UNDER THE SEA

COOKIE DECORATING GUIDE

Iced Kitchen

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YouTube

- ☐ sugar cookies
- ☐ royal icing
- ☐ toothpick or scribe
- ☐ red gel food coloring
- ☐ blue gel food coloring
- ☐ white food coloring*
- ☐ edible pen/marker

- ☐ paper towel
- ☐ 7 tipless piping bags (or more)

*optional

get your supplies together

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.
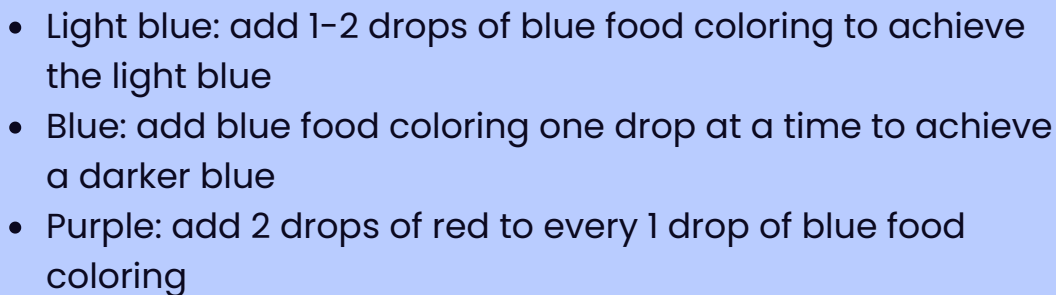
divide and color your icing

This is a great set to utilize the "one bowl method" - using one bowl to mix all the colors without cleaning it in between. With such vibrant colors, any left over colored icing typically blends into the next (but if you're concerned, quickly rinse the bowl). Mix in this order: white, light blue, blue, and purple.

- Light blue: add 1-2 drops of blue food coloring to achieve the light blue
- Blue: add blue food coloring one drop at a time to achieve a darker blue
- Purple: add 2 drops of red to every 1 drop of blue food coloring

Be sure to add the color before adding any water to get to the right consistency. As the color you want to achieve is richer in tone or darker, the icing will become a thinner consistency from the gel food coloring.

Additionally, do not continue to add food coloring if the color is not getting any darker/developing into a darker color. It will dry darker than you think!

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 consistency that sits between a line and a flood.

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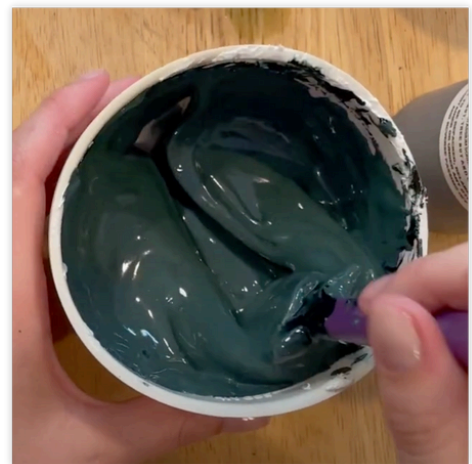
If you make your icing a little bit too thin, don't worry! A 20 second icing can still work as thin as 15 seconds. If it is accidentally thinner than that, mix in a tablespoon of powdered sugar one at a time until it's thickened up.
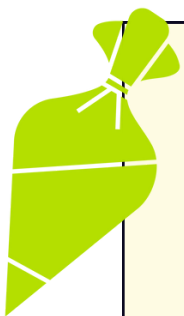
if your icing is too thin, add a tablespoon of powdered sugar at a time to thicken it back up!

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, 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 sides 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 face up. This will allow you to cut a straight line on the end of the piping bag, creating a circle for the icing flows through it.
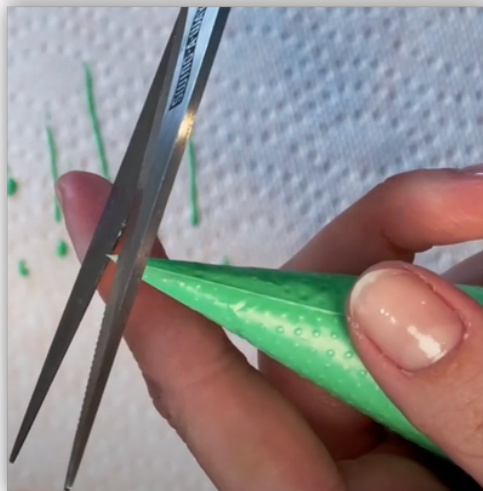
Start by cutting a small amount off the end and test piping until you can pipe a line of icing without needing too much pressure.

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

Place the seam side up and flatten the tip of the bag

Cut a small piece, straight across the end

If your icing is "curling" around the end of the piping bag, turn the bag 90 degrees and cut another straight line. Sometimes straight cuts from one angle can cause curved cuts from another. It's annoying.

decorate: scale cookie

With an edible pen, outline half circles for scales

With light blue, outline and fill scales - make sure none are touching

Once the icing has begun to crust over, repeat the process with purple

Once the icing has begun to crust over, repeat the process with blue

Once the icing has begun to crust over, repeat the process with white

Your scale cookie is complete!

decorate: octopus tentacle cookie

With an edible pen, outline the shape of the octopus tentacle

With white icing, trace the tentacle and outline of the cookie

Fill the outline with the white icing

Once it's crusted over, take the blue, outline and fill the left side of the tentacle

Once it's crusted over, fill the right side of the tentacle with purple

Once crusted over, pipe small circles in light blue on the purple part

Using blue, add a dot of icing in the light blue circles

Your octopus tentacle cookie is complete!

decorate: starfish cookie

With the edible pen, outline a starfish semi onto the cookie

With white icing, trace the starfish and outline of the cookie

Fill in the outline with white icing

Once it has crusted over, fill in the starfish with light blue

Once it's crusted over, add dots of purple on each leg of the starfish

Your starfish cookie is complete!

decorate: jellyfish cookie

With an edible pen, outline the top of the jellyfish, like a bowler hat

With white icing, outline the jellyfish and cookie

Fill in the outline with white icing

With purple, add two thick wavy lines beneath the jellyfish head

Once crusted over, fill in the top of the jellyfish head with light blue and add blue squiggles over the purple

Once crusted over, pipe the dark blue in the last open space

Follow that white piping more dark blue squiggly lines

Add purple dots on the light blue section of the jellyfish

Your jellyfish cookie is complete!

storing and sharing

Allow your cookies to dry for at least 8 hours (possibly more) until they are hard to the touch. You can store your cookies 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!