



Sharp and Smooth Buttercream



with Stephanie Lawshe

What You'll Need

Supplies for a Buttercream Cake

*Link to purchase supplies is under each supply listed below

- Swiss Meringue Buttercream
- Fillings of choice (I typically do 3 layers of fillings)
- Cake Layers (I typically do 4 layers of cake, cause I like mine tall, but 3 layers is fine as well)
- A Set of Acrylic Discs - Make sure to purchase the .5 size
<https://www.cakesafe.com/store#!/Round-Acrylic-Disks/p/83502219/category=12169191>
- Thin cardboard cake boards (You will also need a variety of thin cardboard rounds, depending on how many tiers of cake you have and what sizes they are)
https://www.amazon.com/dp/B07GGVCVYP/ref=cm_sw_em_r_mt_dp_U_EM.7CbYW0YSEG
- Thick Cake Drum or Wood Board for your finished tier to sit on. It needs to be at least 2" larger than your cake. Example: For an 8" cake you want a 10" cake drum or board
https://www.amazon.com/dp/B07D8GL9RG/ref=cm_sw_em_r_mt_dp_U_MO.7CbMNJ8F9T
- Piping Bags (I prefer disposable)
https://www.amazon.com/dp/B07FSQYGBK/ref=cm_sw_em_r_mt_dp_U_HI.7Cb6Z6DH60
- Dritz Ezy-Hem Ruler
https://www.amazon.com/dp/B00114RI9U/ref=cm_sw_em_r_mt_dp_U_YF.7CbHW0SCTY
- X-Large Bench Scraper (Option 1)
https://www.amazon.com/dp/B072SBDN8M/ref=cm_sw_em_r_mt_dp_U_I5.7CbAAS4EWK
- Fat Girl Cakes Bench Scraper (Option 2)
<https://www.etsy.com/listing/554009151/big-tall-metal-bench-scraper-with-handle>
- Small Offset Spatula
https://www.amazon.com/dp/B000WG14FC/ref=cm_sw_em_r_mt_dp_U_uj.7CbR6CCSPJ
- Large Offset Spatula
https://www.amazon.com/dp/B000WG14FC/ref=cm_sw_em_r_mt_dp_U_uj.7CbR6CCSPJ
- Scissors
https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01BRGU8R0/ref=cm_sw_em_r_mt_dp_U_RV.7Cb1689605
- Parchment Paper
https://www.amazon.com/dp/B00C37QN2C/ref=cm_sw_em_r_mt_dp_U_SU.7CbBFR2PHP
- Square Cutting Board
<https://www.cakesafe.com/store#!/Work-Boards/c/21434078/offset=0&sort=normal>
- Cake turntable
https://www.amazon.com/dp/B07HHX9V1P/ref=cm_sw_em_r_mt_dp_U_RR.7CbGX2N1GK

Easy Swiss Meringue Buttercream

1 cup pasteurized egg whites
2lbs (8 cups) powder sugar
2lbs (8 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
1 tsp of sea salt (optional)
1-2 tablespoons vanilla extract or any other flavor of your choice

Instructions

1. Place egg whites and sugar in a stand mixer.
2. Attach the WHISK and combine ingredients on low and then whip on high for 5 minutes (I use a timer).
3. Once the meringue is light, white, fluffy and shiny, add the butter in chunks. Add in salt and vanilla.
4. Whip on high for 8-10 minutes until it's very white, light and shiny.

Tips:

- If the meringue is not fluffy enough, beat for another minute or two before adding the butter
- Make sure your butter is at room temperature and is very soft. Otherwise it won't mix well into the meringue. If your butter is not soft enough you can soften it in the microwave 10 seconds at a time...make sure to not melt it though.
- When you add the butter to the meringue it's going to look clumpy. Make sure to whip it until it is smooth.
- If your buttercream appears to have a lot of air bubbles. Switch out the Whisk attachment to the Paddle and whip buttercream on low for 5-10 minutes until it's super smooth and has little to no air bubbles.

Easy Ganache

White Chocolate Ganache

- 6 oz white chocolate I prefer guittard white chocolate wafers
- 1 oz warm water or 1.5 oz heavy cream
- Oil Candy Color if you want to color the chocolate
https://www.amazon.com/dp/B00006FWVX/ref=cm_sw_em_r_mt_dp_U_1fa8CbFZ2W81T

Dark Chocolate Ganache

- 6 oz chocolate I prefer guittard semi-sweet chocolate
- 1.5 oz warm water or heavy cream

Instructions

1. Melt your white chocolate in a glass bowl over a double boiler or in the microwave. Do not over-heat
2. Stir in your water until combined and smooth. Add in colorings as desired.
3. Let cool to 90 degrees before piping onto the cake or if using to frost your cake, let thicken to peanut butter consistency before using.

How to apply ganache drip to your cake

You can use a spoon to put the ganache onto the cake but I find that I have more control if I use a piping bag or a bottle. You could even use a plastic bag with the tip cut off if you really had to. The key to making the ganache drip look really good is to alternate big drips with little drips. This makes a really pretty pattern and looks very natural. Once you get drips all the way around the cake, you can fill in the center with more ganache and then smooth it out with a spatula, completing that seamless drip look.



Tips for a perfectly smooth buttercream cake

- Its really important to chill your cake for 3hrs or preferably overnight after you have filled and stacked your cake layers. Wrap the cake in plastic wrap to keep it fresh in the fridge.
- It is always better to have more buttercream than less since you want to have enough buttercream to work with when smoothing out your cake. If you apply too little, then after a couple spins of the cake turntable, when you use your hemming ruler to smooth it out, you will pull off all of the buttercream or run the risk of having your hemming ruler or offset spatula pick up cake crumbs.
- Make sure the hemming ruler or bench scraper is parallel to the cake and steady as you pull the cake turntable towards you in long sweeping motions. Don't pull the turntable in small movements or you will end up with little lines all over your cake from the hemming ruler starting and stopping. Another common error is to pull the hemming ruler across the cake, instead of holding it steady and letting the turntable do the work for you.
- You want to give medium firm pressure with the hemming ruler or bench scraper when you are first smoothing out your cake and then towards the end when it is almost completely smooth you want to do more of a soft, whisper like approach with the the hemming ruler barely touching the cake. This is the key to getting the air bubbles out.
- A common error when using the hemming ruler or bench scraper is to have it not perfectly vertical. If you are tilting it one way or the other then your buttercream on your cake will have that angled look as well. Always stop and look at your cake at eye level throughout the process to make sure your cake is not only smooth, but also straight up and down.
- During the smoothing process, if you come across a section that isn't being touched by the hemming ruler or bench scraper then you need to either apply more buttercream to that spot with your offset spatula OR use the other technique in the video below, apply the excess buttercream on your hemming ruler to that specific spot while spinning the turntable. Either method works great...it just depends on what works best for you and what seems the most comfortable.
- Don't be afraid to mess up your almost perfect smooth sides by applying more buttercream because if you don't apply the buttercream to those spots and instead keep trying to smooth them out you will eventually hit the cake layers.
- Once your sides are looking pretty smooth, move on to perfecting the top of your cake. Use the offset spatula to pull in the frosting to the middle of the cake. You can also use the hemming ruler or bench scraper to smooth out the cake top so it is even. Then go around the sides once more and do a final gentle smoothing out of the top to get rid of any tiny marks. There is no set amount of times you need to go around the sides or smooth the top. This is definitely an art form so be easy on yourself the first couple of times you try it out!
- Once your cake is frosted to your liking, simply place it in your refrigerator and let it harden for roughly an hour or until the buttercream has hardened completely before stacking.