



# Basic Fondant Techniques

with  
Elisa Strauss

What You'll Need

## Supplies

### MATERIALS

- Swiss meringue buttercream
- 1/2 recipe royal icing
- Fondant (sugarpaste)
- Food-coloring gels (to dye fondant)
- Vegetable shortening
- Flavored extracts
- Cornstarch (corn flour)

### EQUIPMENT

- Toothpicks
- Plastic mat
- Plastic wrap
- Air-tight containers
- Small rolling pin
- Impression mat
- Clay gun
- Pastry tips: #12, 7, 1, 4, 5
- Metal rulers
- Paring knife
- Palette knife
- Stitching tool (optional)
- Small soft paintbrushes
- Small dish of egg whites and water
- Large rolling pin
- Dry pastry brush
- Fondant smoothers
- Small offset spatula
- Soft tape measurer
- Rose cutter set
- Calyx cutter
- Impression mat for leaves
- Blossom (5-petal cutters)
- Silicone molds
- Embossers/crimpers
- Three dowels (wooden or plastic, 4" long)
- Wooden skewer
- Pencil

### OPTIONAL FOR CAKE BASE

#### For Inlay Technique

- 3 pounds (1.4 kg) fondant: 1 1/2 pounds (680 g) blue and 1 1/2 pounds (680 g) red fondant (from Fondarific)
- Hexagon cutters: 2 1/4" (6 cm) and 3" (8 cm)
- Four-petal cutter
- Piping pips: Nos. 9 and 12
- One 16" (40.6 cm) cake base (made from triple-thickness foam core or store bought)
- Decorative ribbon
- Scissors
- White glue



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Vanilla Cake

This is a delicious white cake with a slightly crunchy top and is the perfect texture for creating sculpted cakes. The recipe calls for egg whites only, which makes it nice and light. Add extra flavor to this cake by brushing layers with flavored simple syrup.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 350 F (170 C). Brush the bottoms and sides of the pans with melted butter and line the bottoms with parchment paper.
2. In a large bowl, sift together the cake flour, all-purpose flour and baking powder. Set aside.
3. In the bowl of a standing mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, combine the butter and sugar and beat on medium speed until light and fluffy.
4. Add the salt and vanilla.
5. Set the mixer to low speed and gradually add the egg whites, scraping often.
6. Alternately add the flour mixture and milk to the butter mixture in two batches, starting with the flour. Scrape down the bowl between each addition and beat until thoroughly combined. Set the mixer to medium-high speed for about 20 seconds then stop and scrape the sides of the bowl.
7. Divide the batter evenly between cake pans or muffin tins. For 9" (23 cm) cake pans, bake 40 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean; for half-sheet pans, bake 35 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean; for cupcakes, bake 20 to 25 minutes, or until they spring back after being touched.
8. Allow the cake to cool for 20 minutes. Once the cake is cool, release it from its pan by running a metal spatula or knife along the sides of the pan. Flip the cake over onto another pan or cake board and peel away the layer of parchment.

VARIATION

- **Lemon Cake:** Add the zest and juice of two lemons (about 1½ teaspoons of zest and 1 tablespoon of juice) to the batter in step 4.

INGREDIENTS

Yield: Three 9" (23 cm) rounds that are 1" (2.5 cm) high or one half sheet (13"x18" or 33 cm x 45 cm) that is 1" high

- 2 cups (227 g) cake flour
- 1¾ cups plus 1½ teaspoons (227 g) all-purpose flour
- 2¼ teaspoons baking powder
- 1 cup (8 oz; 227 g) unsalted butter
- 3 cups (595 g) granulated sugar
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 cup (about 7 eggs; 236 ml) egg whites or pasteurized egg whites in liquid form
- 1½ cups (354 ml) milk

Use the chart below to help you determine how many servings you'll get from different sizes of cake. With sculpted cakes you will have to start with a larger size cake, because as you sculpt, it gets smaller. So keep in mind the number of people you want to serve as you're deciding what size cakes to bake. The numbers tell you how many servings per size and shape of cake. Obviously, the number of servings depends on the size of the slice – and in my family that depends on whether my dad or mom is cutting! This chart assumes slices are approximately 1" wide and 4" high.

NUMBER OF SERVINGS

Cake Size	Round	Square
6" (15 cm)	6	10
8" (20 cm)	18	25
10" (25 cm)	30	40
12" (30 cm)	45	50
14" (35 cm)	60	75
16" (40 cm)	80	100

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Fondant

I buy fondant by the tub. I find prefabricated fondant has a higher quality and usually a finer taste than what could be made at home. You can find premade fondant in many flavors; my favorites include chocolate and vanilla. You can also find kosher rolled fondant. If you cannot find rolled fondant in a store near you or you would like to experiment with a recipe at home, this is the one to use. Yield: Two pounds, enough to cover one 10"- (25 cm-) round, 4"- (10 cm-) high cake.

