

Wilton Decorating with Buttercream Flowers

Objective: Children will create two cupcake designs with piped buttercream flowers

Recommended Ages: 9 years old and up

Time required for project: 1 hour

Overview

This project is designed to introduce children to piping icing flowers and leaves. They will use decorating tools and buttercream icing to decorate cupcakes. The project leader will walk them through each step, demonstrate the basic techniques and assist them as they practice and decorate their cupcakes. Leaders should determine ahead of time how many adult helpers are needed. Depending on the age of the group, 1 adult for every 8 - 10 children should be enough.

Supplies

Wilton Items needed:

- ✓ *I Taught Myself Buttercream Flowers Kit* (1 per child preferred)
 - If not purchasing kit, the following items will be needed:
 - Tip 18, 352 and 1M, 1 per child
 - Wilton Disposable Decorating Bags – 3 bags per child (box of bags can be shared by group)
- ✓ Wilton Icing Gel Colors – green, yellow and pink (to be shared by group)
- ✓ Wilton Creamy White Decorator Icing, 4 lb. tub – optional

Additional Kitchen Supplies (either leader can provide, or children can bring their own):

- ✓ Parchment or waxed paper, approximately 8 in. x 10 in. sheet per child
- ✓ Spatulas or butter knives, 1 per child
- ✓ Containers for mixing icing colors and thinning icing, 4 per child (can use bowls, disposable cups, whipped topping containers, etc.)
- ✓ Water
- ✓ 3 Rubber bands (to use as bag ties)
- ✓ Container to transport decorated cupcake home
- ✓ 1 one-gallon plastic storage bag per child to transport dirty tools home
- ✓ Scissors
- ✓ Paper towels
- ✓ Toothpicks
- ✓ Un-iced cupcakes, 4-6 per child
- ✓ If not purchasing Wilton Buttercream Icing, make icing using the recipe on pg. 9 thinned to medium consistency, approximately 1 ¼ cup per student
- ✓ Ruler

Project Outline

1. Introduction
2. Prepare Buttercream Icing
 - a. Coloring Icing
2. Decorating Bag Basics
 - a. Preparing the Bag
 - b. Filling the Bag
 - c. Closing the Bag
 - d. Holding the Bag
3. Techniques and Decorating Cupcakes
 - a. Icing a cupcake
 - b. Stars
 - c. Rosettes
 - d. Leaves
4. Clean-up/Wrap-up

INTRODUCTION

Provide quick overview of project

PREPARE THE ICING

***Leader should make icing in advance using recipe on page 9 or purchase enough icing for each child to have 1 ¼ cups.**

Facts about purchased icing:

- Grocery store canned icing is very thin and is best used for icing a cake or cupcakes but will not hold up well for piped decorations
- The 4 lb. tub of Wilton Creamy White Decorator Icing is medium consistency, ready to use for this class
- The 1 lb. container of Wilton Icing can be purchased in medium and stiff consistency. If you purchase stiff consistency it will need to be thinned to medium.
 - Open container and stir icing with spatula
 - Add a small amount of water (1 water bottle capful) and stir until thoroughly combined. Add more water in small amounts until desired consistency is achieved.
 - For medium consistency icing, when the spatula is placed upright in the icing, it will move slightly and start to lean.
 - If icing becomes too thin, add small amounts of confectioners' sugar to stiffen.



Explain to students that buttercream icing is the traditional choice for flavor and versatility, this buttercream is soft and spreadable. Use for icing cakes, piping borders, writing and flowers.

Coloring Icing - Explain the difference between liquid food coloring and Gel Icing Colors, then demonstrate how to color icing

- Liquid food coloring found in the baking aisle at the grocery store can be used but has limitations:
 - Color options are usually limited to just 4 base colors, limiting the color combinations you can create
 - Because food coloring is liquid, it can affect the consistency of your icing, especially when you need to add a lot to create an intense color.



- Gel Icing Colors
 - Because Icing Colors are a gel form and the colors are concentrated, they do not change the consistency
 - Available in 25 colors
 - To use:
 - Dip a toothpick into the Icing Color jar, then swirl it in the icing
 - Stir the icing with a spatula to blend in the color
 - Add a little at a time, until you achieve the shade you want, using a fresh toothpick each time you add more color
 - Colors will intensify as they sit



*Assist students with coloring icing

- ¼ cup green
- ¼ cup yellow
- ½ cup pink
- Leave ¼ cup white

DECORATING BAG BASICS

Preparing the Bag - Demonstrate how to prepare a bag

- With scissors, cut about 1/2 in.- 3/4 in. off the tip of the bag
- Trimming too much of the bag can cause the tip to pop out of the bag when in use so start with cutting less rather than more
- Drop decorating tip inside bag, pushing it in as far as it will go
- Make sure tip fits firmly in the bag, so the icing doesn't leak from around the tip



*Assist children with preparing 3 bags using tips 18, 352 and 1M

Filling the Bag - Demonstrate how to fill a bag

- Most important point in filling the bag is to NOT overfill it. A bag that is too full will be hard to control when piping and will make your hand tire faster.
- Hold bag in one hand and fold down the top of the bag to form a generous cuff over your hand
- Using a spatula fill each bag with approximately 1/4 cup of icing
- To remove icing from spatula, squeeze bag with spatula between fingers and pull the spatula out, using the bag and your fingers to squeeze the icing off



Closing the Bag – Demonstrate how to close and secure the bag with a rubber band

- Unfold cuff, force the icing down into the bag, and twist the top of the bag closed
- Release any air trapped in the bag by continuing to squeeze the bag until some of the icing comes out of the tip and into a bowl. This is called “burping” the bag.
- Use a decorating bag tie or rubber band to secure the bag closed so no icing squeezes out of the top of the bag. This tip is especially helpful for new decorators and children, and when working with flow-in icing.



