

GINGERBREAD HOUSE TIPS

Royal icing is a fast drying icing that can be used to decorate cookies or as the glue that holds together creations such as a gingerbread house.

Royal Icing

This recipe makes 2 1/2 cups of icing.

3 egg whites
1 teaspoon of vanilla extract
1 teaspoon of lemon juice
4 cups of confectioner's sugar
Food coloring (optional)

1. In a mixing bowl combine 3 egg whites and 1 teaspoon of vanilla until frothy.
2. Gradually add 4 cups of confectioner's sugar and lemon juice to the mix until incorporated.
3. Beat the mixture until it forms stiff, glossy peaks. Approximately 5 to 7 minutes on high speed.
4. Add food coloring if desired.
5. Transfer to a pastry bag (use standard tips to decorate cookies or other items).

You may prefer to try the alternative recipe listed below.

Alternate Royal Icing Recipe with Meringue Powder

An alternative to using raw egg whites is to use meringue powder, which is essentially dried egg with sugar and gum added. This recipe will yield approximately 3 cups of royal icing.

1. In mixing bowl, whip together the sugar and meringue powder.
2. Add the vanilla extract and lemon juice.
3. Add the water. Beat for approximately 5 minutes or until stiff peaks begin to form.
4. Transfer to pastry bag.

Ideas for Decorations:

cereals	mini cookies	ice cream cones	popcorn
animal crackers	pasta	Necco Wafers	cotton candy
pretzel logs	sticks of gum	oyster crackers	crackers
licorice strings	coconut	crushed Butterfinger sawdust	
Shredded Wheat	sprinkles	raisins	

Construction Tips:

Allow for slight shrinkage of the dough from the original pattern when it bakes up.

You should let your gingerbread house dry overnight before decorating.

Candy canes and pretzel sticks can be used as support structures on the inside of the roof and walls if necessary.

When decorating the roof of your house, it's best to use lightweight candy. Heavy candy or large amounts of frosting could cause your roof to cave in.

Hide any minor assembly mistakes under a thick layer of icing "snow."