

Frosting & piping

Flat frosting

Use a blunt knife or the back of a spoon to spread a fairly thin layer of frosting over a cake or cookie.



Rough frosting

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



Feather icing

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

- 1 Flat frost a cake or cookie (above). While the frosting is still wet, pipe on some lines.
- 2 Drag the point of the toothpick across the lines, to make points. Move the toothpick along, then drag it across again, to make more points.



Food dye

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

Drippy icing

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



Filling a piping gun

First, attach a piping tip. Then, stand the gun tip-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 tip 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 piping tip.

- 1 Hold your piping bag or gun so the tip is around $\frac{1}{4}$ in from the surface of the cupcake.
- 2 Squeeze until some frosting comes out and touches the cupcake. Keep the tip in the same place and keep squeezing until a small swirl forms.
- 3 To finish the swirl, stop squeezing and lift the tip up and away quickly.



- 4 For a tall swirl, follow steps 1-3, then pipe a spiral, starting at the edge of the cupcake 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 piping tip.

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



Glacé icing

To make enough glacé icing to cover around 12 cupcakes or one large cake, you will need 1 cup powdered sugar, $2\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons water and some food dye (optional).

- 1 Sift the powdered 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.

