

## Cookie Crumble Cake

**Objective:** Children will ice and decorate a cake using buttercream icing and Thin Mint Cookies®.

**Recommended Ages:** 9 years old and up

**Time required for project:** 90 minutes

### Overview

This project is designed to introduce children to cake decorating. They will learn the following:

- How to adjust icing consistency and flavor and tint icing
- How to crumb coat and ice a cake smooth
- How to prepare and use a decorating bag and tip to pipe a simple border
- How to use crushed cookies and sprinkles to create a striped effect on the side of a cake



### Supplies

#### Wilton Items Needed:

- ✓ Creamy White Decorator Icing, 4 lb. tubs – optional
- ✓ 9 in. Straight Spatula (1 per child) – optional
- ✓ 10 in. Cake Circle (1 per child) – optional
- ✓ 12 in. Disposable Decorating Bags (1 per child)
- ✓ Tip 1M (1 per child)
- ✓ Clear Piping Gel, 10 oz. (1 to be shared by group)
- ✓ Green Icing Color (1 to be shared by group)
- ✓ Decorator Brush (1 per every 2 children)
- ✓ Cake Leveler – optional
- ✓ Bag Ties – optional (1 pkg. is enough for 12 children)
- ✓ Sprinkles -- optional

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

- ✓ Two 8 in. round chocolate cake layers (2 layers per child)
- ✓ Thin Mint Cookies® or chocolate sandwich cookies (1 box/pkg. per 2 – 3 children)
- ✓ Cake base or plate large enough for an 8 in. cake (if not using optional Cake Circle)
- ✓ Wax paper or parchment paper, one sheet approximately 5 in. in length per child to practice swirls on and a second sheet approximately 8 in. in length to cut for the stripes
- ✓ 1 one-gallon resealable plastic storage bag per child (to transport dirty tools home)
- ✓ 1 one-quart resealable plastic storage bag per child (to crush cookies in)
- ✓ Pure white vegetable shortening (about 1 teaspoon per child)
- ✓ Mint flavoring (1 drop per child)
- ✓ Scissors
- ✓ Ruler
- ✓ Tape
- ✓ Toothpicks
- ✓ Tall glass

- ✓ Bowl or container large enough to separate out 1 ¼ cups medium consistency icing for border
- ✓ Bowl or container large enough to hold about 4 ½ cups thin consistency icing for tinting
- ✓ Small bottle of water
- ✓ Large serrated knife (if not using Cake Leveler)
- ✓ Rubber bands, 1 per child (if not using Bag Ties)
- ✓ Paper towels
- ✓ Cookie sheet (pan must have sides to catch excess cookie crumbs and sprinkles)
- ✓ Container to carry home decorated cake
- ✓ If not purchasing Wilton Creamy Decorator Icing, make icing using the recipe on pg. 11 (approximately 5 ¾ cups per child)

## **Project Outline**

1. Introduction
2. Prepare Icing
  - a. Adjust icing consistency
  - b. Tint and Flavor Icing
  - c. Crush Cookies for Cake Center
3. Prepare Cake
  - a. Level Cake
  - b. Crumb Coat Cake
4. Prepare for Cake Stripes
  - a. Crush Cookies for Stripes
  - b. Prepare Strips
5. Prepare Decorating Bag
  - a. Prepare Bag with Tip
  - b. Fill Bag
  - c. Close Bag
  - d. Hold Bag
6. Swirl Technique
7. Smooth Ice Cake
8. Decorate Cake
  - a. Add Cookie Stripes
  - b. Add Top Swirl Border
  - c. Add Cookie Garnish
9. Clean-up/Wrap-up

## **INTRODUCTION**

**\*Leader - Provide quick overview of project.**

## **PREPARE ICING**

### **Adjust Icing Consistency**

**NOTE: If using the Creamy White Decorator Icing, skip this section and move on to Tinting and Flavoring the Icing. The unique consistency of the purchased ready-made icing works well for both icing the cake and piping the border. Reserve 1 ¼ cup of white icing for the border.**

**\*Leader – Explain icing consistency and the difference between thin and medium.**

- Icing consistency is the thickness/stiffness of icing. *Thin* icing is used to ice cakes for decorations such as writing, vines and leaves. *Medium* consistency is used for decorations such as stars, borders, and flowers with flat petals.
- For this activity, we will be using both thin and medium consistency icing. The Wilton Buttercream Icing recipe makes a *medium* consistency, so water must be added to make it thin.
- To change icing consistency from medium to thin, add water, a few drops at a time, until it is easy to stir.
- Just a few drops of liquid can make a big difference in results, so make sure you don't add too much water to start. If icing becomes too thin, add a small amount of confectioners' sugar to make it thicker.
- It may be easier for students to thin part of the icing at a time.
- It takes approximately 1 teaspoon of water per cup of icing to change medium to thin consistency.
- For medium consistency: When the spatula is placed upright in the icing, it will move slightly and start to lean.



