



customcakesandcupcakes.com

Cake recipes & baking instructions:



Buttercream frosting recipe & instructions:



Website written tutorial & instructions:



Full cake decorating tutorial video:



## Step 1: Making the Fondant Unicorn Ears

- o NOTE: make the ears at least a day or two in advance, as they will require drying time.
- o Dust surface with cornstarch to prevent fondant sticking. Roll out the white fondant and cut out two ears using the larger ear cutter from the Unicorn Eyes and Ears Set, as shown in the video.
- o Roll out the pink fondant and use the smaller ear cutter from the Unicorn Eyes and Ears Set to cut out 2 smaller versions of this shape as well.
- o Brush the white shapes with water and press a skewer about halfway into the ear (see video). Add the pink ear linings on top. The water will allow these to stick together. Find a rounded bottle, can, cup, or other object and wrap this in parchment paper to prevent the fondant from sticking to it. Gently wrap each ear around the object and allow these to dry in this position overnight.



## Step 2: Making the Fondant Unicorn Horn

- NOTE: make the horn at least a day or two in advance, as this will require drying time.
- Divide the gold fondant in half and roll out two long tapered snakes or ropes. Spiral these around one another, and brush water into the seams (see video). Cut this off at desired length.
- Dip a skewer into water, and carefully insert this through the horn. This may take some time, and it helps to turn the stick a bit as you press this in. Roll this entire piece lightly and gently to reshape as needed. Insert this into a foam block, or a small box with a hole cut into it to anchor the horn.
- Using a large or medium fluffy brush, dust the edible gold dust all over the horn. Let this dry overnight. Make sure to reserve some of the gold dust for later.



## Step 3: Baking the Cake Layers

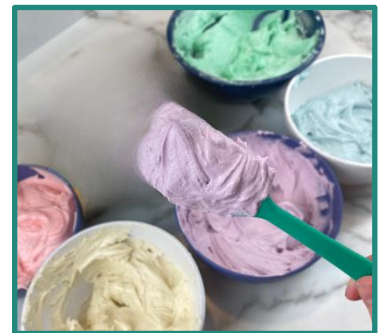
- NOTE: It is helpful to bake cake layers ahead of time and freeze them until ready to decorate. This tutorial and video show vanilla cake, but use any flavor, recipe, or box mix that you would like. My recipes are available at [customcakesandcupcakes.com](http://customcakesandcupcakes.com). Optional – add colorful jimmies sprinkles to cake batter to make funfetti!
- 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.
- The shape/size of the unicorn head cake looks more proportional with either two thicker smaller cake layers, or three thinner larger cake layers (a very tall or very short cake will have a different look – the cake size is entirely your choice). This video features three 8" cake layers, and another commonly used size for unicorn cakes is two 6" cake layers. The same instructions can be followed for any size, however. My cake recipes can be found at [customcakesandcupcakes.com](http://customcakesandcupcakes.com), or you can use a preferred recipe, a boxed cake mix, or purchase a cake from a grocery store to decorate and skip this step.
- Fill the cake pan(s) approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{2}{3}$  full with cake batter. The same pan may be used for all layers, just bake them one at a time.
- 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 4: 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.
- Mix buttercream frosting in a stand mixer or hand mixer on low to medium speed or as per recipe.
- Divide buttercream into 5 bowls: 1 large bowl and 4 small bowls. Add the coloring as follows, adding more if desired:
  - \* White: large bowl: leave white, no added coloring.
  - \* Pink: small bowl: 1-2 drops pink gel coloring.
  - \* Purple: small bowl: 1 drop purple gel coloring.
  - \* Blue: small bowl: 1 drop blue gel coloring. May also add 1 drop purple/violet gel coloring if desired.
  - \* Teal: small bowl: 2 drops blue gel coloring and 1 drop yellow gel coloring.
- Add a tablespoon of powdered sugar to each of the smaller bowls with colored frosting to stiffen the consistency of the buttercream for piping. Add 2 teaspoons of milk or cream to the white buttercream to thin it slightly for easier frosting and spreading.
- These instructions are for a pastel color scheme, so if you'd like more vibrant colors, add more gel coloring if desired. Colors will deepen with time, so the buttercream may be made a day or two in advance and stored in the refrigerator in an airtight container. If refrigerating, allow buttercream to warm up a bit at room temperature before using to make piping easier. Keep covered until ready to use. Stir well just prior to using to press out air bubbles.



## Step 5: Stacking and Crumb Coating the Cake

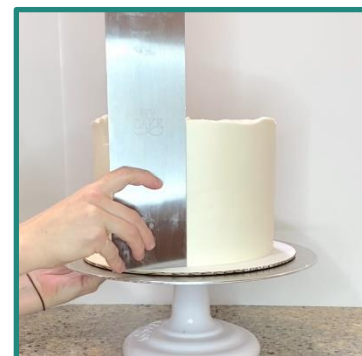
- Written instructions for frosting smooth buttercream cakes can also be found at [customcakesandcupcakes.com](http://customcakesandcupcakes.com), and the tutorial video can be found on my YouTube channel, Custom Cakes and Cupcakes by Erin.

- Using an offset spatula, spread a little of the white buttercream onto the cake board and place the first layer down. Spread more of the white buttercream onto the first layer, and then add the second cake layer. Repeat this on the second layer and place the third layer upside down on top (placing the top layer upside down gives a sharper edge to the top of the cake). Whether you are making a 2-layer or 3-layer cake, the top layer is added upside down.
- Spread the buttercream over top of the cake with spatula, continuing with sides of cake as shown in video.
- Once the cake is covered, use the cake scraper to smooth the sides (see video), leaving a thin coat of buttercream. This may take several passes. Use your offset spatula to pull the extra buttercream on top in toward the center to create a sharp edge.
- Chill the cake in the refrigerator for 20-30 minutes or until the buttercream is set and firm to the touch.



