

HOW TO STACK A CAKE USING STRAWS

In this tutorial I will show you how to stack a tiered cake using jumbo straws.

Tiered cakes are created when different sized cakes are placed directly on top of one another. No matter how many cakes you are stacking, aesthetically it is best to have at least a two to four inch difference in size. Stacked cakes, especially very tall ones, must be stabilized using individual cake boards and supports in each cake. The only time full dowelling is not necessary for a stacked construction is if the lower cakes are a very firm fruitcake and not a light sponge cake or filled creation because the top cakes would simply sink into the lower ones and the cake would topple over.

If possible try and stack cakes while the icing is freshly done or wait for at least 2 days after icing the cakes before stacking or the icing might crack.

When stacking cakes, it is important to add some type of support to the layers underneath the top tiers to create stability. Cake decorators use everything from wooden or plastic dowels, skewers or professional support systems, however, I have found that using jumbo straws (pictured below) is very efficient, cheap (50 straws cost AUD \$2.00) and they are much easier to cut than wooden and plastic dowels.

My husband is an engineer and has calculated that 1 jumbo straw can easily hold at least 5kg – so as long as you use sufficient straws in each tier (refer to the guide at the end of this tutorial) and ensure that they are cut square on the ends and inserted vertically in the cake you will have no problem with your cake collapsing from the weight of a number of tiers.



ITEMS YOU WILL NEED:

- Iced cakes on cake boards
- Jumbo Straws
- Skewer
- Knife
- Pencil
- Ruler
- Scissors
- Cake lifter or palette knife
- Buttercream or royal icing

STEP 1

Ice each tier separately, ensuring that the cake is firmly "glued" with buttercream or royal icing onto a cake board that is exactly the same size as the cake (refer to my tutorial on how to buttercream and cover your cake with fondant tutorial which will show you how to do this).

The bottom tier is usually placed and "glued" on a thicker cake board that is either the same diameter as the cake or at least two inches bigger depending on the design of the cake you are making (as per the cake below)



STEP 2

Take the skewer and insert the flat side into the cake – going straight down and right to the cake board, use a knife or your finger to mark the exact height at the top of the cake and then pull the skewer back out.



STEP 3

Using the pencil mark off the measurement onto a straw – ensure that you measure from the flat section of the straw. Ensure the flat ends of your straws are level and mark off the measurement on all the straws you will be inserting into the cake (in this example the base is an 8 inch (20.32cm) cake so I am using 3 straws for support).

Cut the straws to length using the scissors.



STEP 4

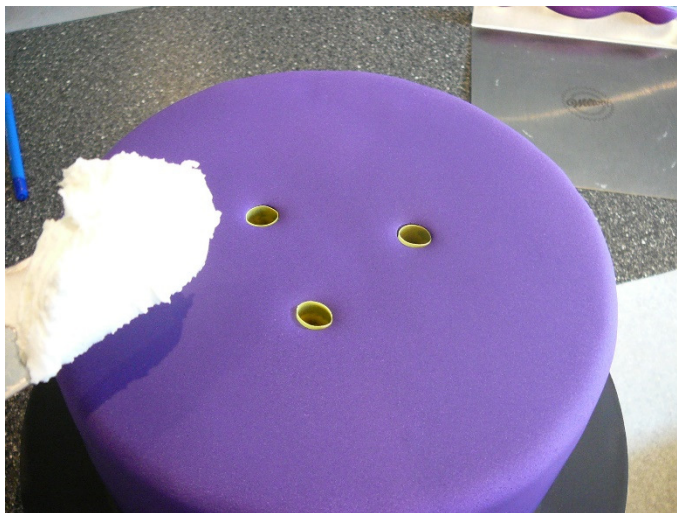
Push the straws straight down - ensuring that you insert the uncut, square ends in first and that you insert them vertically until they touch the cake board at the bottom of the cake.

Do not be concerned if the straws do not appear to be even on top – this just means that the top of your cake is not 100% level.



STEP 4

Place some buttercream or royal icing over the straws, this will ensure that the next tier will stick to the bottom cake and will not move or shift during transportation.



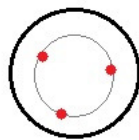
STEP 5

Stack the second tier on to the first using a cake lifter (my preferred option) or a palette knife to move it without ruining the icing. Ensure that it is centred on the bottom cake.

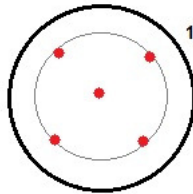
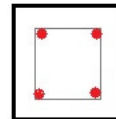
You would repeat this process for each stacked tier on the cake design except the top one.



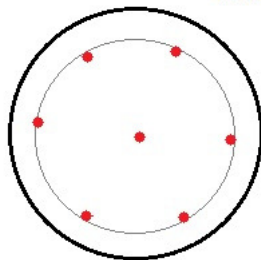
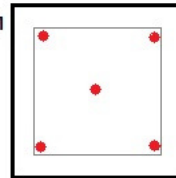
CAKE SUPPORT GUIDE USING STRAWS



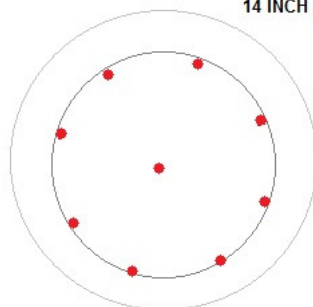
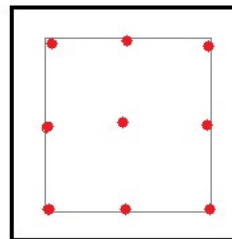
8 INCH / 20.32 CM



10 INCH / 25.40 CM



12 INCH / 30.48 CM



14 INCH / 35.56 CM