- For thin consistency: It should be easy to stir, and a spatula stuck in the icing will fall over, but the icing should not be so thin it would pour out of the cup.



- Have children adjust their consistency of icing if using homemade icing. They will need the following amounts:
  - 4 ½ cups of thin consistency to crumb coat and ice cake
  - 1 ¼ cups of medium consistency for top swirl border

**\*Leader – Assist children with adjusting their consistency of icing.**

### Tint and Flavor Icing

- Concentrated Gel Icing produces deep rich color with just a small amount and won't affect the icing consistency, unlike the squeeze bottles that can be found in grocery stores.
- Dip a clean toothpick into the icing color jar, and then swirl the toothpick into the icing.
- Remember to start with a small amount of color and gradually add more until you reach your desired color.



- Stir with a spoon or spatula to evenly blend the color.
- Use a clean toothpick each time more color is added.
- Flavor extracts can be used to add flavor to icing. Because they are highly concentrated, only a small amount is needed.
- Have children tint their thin consistency icing green and add 1 drop of mint flavor extract.

**\*Leader – Assist children with tinting and flavoring their icing.**

### Crush Cookies for Cake Center

- Place 5 Thin Mint Cookies in a small resealable bag.
- Seal the bag, then place the bag on a flat surface. Use the palm of your hand to crush the cookies into small crumb-like pieces.

### PREPARE CAKE

#### Level the Cake ([video link](#))

**NOTE: If using a serrated knife instead of a Cake Leveler, the video link above provides instructions on usage.**

A dome typically forms on the top of a baked cake, making its surface uneven. Create a perfectly even surface by leveling your cake layers.

- Start with the cake on a flat surface. The domed side should be facing up.
- Using a cake leveler, set the feet on the work surface with the wire against the cake.
- Position the ends of the cutting wire into the notches at the desired cutting height, removing as little cake as possible to maintain the height of the cake. Make sure the notch numbers on both sides of the leveler match.
- With the leveler legs standing on the work surface, cut into the crusted edge using a gentle sawing motion, then continue by gliding the wire through the cake.
- Carefully lift the dome off the cake and set aside.
- Repeat with the second layer of the cake.



**\*Leader – Assist children with leveling their cakes.**

### Crumb Coat the Cake

A crumb coat is a very thin layer of icing used to “glue” crumbs down, seal in the cake’s moisture (super useful when you need to store the cake before decorating it) and provide an even base for additional frosting. It’s basically a delicious primer for your cake masterpiece that keeps the cake on the cake side, and the icing on the icing side. Everyone in their own dance space.

- Place one cake layer cut side down on the cake circle or plate. Use a spatula to spread about a 1/3 cup of icing over the top of the layer; do not worry about icing the sides at this point. Sprinkle a thin layer of cookie crumbs on top, then place the second cake layer on top.
- Use a spatula to spread icing over your cake. It should be thin enough that you can see the cake (and crumbs) through it. Don't worry about visible crumbs, it's all part of the process! Smooth the icing as best as you can and let it dry until it crusts over or feels dry to the touch. The crumb coat should be dry before you apply the final layer of icing.

**\*Leader – Assist children with crumb coating their cakes.**

- While the crumb coat is drying, move on to Preparing a Decorating Bag and Preparing for Cake Stripes.

### **PREPARE FOR CAKE STRIPES**

**\*Leader – Explain and demonstrate how to prepare the crumb mix with sprinkles and measure and cut the wax paper strips. Have children work along with you as you demonstrate.**

#### **Crush Cookies for Stripes**

- Place 6 cookies in a small resealable bag.
- Seal the bag, then place the bag on a flat surface. Use the palm of your hand to crush the cookies into small crumb-like pieces.
- Mix in sprinkles for added color.

#### **Prepare Wax Paper Strips**

- Cut 2 strips of wax paper or parchment paper approximately 3/4 in. wide and long enough to wrap around the cake (about 25 in.). You will likely need to tape strips together in order for them to be long enough to wrap around the entire cake.
- Rub one side of each strip with a thin layer of shortening. This will help the strips to adhere to the side of the cake. Set the strips aside, keeping the shortening side facing up.

### **PREPARE DECORATING BAG**

**\*Leader – Explain and demonstrate how to prepare and use a decorating bag.**

#### **Preparing Bag with Tip**

- With scissors, cut about 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 1M tip inside bag and push to the bottom to expose about 1/2 of the tip out of the bottom of the bag.
- If necessary, trim more of the bag so the tip is properly positioned.

#### **Filling Bag**

- Most important point in filling the bag is to NOT overfill it. A bag that is more than half full will be hard to control when piping and will make your hand tired faster.

- Hold the bag in one hand and fold down the top of the bag to form a generous cuff over your hand.

**HINT:** A tall glass can also be used to hold the bag, allowing both hands to remain free. Simply place the bag inside the cup and fold down the top of the bag, cuffing it over the top of the glass.

