



4 FOUNDATIONAL

cookie design techniques

decorating guide

**Iced
Kitchen**

building blocks of cookie decorating

Are you ready to elevate your cookie game...or just start your cookie game? These four basic royal icing decorating techniques are the building blocks of every amazing cookie creation out there. From holiday masterpieces to personalized lettering, these techniques are the keys to unlocking your cookie decorating potential. This guide is perfect for absolute beginners - it'll take you step-by-step through each technique, making it easy to create show-stopping cookies with just one consistency of icing. Grab your ingredients, get your favorite playlist or podcast on, and let's get piping!

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follow along on
YouTube



- *either use the yellow and blue or the dark green, you won't need both

Before we dig into decorating, make sure you have baked your cookies (roughly 2 dozen, but you can do more or less) and made your royal icing (one batch of my recipe will work for 2 dozen cookies). Recipes are linked in the supply list and videos walking through each recipe can be found linked below.

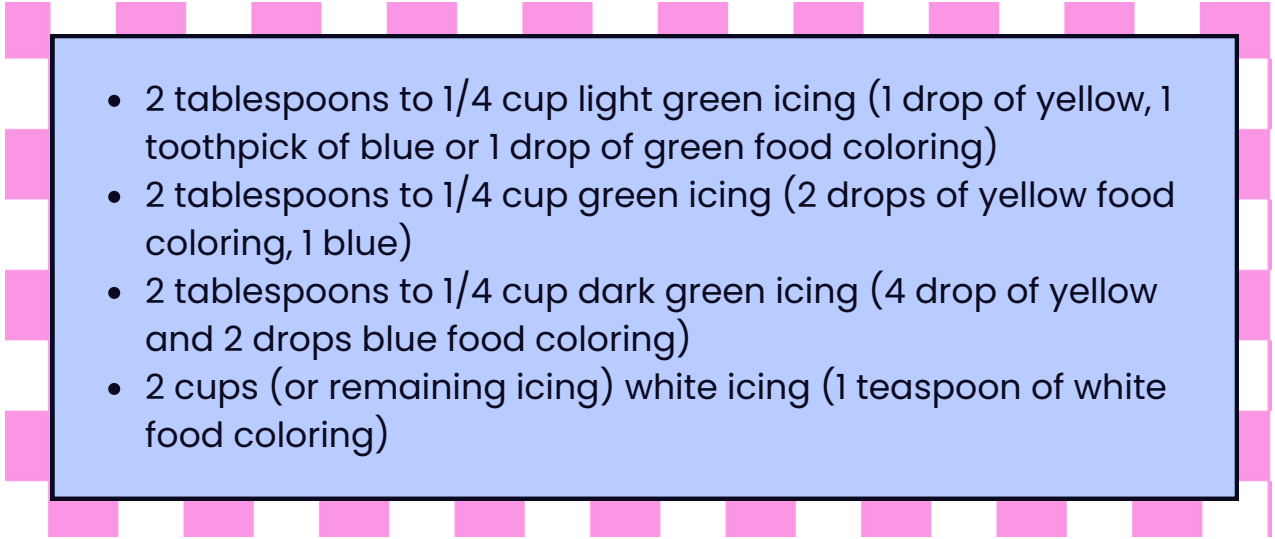


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divide and color your icing

For the 4 Foundational Cookie Design Technique cookies, you're going to need to create 4 different colors. Each cookie will use a mix of white, light green, green, and dark green royal icing.

Divide your royal icing into 4 different bowls or mix your colors using one bowl, one color at a time.

- 
- 2 tablespoons to 1/4 cup light green icing (1 drop of yellow, 1 toothpick of blue or 1 drop of green food coloring)
 - 2 tablespoons to 1/4 cup green icing (2 drops of yellow food coloring, 1 blue)
 - 2 tablespoons to 1/4 cup dark green icing (4 drop of yellow and 2 drops blue food coloring)
 - 2 cups (or remaining icing) white icing (1 teaspoon of white food coloring)

When initially making your royal icing, add in the white food coloring with the initial mix. White food coloring not only gives you a brighter white, but it helps with keeping "butter bleed" (when butter in your cookie shows in your royal icing) causing your white to look more yellow as it dries.

Be sure to mix the green color first (it can be helpful to add 1/4 teaspoon of water when mixing colors) and then adding more water, a small amount at a time, to reach the 20 second consistency for this set.

mix the icing consistency

When using royal icing, the consistency of the icing allows you to do different decorations. Often what you see on social media or in recipes are two different icing consistencies, a line and a flood. But for these cookies, you'll have one consistencies that sit between a line and a flood.

This is a 20 second icing. it's names come from the amount of time it takes the icing to "settle" or level out on a cookie.