Holding the Bag – Demonstrate how to hold the bag

- Place the bag in the palm of your hand with the twist between your thumb and forefinger
- Curl your fingers around the bag so you can apply even pressure with your entire hand
- Fatigue in any one finger may signal a problem in your grip.
- As you decorate, periodically twist the bag and slide the rubber band or bag tie down, to force the remaining icing down into the bottom of the bag and tip
- Use the fingers of your other hand to steady the bag and guide the tip as you decorate
- Squeeze the decorating bag as you guide it



***Assist students in filling 3 bags with approximately ¼ cup icing.**

- **Bag with tip 352 – green icing**
- **Bag with tip 18 - yellow icing**
- **Bag with tip 1M - pink icing**

Hint: To minimize mess, have students work in pairs, one child holding the bag, the other inserting the icing in the bag.

DECORATE CUPCAKES - Demonstrate each technique having students work along with you. Once they complete one cupcake of each design, children can work at their own pace to decorate additional cupcakes.

Star Flower Cupcake

The star tip is available in various sizes. It creates the most popular, easily accomplished decorations. The serrated edges of the star tip create ridges in the icing as you squeeze it out.

- With tip 1M and pink icing
 - Hold decorating bag at a 90° angle (straight up and down) with the tip slightly above the surface
 - Beginning at the edge of the cupcake, squeeze to form a star shape. Increase or decrease pressure on the bag to change the size of the star.
 - Stop squeezing and pull away
 - Repeat working around and across the cupcake until the entire surface is covered



Icing a Cupcake

Some cupcake designs require the top of the cupcake to be iced first before decorating

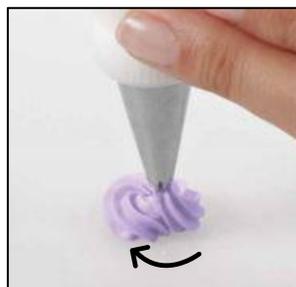
- Place a dollop of icing at the center of the cupcake
- Spread icing across the top using a back and forth motion, pushing toward the edges. To reduce crumbs, the spatula should only touch the icing and not the cupcake surface.



Rosette Cupcake

The rosette is piped with a smaller star tip. It has the tight, swirling look of a rose but it is achieved with one continuous rotation.

- Use tip 18, yellow icing and an iced cupcake
 - Hold decorating bag at a 90° angle (straight up and down) with the tip slightly above the surface
 - Squeeze the bag to form a star
 - Without releasing pressure, raise tip slightly and move tip to start a clockwise rotation around the star. Start at 9:00, move to 12:00, down to 3:00 and finish at 6:00.
 - Stop squeezing at 6:00 but continue to move the tip back to the starting point
 - Pipe 6 rosettes around the edge of the cupcake and one in the middle. Optional - use pink icing and tip 1M to make a pink rosette or a star center.



Leaves

Make your blooms come to life with realistic leaves. Using a special leaf tip, these buttercream leaves are great for filling in around your flowers.

- Using tip 352 and green icing, touch the surface with the points of the tip aligned vertically (like a bird's beak)
- Squeeze hard to build up a base of icing
- Slowly raise the tip slightly
- Relax pressure as you pull the tip away to form the leaf point
- Stop squeezing and pull tip away
- Add leaves to your flower cupcakes



CLEAN-UP AND WRAP-UP

INSPIRATION



Wilton Buttercream Icing

Note: This recipe is for stiff consistency buttercream, which is excellent for piping decorations like flowers with petals that stand up. It will need to be thinned to medium consistency for stars, rosettes and leaves. Add 2 teaspoon of water to the recipe to convert stiff icing to medium.

Makes 2 ¼ cups

INGREDIENTS:

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
1/2 cup solid vegetable shortening
1/2 cup (1 stick) butter or margarine, softened
4 cups (1 lb.) sifted confectioners' sugar
2 tablespoons milk or water

TOOLS:

Electric mixer with paddle attachment (or hand mixer with beaters)
Large bowl
Silicone spatula

- In large bowl, beat shortening and butter with electric mixer until light and fluffy. Beat in vanilla.
- Gradually add confectioners' sugar, one cup at a time, beating well on medium speed.
- Scrape sides and bottom of bowl often. When all sugar has been mixed in, icing will appear dry.
- Gradually add milk or water; beat at medium speed until light and fluffy.

HINTS:

- Keep bowl covered with plastic wrap until ready to use.
- If using a hand mixer, beat shortening, butter and liquids first, then add sugar, as above. Make one batch at a time to prevent hand mixer from overheating.
- Depending on the humidity and climate, it may be necessary to adjust the liquid and the sugar in your icing. If icing looks dry, add small amounts of liquid (1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon at a time). If icing is too wet, add 1 tablespoon of confectioners' sugar at a time.
- The key for both adjustments is adding small amounts until you achieve the right consistency.