**INGREDIENTS**

- 9 cups plus 2 tablespoons (1.12 kg) confectioners' sugar, sifted
- 3 tablespoons (45 ml) cold water
- 1 tablespoon unflavored gelatin
- ½ cup (120 ml) light corn syrup (liquid glucose)
- 1½ tablespoons glycerin
- 1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract

**INSTRUCTIONS**

Place 6 cups (750 g) of the confectioners' sugar in the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with a paddle attachment.

In a small bowl combine the water and gelatin. Allow the mixture to sit for two minutes.

Place the gelatin mixture in a double boiler and melt over low heat. Remove from heat and stir in the corn syrup, glycerin and vanilla.

With the mixer on low speed, pour the gelatin mixture into the confectioners' sugar. Turn the mixer to medium speed and beat until a sticky ball forms.

Using a spatula coated in shortening, scrape the dough onto a clean surface and knead in the remaining confectioners' sugar until the fondant is smooth.

Wrap the fondant in several layers of plastic and store at room temperature for at least 24 hours in an airtight container before using.

**HOW MUCH FONDANT?**

Size	Round	Square
4"	¾ pound (340 g)	1 pound (454 g)
6"	1 pound (454 g)	1½ pounds (680 g)
8"	1½ pounds (680 g)	2 pounds (907 g)
10"	2 pounds (907 g)	3 pounds (1.4 kg)
12"	3 pounds (1.4 kg)	4 pounds (1.8 kg)
14"	4 pounds (1.8 kg)	5 pounds (2.3 kg)
16"	5 pounds (2.3 kg)	6 pounds (2.7 kg)

*Tips: Do not get rolled fondant wet. It gets sticky and becomes difficult to use.*

*In hot climates or in the summer you may need to use a little extra confectioners' sugar. If possible, work in an air-conditioned area.*

*A fondant-covered cake will keep for two days without refrigeration. Store in a cool, dry area.*

*For flavor variations, substitute 1 tablespoon of another extract, such as almond, lemon or mint, for the vanilla.*

**HOW TO MEASURE WITHOUT A SCALE**

Amount	Size
¼ ounce (7g)	small marble
½ ounce (14 g)	large gumball
1 ounce (28 g)	golf ball
4 ounces (113 g)	raquet ball
6 ounces (170 g)	tennis ball
8 ounces (227 g)	orange

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## Royal Icing

For cake and cookie decorators, royal icing is indispensable. Think of it as sweet, edible “glue” that holds together or attaches finished tiers of cake, ices cookies, creates decorations, and allows you to attach decorations directly onto the cake. The amount of sugar you use will determine the thickness of your royal icing. For stiffer icing, add more sugar. For thinner icing (for flooding your designs), add a few drops of water.

**INSTRUCTIONS**

1. In the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, beat the egg whites on medium speed until soft peaks form.
2. Gradually add the confectioners' sugar,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup (50 g) at a time, on medium-low speed. Scrape thoroughly between additions.
3. Add the lemon juice and beat on medium-high speed until stiff peaks form and the icing is no longer shiny, about 6 to 8 minutes.
4. Use immediately or place the icing into an airtight container. You can keep royal icing in the refrigerator for up to 5 days.

**INGREDIENTS**

Yield:  $4\frac{1}{2}$  cups (1.1 l)

- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup (3 ounces; 85 grams) pasteurized egg whites
- $4\frac{1}{2}$  cups plus 1 tablespoon (16 ounces; 454 g) sifted confectioner's sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon lemon juice

*Tip: Allow your royal icing to come to room temperature before you use it. It will be much easier to mix and pipe.*



Resources

**BAKEWARE & KITCHEN SUPPLIERS**

Many of these outlets also carry cake decorating supplies

- Bridge Kitchenware [bridgekitchenware.com](http://bridgekitchenware.com)
- Broadway Panhandler [broadwaypanhandler.com](http://broadwaypanhandler.com)
- J.B. Prince Company [jbprince.com](http://jbprince.com)
- Kerekes Bakery & Restaurant Equipment [bakedeco.com](http://bakedeco.com)
- Sur La Table [surlatable.com](http://surlatable.com)
- William Sonoma Stores [williams-sonoma.com](http://williams-sonoma.com)

**ELISA'S BOOKS**

*The Confetti Cakes Cookbook*  
(Little, Brown and Company, 2007)

*Confetti Cakes For Kids*  
(Little, Brown and Company, 2008)

**DECORATING SUPPLIERS**

- MarvelousMolds.com [marvelousmolds.com](http://marvelousmolds.com)
- Beryl's Cake Decorating & Pastry Supplies [beryls.com](http://beryls.com)
- Country Kitchen Sweet Art [countrykitchensa.com](http://countrykitchensa.com)
- Creative Cutters [creativecutters.com](http://creativecutters.com)
- Global Sugar Art [globalsugarart.com](http://globalsugarart.com)
- Pfeil and Holing [cakedeco.com](http://cakedeco.com)
- Sugar Wand Enterprises [cakesbydesign.cc](http://cakesbydesign.cc)



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