After you've mixed in the food coloring, add a little bit of water at a time (I tend to do 1/4 - 1/2 teaspoon) until you get to the right consistency.

The 20 second consistency will take 20 seconds to settle after you run a spoon or knife through it. You can also lift a small amount with a spatula and see how it runs off, like Elmer's Glue.

This consistency is thick enough to create its own "edge" so the icing doesn't run over the side of a cookie (replacing the need for a "line" consistency), but also thin enough to fill a cookie like a "flood" consistency would.

It also allows you to do "wet on wet" decorating, where you place different colors of icing that are the same consistency on or near one another to decorate.

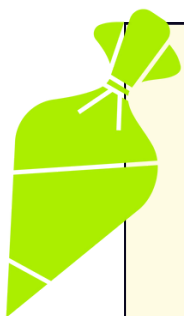
20 second icing

Before adding water
and then at the
right consistency



If you make your icing a little bit too thin, don't worry! A 20 second icing can still work as thin as 15 seconds. If it was accidentally thinner than that, mix in a tablespoon of powdered sugar one at a time until it's thickened up.

For the 10 second icing, it can be as thin as 8 seconds or a little thicker. If it's accidentally too thin, mix in a tablespoon of powdered sugar one at a time until it's thickened up.



if your icing is too thin, add a tablespoon of powdered sugar at a time to thicken it back up!

bag the icing

Majority of the time, you will want to put all of your different icing colors and consistencies into their own tipless piping bag. Tipless piping bags are one time use piping bags that do not require a piping tip in order to be used. Instead you cut the tip of your piping bag to the desired size or shape.



tipless piping bag



piping bag with a tip

You can get tipless piping bags in a variety of sizes, a good size for any cookie project is a 12 inch piping bag. You can fill these with a large amount of icing or a small amount based on your needs.

When doing more precise design work, like you'll do with this cookie set, it's easier for you to use smaller piping bags or to not fill your bag as full as possible. This allows you more hand dexterity.

It's like writing with a pencil, too big and you'll be more clumsy, thinner and smaller and you can write just fine!

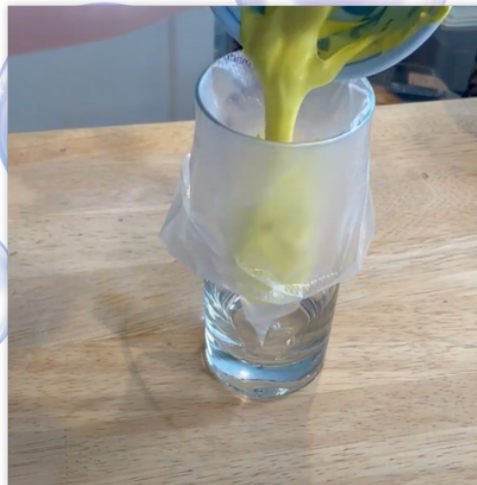


fill your piping bag

Use a cup, open your piping bag, and place it inside



Pour your icing inside the piping bag



Once filled, pull up the side of the bag, twist the end, and tie into a knot or clip the end



cut the end of your piping bag

When you're ready to decorate, grab your piping bag and flatten out the end, placing the seam straight up. This will allow you to cut a straight line on the end of the piping bag, creating a circle when icing flows through it.

Start by cutting a small amount off the end, until you can pipe a line of icing without needing too much pressure.

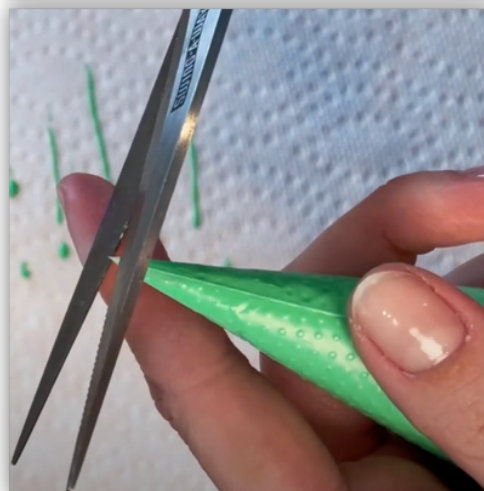
If you end up cutting too much off, start over with a new bag!

For more precise line work, you want to cut smaller ends off your piping bag. For the white royal icing, you can have a larger hole to more easily fill your cookie.

Use a cup, open your piping bag, and place it inside



Pour your icing inside the piping bag



decorate: base of each cookie

Every cookie in this set will start with a white royal icing base, before you do any of the decorating techniques, follow this step:

Pipe a line around the outside of the cookie with white icing



Fill in the circle (the top of the cookie) with white icing



Use a scribe to even out your icing, creating the base for the rest of your decoration!

