4. Turn the mixer on low and mix for 2 minutes to push out any air bubbles.

Assemble

1. Layer one yellow cake, cut side up onto the cake board. Add a $\frac{2}{3}$ cup of chocolate buttercream over the cake. Place another cake layer cut side down over top. Repeat process for another layer. Crumb coat and freeze for 20 minutes.
2. Then add a thicker layer of buttercream and smooth the sides out using a cake scraper. Add sprinkles to the bottom of the cake. Finally, with a piping bag fitted with #844 star tip, pipe swirls and top with sprinkles.





PINK LEMONADE CAKE

Lemon Cake Layers with Strawberry Lemon Pink Buttercream

PREP TIME 30 MIN | COOK TIME 40 MIN | TOTAL TIME 70 MIN | YIELDS: 1 (3 LAYER) 6-INCH OR (2 LAYER) 8-INCH CAKE

INGREDIENTS

Lemon Cake

- ½ cup (or 1 stick) unsalted butter, room temperature
- ⅓ cup vegetable oil
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 4 whole eggs
- 1 box of vanilla cake mix, sifted
- ¾ cup all-purpose flour, sifted
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¾ cup whole milk
- ⅓ cup lemon juice
- 2 Tablespoons lemon zest
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Pink Strawberry Buttercream

- 2 cups (or 4 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 7 cups powdered sugar, sifted
- 1 Tablespoons heavy cream
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 Tablespoon strawberry extract
- 1 Tablespoon lemon extract
- Soft pink gel food coloring
- 1 cup clear rock candy, for garnish
- 2 lemon slices, cut in half, for garnish
- 1 pink & white straw, for garnish

INSTRUCTIONS

Lemon Cake

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray three 6-inch round cake pans with non-stick spray, line the bottom of each pan with parchment paper and spray again. Set aside.
2. In a medium-size bowl, whisk and stir together the cake mix, all-purpose flour, and salt. Set aside.
3. In a stand mixer bowl fitted with a paddle attachment, beat the butter, oil, and sugar on medium-high for 5 minutes.
4. Add eggs, one at a time to the stand mixer bowl and beat on medium until well incorporated.
5. Turn the mixer on low and add half of the flour mixture to the butter mixture until fully incorporated.
6. Add the milk, lemon juice, lemon zest, and vanilla extract and beat on low until incorporated. Scrape down the sides of the bowl. Finish by adding the remaining flour mixture and mix on low for another 30 seconds.
7. Evenly distribute the cake batter among the three cake pans and bake for about 30-35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center of each cake comes out clean or with just a few moist crumbs.
8. Remove cakes from the oven and let cool in pans for 10 minutes before inverting onto cooling racks to cool completely. Wrap cakes in plastic wrap and place into the freezer to chill for 30 minutes.

Pink Strawberry Buttercream

1. In a stand mixer bowl fitted with a paddle attachment, beat the butter until light and fluffy, about 5 minutes.
2. Turn the mixer to low, gradually add the powdered sugar, followed by the cream. Then add the salt, strawberry and lemon extract.
3. Add pink gel food coloring. Mix until combined. Scrape down sides of the bowl.

4. Turn the mixer to medium-high and beat the frosting for about 5 minutes until light and fluffy. Turn the mixer on low and mix for 2 minutes to push out any air bubbles.

Assemble

1. Layer one chilled carrot cake, cut side up onto the cake board. Add 2/3 cup of buttercream over the cake. Place another cake layer cut side down over top. Repeat process for another layer.
2. Crumb coat and freeze for 20 minutes.
3. Then add a thicker layer of buttercream and smooth the sides out using a cake scraper.
4. Finally, add crushed rock candy pieces, lemon slices and insert straw to complete the cake.

