



customcakesandcupcakes.com

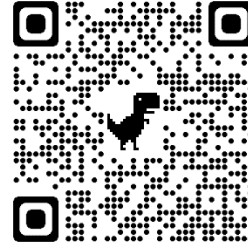
Cake & cupcake  
recipes &  
instructions:



Buttercream  
frosting recipe  
& instructions:



Website written  
tutorial &  
instructions:



Full cake  
decorating  
tutorial video:



## Step 1: Baking the Cake Layers

- o NOTE: It is helpful to bake cake layers ahead of time and freeze them until ready to decorate. Use any flavor, recipe, or box mix that you would like. My recipes are available at customcakesandcupcakes.com. Optional – add colorful jimmies sprinkles to the cake batter to make funfetti!
- o Spray the sides and bottom of cake pan(s) with nonstick cooking spray/canola spray. It is also helpful to cut parchment circles to line the bottoms of the pans, but this is optional.
- o The method shown in this tutorial and accompanying video uses three 6" cake pans, as these are common sizes, however a combination of small, medium, and large cake pans may be used together to achieve this design as well. If you have seen my method for making Barbie princess



doll dress cakes, feel free to refer to that when using cake layers of various sizes. If larger pans than 6" are used, more cake batter may need to be made.

- Fill the cake pan(s) approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{2}{3}$  full with cake batter.
- Bake at 350° or as directed by recipe, 1 or 2 cake layers at a time. Layers will be done once a toothpick comes out clean from the center.
- Allow layers to cool completely before decorating. Run a knife around the edge of the pan to allow the layer to release easier. Wrap in plastic wrap and store in refrigerator or freezer in airtight container until ready to decorate.



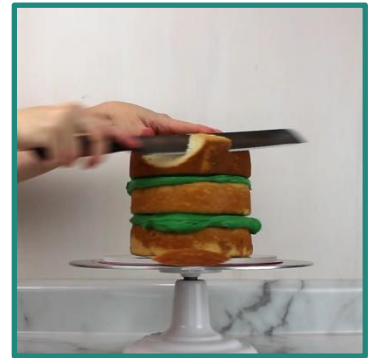
## Step 2: Mixing the Buttercream Frosting

- NOTE: buttercream frosting can be made a day or two ahead of time and stored in airtight containers in the refrigerator.
- Full recipe and instructions for vanilla buttercream frosting can be found at [customcakesandcupcakes.com](http://customcakesandcupcakes.com) or use your preferred recipe or prepackaged frosting.
- Mix buttercream frosting in a stand mixer or hand mixer on low to medium speed or as per recipe. You will likely need at least a double batch of buttercream frosting.
- Divide buttercream into 3 bowls: 1 larger and 2 smaller bowls. Add the gel coloring as follows, and stir, adding more if desired:
  - \* Green: large bowl: add 8-10 drops green gel coloring.
  - \* Light Green: small bowl: add 2 drops green gel coloring.
  - \* Dark Green: small bowl: add 6 drops green and 4-6 drops of teal gel coloring.
- Colors will deepen with time, so buttercream can be made a day or two in advance and stored in the refrigerator in an airtight container for colors to become more vibrant. If refrigerating, allow buttercream to warm up a bit at room temperature before using to make piping easier. Add more gel coloring if deeper colors are desired. Keep covered until ready to use. Stir well just prior to using to press out air bubbles.



### Step 3: Stacking, Carving, and Crumb Coating the Cake

- Spread a little of the "medium" green buttercream (from the large bowl) onto the cake board to help secure the first layer. Place the first cake layer down (if you are using multiple sizes, choose your largest layer first). Spread more of the green buttercream onto the first layer, and then add the second cake layer. Repeat this on the second layer and place the third layer on top.
- Using a serrated knife, begin to carve the layers into a cone shape. This may take many cuts. Take your time, and every so often, step back and look at the shape from a distance to ensure everything looks even. Be careful with where your opposite hand and fingers are placed while carving.
- Take 1-2 of the cut cake scraps and squeeze/sculpt it into a little pointed cone to add to the top of the cake using a little bit of buttercream to attach it. See video.
- Using an offset spatula, spread more buttercream frosting all over the cake to create the crumb coat. Cover the entire cake.
- Chill the cake in the refrigerator for 30 minutes or until the buttercream is set and firm to the touch.
- Note: the remaining cake scraps may be saved and refrigerated or frozen in an airtight container to make cake pops, cakesicles, or trifles.



## Step 4: Preparing to Decorate

- Place tip 4B or 864 (they are interchangeable) into a piping bag and cut off the tip of the bag, so the piping tip sticks through, but stays in place.
- Gently stir all bowls of buttercream to press out any air bubbles that may have developed.
- Using a narrow spatula or butter knife, spread some of the dark green buttercream onto 1 side of the piping bag as shown in the video. Use the same technique to spread some of the light green buttercream onto the other side of the piping bag. See video.
- Fill the remaining space in the bag with the medium green buttercream.
- Squeeze a little bit of this back into the bowl to ensure all 3 shades of green show up together. Refill the piping bag as needed while piping with all three shades of green as desired.



## Step 5: Piping the Tree Branches

- Starting at the bottom of the cake, squeeze the piping bag to anchor the buttercream to the cake, pull outward and gradually release pressure to pipe a tree branch. See video for method.
- Continue this around the entire bottom border of the cake, covering all surface area.
- Create a second row immediately above the bottom row, continuing to pipe branches to cover the cake. Pipe more branches to cover any gaps. The piping bag may need to be refilled a few times with the three shades of green. It is ok if the greens mix a bit.
- Finish with a few shorter branches around the top of the cake. See video.



## Step 6: Decorating the Tree

- Select desired colors from the sprinkle mix (or use them all!).
- Add these all over the branches either spaced randomly or in a desired design. A tweezers can help place the smaller sprinkles.



## Optional Decorating Ideas

- Create a fondant tree topper using a star, angel, or other cutter. Use a toothpick to secure this into the cake. See video.
- Dust or spray edible glitters or shimmer sprays.
- Create fondant ornaments using bell or bauble shaped cutters to add to the tree.
- Add small candy canes or other festive candies to the tree.
- Examples for these can be found on my YouTube channel, Custom Cakes and Cupcakes by Erin.

**Note:** to cut this cake, cut the entire cake in half, and lie the halves down on a cutting board. Cut long slices, and then cut these in half.