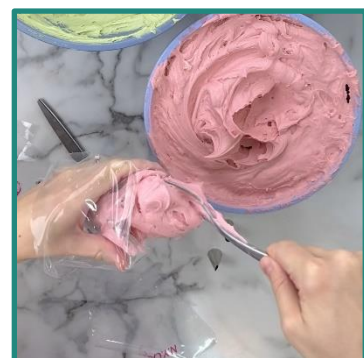
## Step 6: Frosting the Final Coat

- Spread a generous amount of white buttercream over the top of the cake and continue spreading over the sides, keeping the spatula straight against the sides as shown in the video.
- Smooth the buttercream with your scraper. It is helpful to warm up the metal under hot water (wipe dry) to soften and smooth the buttercream. This may take several passes. Create the top edge by pulling off extra buttercream in toward the center with your offset spatula just like when crumb coating.
- Chill the cake in the refrigerator for 20-30 minutes or until the buttercream is set and firm to the touch.



## Step 7: Preparing to Decorate

- 4 large couplers (to be used with the 1M tip): unscrew the ring from the first large coupler and place this into a piping bag. Cut the end of the bag off, so that the coupler sticks through slightly, but stays in place. Fill each bag with one of the four buttercream colors: pink, blue, teal, and purple. Place the 1M tip onto one of the prepared bags with couplers and screw the ring over the tip to hold it in place. Later in this tutorial, when finished piping with the first color, remove the



1M tip, wash and dry it, and then place onto another color. If you are using just one large coupler and tip, these bags will need to be filled then used one at a time.

- 4 small couplers (to be used with the 32 or 199 and the 104 or 103 tips): unscrew the rings from each of the small couplers and place each into a piping bag. Cut the end of the bag off, so that the coupler sticks through slightly, but stays in place. Fill each bag with one of the four buttercream colors: pink, blue, teal, and purple. Place the 32 and 104 tips on two of these colors to start. When finished piping with these, wash and dry the 32/199 and 104/103 tips and place on another color.



## Step 8: Piping the Buttercream Mane

- Add the 1M tip to one of the piping bags prepared with the large coupler (pink in pictures and video), and pipe one buttercream rosette/swirl on the front of the cake right at the top edge (see video) by squeezing with medium pressure in one spot and swirling around this while maintaining this pressure. Gradually release as you continue with the swirling motion to finish. Add several of these over the top of the cake and along the back (imagining a "mane" shape cascading down).
- Remove the 1M tip and wash/dry. Attach this to another colored piping bag with the large coupler and add more rosettes across the top and back of the cake. Repeat with the two other colors, leaving some space for further decorating.
- Using one of the piping bags prepared with the small coupler set, attach the 32 or 199 tip and pipe small shells by holding the bag at a 45-degree angle to the cake, squeezing with medium pressure, counting to 3, and then releasing pressure and pulling down at an angle. Follow this with another shell (either of the same or another color) next to it or behind it. See video. Pipe drop stars by holding the piping bag perpendicular to the cake, squeezing with medium pressure, releasing fully, and pulling away (this resembles a chocolate kiss). Remove tip and wash/dry. Repeat this with other colors as desired.
- Using one of the piping bags with the small coupler set prepared, attach the 104 or 103 tip, and pipe ribbons by holding the wide end of



the tip against the cake, and the narrow end up. Squeeze with medium to light pressure and wiggle the piping bag back and forth to create a ribbon (see video). Release pressure entirely before pulling away. Repeat these piping designs with other colors as desired by removing the tip to wash/dry first.

### *Step 9: Painting the Unicorn Eyes*

- Using the eyelash embossing stamps from the Unicorn Eyes and Ears set, gently press these onto the front of the cake as a guide for painting. See video. This works best on cold buttercream, so if you find your white buttercream has warmed up, place the cake back into the fridge for another 20-30 minutes to make sure it is cool and set.
- In a small bowl or cup, mix a little of the gold dust with a drop or two of a clear alcohol or extract (i.e.: vodka, light rum, lemon extract, almond extract). Paint in the embossed eyelashes with a fine brush.



### *Step 10: Adding the Horn, Ears, and Sprinkles*

- Insert the horn into the top of the cake, centered, but near the front. This can be slightly angled forward to look like a unicorn or more perpendicular to the cake if desired. If this is difficult with the cake being cold, a pliers can help to carefully finish inserting the horn.
- Add the ears on either side of the horn. If any of the mane piping was bumped while inserting the horn or ears, more rosettes, ribbons, drop stars, or shells can be piped around the insertion site.
- Add sprinkles using fingers or tweezers all over the unicorn's "mane" to finish.



## Optional Decorating Ideas

- Create a hair bow for the unicorn using the remaining pink fondant.
- Using embossing stamps and/or edible gold paint or airbrush color, add a personalized fondant ribbon.
- Add edible sparkle dust to unicorn and mane.
- Lightly brush pink edible dust or glitter to unicorn's cheeks.
- Create fondant or buttercream flowers for unicorn's mane.
- Add "blush" or "rouge" to the unicorn's cheeks with pink edible dust.
- Videos for all these ideas can be found on my YouTube channel.

