



Module 1 - Section 2 - Making and Applying Buttercream

Objective: Be able to achieve a neat crumb coat and sharp edge finish using buttercream.

In completing each section the user will be able to:

- Correctly weigh and measure ingredients in accordance with the recipe
- Cut, fill, and layer the cake with buttercream/frosting
- Produce a neat crumb coat finish
- Achieve a sharp edge buttercream finish

Assessment criteria:

1. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of buttercream
2. Achieve a neatly filled buttercream sandwich layer
3. Achieve a sharp edge buttercream finish
4. Achieve a smooth buttercream covered cake

You will Need:

TOOLS

Mixer, bowl, and beater
Tablespoon
Teaspoon
Scraper
Palette knife
Serrated knife
Metal side scraper
10" round cake drum
6" round cake card

INGREDIENTS

8" round madeira cake
1Kg Icing (powdered or confectioners') sugar
500g unsalted butter
Cream
Vanilla extract

Method:

- Beat the butter until soft and fluffy
- Add the icing sugar slowly approx 250g at a time
- Mix thoroughly before adding more icing sugar

- Once all mixed through, beat on a fast speed until you achieve a firm consistency that will hold its shape
- Add flavourings and mix thoroughly on a slow speed
- Add a little cream to improve the texture and smoothness

Supporting Notes:

Buttercream is made using unsalted butter and icing sugar (also known as powdered or confectioners' sugar). Flavourings and sometimes milk can be added, depending on taste. You can make buttercream using some brands of margarine, however, for flavour and structure it's best to stick with butter.

Traditionally butter was used, but today some recipes call for the use of white vegetable fat (Crisco/Trex). The fat contributes to the flavour and texture of the filling, but it comes down to personal choice and the purpose for the buttercream.

Icing sugar gives the structure and strength to the product. Granulated sugar is not suitable as the granules are too big to melt and merge into the butter. Different proportions may have to be used in different climates.

Buttercream has a tendency to melt in hot or humid weather, causing problems with cake structure and stability. However, more icing sugar and/or white vegetable fat will help with the structure. Buttercream must be stored correctly to maintain quality. It should be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator or freezer. Buttercream will keep for about two weeks when refrigerated, but it will start to dry and lose its freshness after one week. You can freeze buttercream for up to two months, but it must be left to thaw thoroughly before use.

Whether from the fridge or freezer, buttercream should be brought to room temperature before use. Ensure that it is kept covered to prevent a skin forming, which will occur when exposed to the air.

Buttercream is used to make the first coat on the cake, known as the crumb coat. This is to set the crumbs of the cake and give a smooth base to work from. The cake should then be refrigerated for 10-15 minutes, before adding a second coat of buttercream.

It is important, when coating the cake with buttercream, to ensure you achieve a smooth finish. This is the foundation for your sugarpaste/fondant, so the smoother the buttercream, the easier it will be to get a smooth sharp edge finish to your cake.