Do not put the white icing base on *all* the cookies before moving forward with the other decorations, but on a *single* cookie and follow with the design.

If you put the white icing on all the cookies and then go back to add on the design you won't be able to use the "wet-on-wet" technique because the white icing will have dried too much.

decorate: drag technique

The drag technique utilizes dots or lines of colored icing and a scribe to drag the icing, creating new shapes or designs.

Pipe each color of green in a straight line on your cookie



Take your scribe and run it perpendicular across your cookie



Drag your scribe going the opposite direction



**Your drag
technique is
done!**



tips

- Wipe off the scribe after each drag to not put color where you don't want it
- Don't put the scribe too deep to make sure the icing can settle (even out) on it's own
- Don't wait too long between icing to drag your scribe through so that the icing doesn't begin to dry and crust over



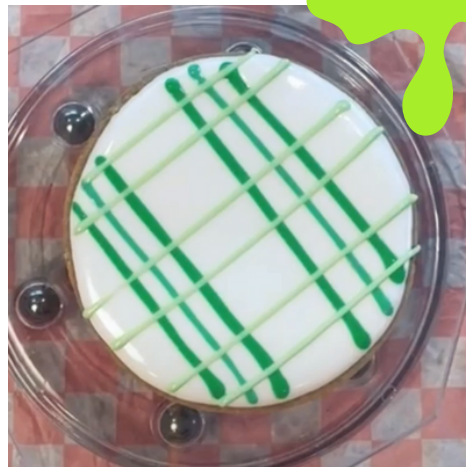
decorate: line technique

Line techniques are an essential part of cookie decorating, as they help create definition and shape to your design. Don't be intimidated, as even the simplest lines can make a big impact on your cookie creations!

Pipe straight lines across your cookie, alternating between greens



Pipe light green lines perpendicular



Finish with dark green lines inbetween the light green lines



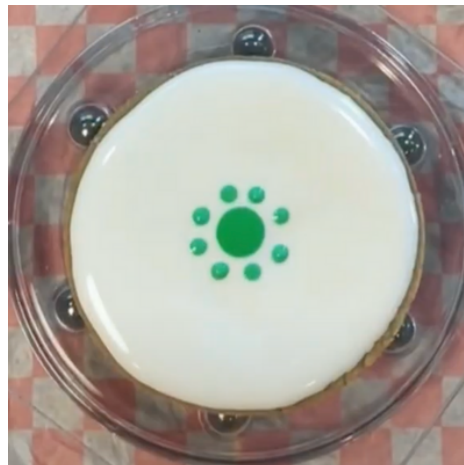
decorate: dot technique

The dot technique is a simple yet versatile technique in cookie decorating that can add texture, dimension, and interest to your designs. With just a few dots, you can easily create patterns, flowers, and other fun shapes on your cookies.

Place a dark green dot in the center of the cookie



Place 8 small green dots around the dark green dot.



Place 8 slightly larger dark green dots around those



Place 8 slightly larger green dots around that



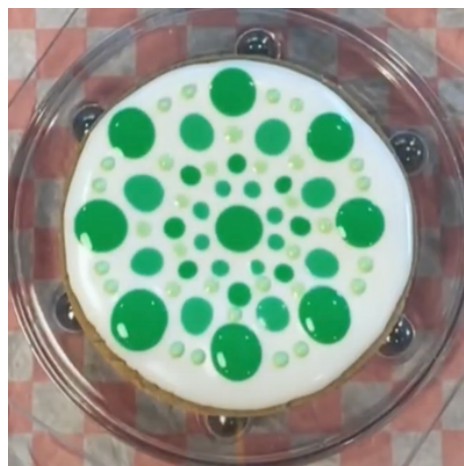
End with 8 larger dark green dots around the edge of the cookie



Use light green to add dots in between each green and dark green dot



Your dot technique is done!



decorate: dot, line, + drag technique

Last, you'll combine all three techniques to create a new design! You'll make a wreath with hearts on it here, but this can get the creative juices flowing with what you can do next.

Pipe green lines from the outside to inside of the cookie



With the dark green, repeat the first step



Drag your scribe in 2-3 continuous circles through the lines



Pipe 6 light green dots throughout the wreath



Drag your scribe through each dot to make a heart shape



You've now combined all the techniques!



storing and sharing

Allow your cookies to sit uncovered to dry until the icing has hardened (typically 8 - 12 hours). You can leave them overnight with no concern of having a hard cookie to bite into later!

Once dried, you can store them in an air tight container or bag. They will remain soft cookies for around two weeks in a sealed container. You can even freeze them to enjoy later.

Share with friends or family or keep all for yourself!

enjoy your cookies!

Share them with me [@iced.kitchen](#)