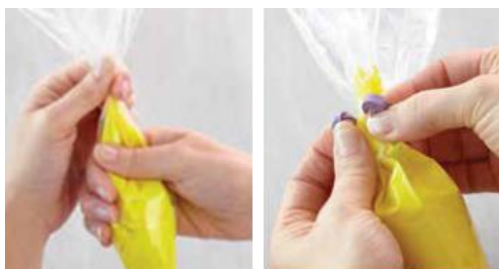
- Using a spatula, fill bag with 1/2 cup of *medium* consistency icing (about a handful).
- To remove icing from spatula, squeeze bag with spatula between fingers and pull the spatula out, using the bag and your fingers to squeeze the icing off.



**\*Leader – Assist children with filling bags**

### Closing Bag

- Unfold cuff and twist the top of the bag closed, forcing the icing down into the bag and tip.
- If desired, use a Bag Tie or rubber band to secure the bag closed so no icing squeezes out of the top of the bag.



### Holding Bag

- Place the bag in the palm of your hand with the twist between your thumb and your forefinger.
- Curl your fingers around the bag so you can apply even pressure with your entire hand.
- As you decorate, periodically twist the bag and slide the rubber band 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 as you decorate.
- Squeeze the decorating bag as you guide it.



## SWIRL TECHNIQUE ([video link](#))

**\*Leader – Explain and demonstrate on a piece of wax paper or parchment paper how to pipe a swirl. Have students practice swirls on wax paper. After practicing, icing can be scraped off paper and re-used.**

- Using a decorating bag fitted with tip 1M, hold the bag straight up, with the tip about a ½ in. above the surface.
- Squeeze to form a star at the center of the swirl. Without releasing pressure, raise the tip a little bit and move it slightly to the side. This will be the starting point of your swirl. Pipe a line of icing toward the top of the star. Using a circular motion, pipe a “C” until it connects to the starting point.
- After completing the first rotation, move the tip slightly inward and repeat the circular motion. Continue spiraling until you reach the desired height. End the spiral at the center of the swirl. Stop squeezing before pulling tip away.
- To complete a border, pipe swirls next to each other around the edge of the cake.



## SMOOTH ICE CAKE

**\*Leader – Explain and demonstrate how to ice the cake smooth, then assist students with icing their cakes smooth.**

- With an angled spatula, place a generous amount of thin consistency icing on the center of the cake top.
- Spread icing across the top.
- To keep crumbs from showing on the finished surface, always keep icing between the cake and the spatula. Roughly smooth the top.
- Apply icing to the sides of the cake as on the top. Smooth the sides by holding the spatula against the side of the cake, with a slight angle pointing away from the cake.
- Slowly turn the cake base without lifting the spatula from the icing surface.
- Return the excess icing to the bowl. Repeat until the sides are smooth.

- Smooth the top of the cake last, using the edge of the spatula.
- Sweep the spatula edge from the rim of the cake to its center.
- Lift it off and remove the excess icing.
- To finish, rotate the cake slightly and repeat the procedure, starting from a new point on the rim.



## DECORATE CAKE

### Apply Cookie Stripes

- Place a cookie sheet underneath the cake, using an object to elevate the cake slightly so it is not sitting directly on the pan. This will make it easier to re-use the crumbs and sprinkles that fall into the pan.
- Wrap the wax or parchment paper strips around the cake, evenly spacing them.
- Using a decorator brush, apply a thin layer of piping gel to the exposed icing stripes. This will help the cookie crumb mix adhere.
- Pour a large handful of cookie crumb and sprinkle mix into your hand and press them against the cake side. Repeat until the entire piping gel area is covered in the mixture, re-using the crumbs and sprinkles that fall into the pan.
- Carefully remove the parchment strips to expose the crumb-free areas.
- **Notes:**
  - Ideally, when creating the striped effect, cake should be chilled for at least 30 minutes so icing can set before adding the parchment strips.
  - To cover the entire side of the cake (omitting the striped effect), apply the crumb mixture the same way, pressing them on with your hand and using a pan to catch the excess.

### Add Top Swirl Border

- Using bag with 1M tip and medium consistency icing, pipe swirls around top edge of cake.



### Add Cookie Garnish

- Sprinkle some crumb mixture on swirls.
- Using the serrated knife, cut the remaining whole cookies in half and place on swirls, evenly spacing the cookies apart.

**HINT:** When cutting the cookies, use a sawing motion, rather than cutting straight down, to reduce breakage.



Now that your Girl Scouts have been introduced to working with icing, encourage them to learn more through the *Icing Fundamentals*, *Buttercream Flowers*, *Decorating Cookies* and *Fondant Fundamentals* class activities. Find the easy-to-follow leader guides and completion certificates at <http://classpromo.wilton.com/girlscouts>.

### CLEAN-UP AND WRAP-UP

INSPIRATION



## **Wilton Buttercream Icing** (Medium Consistency)

Makes 2 ¼ cups (Each student will need a double recipe)

### **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 + 2 teaspoons 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 adjustments is adding small amounts until you achieve the right consistency. For medium consistency, a spatula in the icing will move slightly and start to lean but will not fall over.