

Dotty Butterfly Cookies

You can create this deliciously dotty design in six easy-to-follow steps and you'll learn three essential piping skills in the process. Use your Large Butterfly Cutter to get started.



Creatively iced cookies are more popular than ever before, and they look beautiful, too. The basic techniques needed to make these Dotty Butterfly Cookies are much easier to achieve than you think and comprise three key piping skills. These skills form the basis of many future projects for both

cakes and cookies. Once you've mastered them, you'll be able to create a variety of gorgeous confections for your friends and family – and with every issue we'll teach you more creative skills. Turn the page for your first step-by-step lesson in the art of beautifully iced cookies.

Beautiful Butterflies



Sugar cookies and pastel iced butterflies make a tempting teatime combination. To create these dotty delights, you need three key piping skills: **outlining**, **flooding** and **dotting**. See our **Key Skills** box (below) to find out more and follow the steps on the right to discover how to master them.

You will need

DECORATES 12 BUTTERFLY COOKIES

- * 12 SUGAR COOKIES
(see *Essential Recipe*, page 6)
- * FOR THE ICING:
 - 3 food colours: green, purple, blue
 - 450g royal icing sugar (see page 18 to make your own royal icing)
 - Water

Equipment

- Mixing bowl and metal spoon
- Cocktail sticks
- 6 disposable piping bags
- Scissors
- Small round hole icing nozzle

Decorating time: 1 hour (plus 4 hours drying time in between Steps 4 and 5)

Key Skills

* **OUTLINING:** Piping an outline around your cookies prevents the icing from dribbling over the edges and gives the most professional finish. Outlining can also be used on cakes, and for creating your own unique or bespoke icing decorations and shapes, called 'run-outs'.
USE IT FOR: Giving a border to cookies, cake decorations and run-out shapes.

* **FLOODING:** This technique is used to fill in or 'flood' inside an outline with icing. It can be used on cookies, cakes or inside run-out shapes. The icing consistency for flooding is quite runny and gives a smooth finish. (See page 18, *Royal Icing Consistencies*.)
USE IT FOR: Filling inside the outlines of cookies, cakes and run-outs.

* **DOTTING:** This handy technique, done over hardened icing, is great for practising your control when working with a piping bag and an icing nozzle – the more you squeeze the bag, the larger the dot. To remove unwanted peaks from dots, pat down with a damp brush.
USE IT FOR: Practising with a piping bag and creating simple decorations.

Step-by-Step Icing Butterfly Cookies



1



2



4



5



6

Expert Tip

After you've spooned your icing into the bag, fold down the end of the bag a few times to prevent the icing from oozing out. As you ice, your hand will hold the folded end in place.

1. Sift 150g of royal icing sugar into a bowl and add a little water. Use a cocktail stick to add a tiny dab of blue colouring and build up colour gradually. Mix well with a metal spoon. Your icing should be soft peak – soft enough to pipe but not runny. (See page 18, *Royal Icing Consistencies*.)
2. Place your icing nozzle inside a piping bag or snip a small hole in the end of the bag. Spoon three teaspoons of blue icing into the bag. Holding the bag close to the tip, use gentle, even pressure to pipe an outline around the inside edge of each cookie. Let your index finger guide the bag and use your other hand to help you if you need it. If you make a mistake, wipe clean and start again.
3. Thin down the remaining icing with a little water to make it runny enough to flood inside each outline. (See page 18, *Royal Icing Consistencies*.)

4. Half fill a clean piping bag and snip a hole in the end – you don't need a nozzle for this step. Flood inside the outlines, starting at the edges and working towards the centre for a nice, even finish. Allow to dry for four hours.
5. Make up your other two icing colours as described in Step 1. Spoon some soft peak green icing into a piping bag and snip off the tip. Squeeze a large dot for the head and a second dot for the body, dragging the tip of the piping bag through the icing to create a pointed tail.
6. Place your icing nozzle in a new piping bag and half fill it with purple icing. Pipe small dots onto each butterfly wing, gently squeezing until you get the right dot size (as described in *Key Skills, Dotted, opposite*). Leave to dry, then repeat the steps to create green and purple butterfly cookies.

Decorative Ideas

Real butterflies are wonderfully varied and there's no reason why your cookie designs can't be, too. Look at the internet and at decorations in your local supermarket for inspiration. Here are two decorative ideas to help you get started.



* Pretty Paisley

Flood your butterfly with icing and, while it's still wet, drop in dots of runny icing in a different colour. Use a cocktail stick to drag the icing towards the butterfly's body and create a 'teardrop' paisley shape.



* Silver Wings

Silver dragée balls are widely available to buy and are an easy way to add a special touch to your cookies. After piping on dots in Step 6, simply press a single dragée into each dot – the icing will hold it in place.

Essential Recipe

Sugar Cookies

This recipe makes around 18 to 20 cookies, giving some spare to practise on.



You will need

- 125g unsalted butter
- 125g caster sugar
- 1 medium egg
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 250g plain flour

Lift your butterflies out carefully to make sure they maintain their shape.

- In a bowl or electric mixer, beat the butter and sugar together until light and creamy.
- Add the egg and vanilla extract and mix together.
- Sift half the flour into the bowl and mix it in, then sift in the other half and mix again.
- Knead the dough until smooth, then wrap in clingfilm and let it rest in the fridge for half an hour.
- Preheat your oven to gas mark 4/180°C/350°F.
- Roll out the dough on a lightly floured surface to around 4mm thick and use your Large Butterfly Cutter to cut it out.
- Place on a baking tray lined with baking parchment and bake for 10 to 15 minutes until light golden brown. Allow to cool before decorating.

* **In Issue 2...** Learn how to make Iced Sponge Squares and cover them using fondant icing sugar. Plus use your new piping skills to decorate the squares with a range of exciting and inspiring designs.