

Icing & piping

Flat icing

Use a blunt knife or the back of a spoon to spread a fairly thin layer of icing all over a cake or biscuit.



Rough icing

Use a blunt knife to spread a generous layer of icing all over a cake or biscuit. Drag and swirl the knife over the surface, making rough peaks.



Feather icing

You will need glacé icing (opposite), a gun or bag fitted with a small round nozzle and filled with glacé icing in a contrasting shade, and a cocktail stick.

- 1 Flat ice a cake or biscuit (above). While the icing is still wet, pipe on some lines.
- 2 Drag the point of the cocktail stick across the lines, to make points. Move the stick along, then drag it across again, to make more points.



Food dye

Ordinary liquid food dye is fine for tinting icing or buttercream in pale shades, but too much can make the icing or buttercream runny. For strong shades, use gel food dye.

Drippy toppings

Spoon on the topping. Spread it to the edge of the cake. Keep spreading, so a little spills over.



Filling a piping gun

First, attach a nozzle. Then, stand the gun nozzle-end down in a mug or glass. Spoon in some frosting. Attach the plunger to the gun.

Filling a piping bag

- 1 Push a piping nozzle down to the pointed end of the piping bag. If you're using a plastic piping bag, snip the end off first.
- 2 Stand the bag point-down in a mug or glass. Open up the bag and turn over the top edge. This will help to keep it open while you fill it.
- 3 Spoon in some frosting. Stop when the bag is half full. Unfold the top edge. Make a twist in the bag just above the frosting.



Piping swirls

You will need a filled piping gun or bag fitted with a star- or flower-shaped nozzle.

- 1 Hold your piping bag or gun so the nozzle is around ½cm (¼in) from the surface of the cake.
- 2 Squeeze until some icing comes out and touches the cake. Keep the nozzle in the same place and keep squeezing until a small swirl forms.
- 3 To finish the small swirl, stop squeezing and lift the nozzle up and away quickly.
- 4 For a big swirl, follow steps 1-3, then pipe a spiral, starting at the edge of the cake and going in and up, over the small swirl. Lift up and away quickly to finish.



Piping lines & dots

You will need some writing icing, or a filled tube, gun or bag fitted with a tiny round nozzle.

- 1 For a dot, squeeze until a dot of icing comes out. Stop squeezing and lift the nozzle away quickly.
- 2 For a line, keep squeezing as you move the nozzle along. Stop squeezing and lift the nozzle away quickly.



Glacé icing

To make enough glacé icing to cover around 12 cupcakes or one large cake, you will need 100g (4oz) icing sugar, 2 teaspoons of water and some food dye (optional).

- 1 Sift the icing sugar into a bowl. Mix in the water until you have a smooth, spreadable paste.
- 2 Mix in a few drops of food dye, if you like. Or, for more than one shade, divide the icing between separate bowls and mix a different shade into each.

