

GINGER'S BREADBOYS GINGERBREAD HOUSE KIT



is intended for non-bakers and bakers alike—to be enjoyed as a solo or family activity. Whether completed over several days or in one afternoon, it is sure to bring smiles and enjoyment! Read instructions thoroughly; organize and plan for your decorating ideas before you begin.

Our house illustration design and other decorating suggestions can be found at gingersbreadboys.com/pages/how-to-decorate-a-gingerbread-house.

Making the Dough for the Gingerbread House

Prep time: ~25 minutes. Chill time: 3 hours or overnight.

- 1) Use mixer with paddle attachment to cream 1 cup shortening with 1 cup granulated sugar.
- 2) Add large egg and mix well. Blend in $\frac{3}{4}$ cup unsulphured molasses.
- 3) Add 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar and mix well.
- 4) With mixer on low speed, slowly add gingerbread mix and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water.
- 5) Blend just until flour mixture is incorporated. Scrape down sides of mixing bowl as needed.
- 6) Empty dough onto ~18-inch wax paper sheet. Using wax paper, knead dough to form a block.
- 7) Wrap block of dough in same wax paper and place in gallon-size plastic food storage bag.
- 8) Chill for 3 hours or overnight in refrigerator.

Helpful Hints: All ingredients should be at room temperature before starting.

If cookie mix has become lumpy while resting in tin, sift before using.

Switch to mixer's dough hook attachment—if you have one—to add gingerbread mix (step 4).

Making White and Green Royal Icing for Building and Decorating

Prep time: ~25 minutes.

- 1) Place one pound (~3 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 cups) of powdered sugar in mixing bowl.
- 2) Add 3 tablespoons meringue powder.
- 3) With mixer on low speed and using whisk attachment or beaters, gradually add 7 tablespoons of water until mixture is thick and smooth.
- 4) Turn speed to high and whip for ~3 to 5 minutes until mixture forms stiff, glossy peaks.
- 5) For white icing, remove ~ $\frac{3}{4}$ of icing from mixing bowl and place in container with lid. Place plastic wrap directly on icing before sealing. Refrigerate until ready to use.
- 6) Add green food coloring by drops to remaining ~ $\frac{1}{4}$ of icing until desired color is reached and whip. Add powdered sugar to adjust consistency if needed. Store per instructions in step 5.

Helpful Hints: Royal icing should be thick enough to hold its shape but not so thick that it can't be squeezed easily out of decorating bag. Add powdered sugar or water to adjust.

While using icing, cover container with damp tea towel to prevent from drying out.

This royal icing recipe dries hard and fast to make it easy to bond baked panels and hold house together. Quantity is sufficient to build and decorate two houses.

Baking the Gingerbread House

Bake time: ~9 to 10 minutes per pan. Yield: 2 houses.

- 1) Preheat oven to 375°.
- 2) Remove dough from refrigerator, unwrap, and cut into 12 equal portions.
- 3) On flat surface, place portion of dough on piece of pre-cut parchment paper. Cover with sheet of wax paper.
- 4) Use rolling pin to roll out dough to 1/8 inch thick. Keep to rectangular shape of parchment paper piece.
- 5) Cut dough with 5.25" x 7.5" rectangle walls and roof panels cutter.
- 6) Remove excess dough from around cutout, set aside, and save.
- 7) Transfer dough and parchment paper piece to baking sheet.
- 8) Repeat steps 3 through 7 for total of 8 pieces: 4 wall panels and 4 roof panels.
- 9) Use smaller cutters to create impressions—or to cut out shapes—on wall panels for doors, windows, and/or wreath.
- 10) Stamp cobblestone design impression on wall panels and/or diamond design impression on roof panels if desired.
- 11) Create stained-glass window with hard candy if desired. (See **Helpful Hints** below.)
- 12) Bake each piece thoroughly for ~9 to 10 minutes until gingerbread is firm but not crisp. Ovens vary, so watch first pan for bake time. Bake longer if needed.
- 13) Remove from oven and allow to cool on pan for ~10 minutes before moving to countertop or cooling rack.
- 14) Re-use parchment paper pieces after baking.
- 15) Bake door and/or window cutouts from step 9 for ~8 minutes or less.
- 16) Repeat steps 3 through 11 using end wall panel with gable cutter. Cut 4 pieces. Bake per instructions in step 12.
- 17) Use excess dough to cut out path pavers, shingles, and/or shutters if desired and bake for ~8 minutes or less.
- 18) Stack and refrigerate house panels—separated by piece of wax paper—until ready to build and decorate house.

Helpful Hints: It may be easier in steps 3 and 16 to place walls and roof panels cutter or end wall panel with gable cutter directly on parchment paper piece and press dough into cutter. Lightly flour dough if sticking to wax paper.
Dip dough impression stamps in powdered sugar or flour before each use to prevent sticking to dough.
Do not cut all the way through dough when making impressions with stamps or cutters. If choosing roof shingles in your design, each roof panel needs 8 rows of 6 shingles per slope (48) or 96 shingles for one house.
Halve a square or round window cutout to create window shutters.
Use large round cutout for wreath impression.
To create stained-glass window, crush piece of hard candy and place crushed pieces in window cutout. Candy will melt during baking to form a hard shell.
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Building the Gingerbread House

Time: Take as much as you need! House panels should be cooled completely.

- 1) Remove baked house panels from refrigerator.
- 2) Separate out 2 wall panels, 2 roof panels, and 2 end wall panels with gable for each house.
- 3) Decorate baked wall panels and end wall panels with gable while flat—before building house. Skip now to **Decorating the Gingerbread House** section, step 1. Return here—to step 4—to continue building gingerbread house after decorating has been completed. Allow time for icing and decorations to dry and set before building house.
- 4) Affix decorating tube #7 plain border (mortar) onto decorating bag containing white royal icing. The royal icing from our recipe dries hard and fast and is the mortar that bonds the house panels together. Tube #7 has a larger opening to pipe a thicker bead.
- 5) Remove cardboard rectangle house bases from tin.
- 6) With baked wall panel in one hand and decorating bag in the other, run bead of mortar along long edge of wall panel.
- 7) Then position baked wall panel—long side with mortar down and decorated side to the outside—on cardboard rectangle house base about 2 inches from edge and parallel to long side of cardboard rectangle. Hold until it bonds.
- 8) Repeat step 6 with baked end wall panel with gable in one hand and decorating bag in the other. Run bead of mortar along bottom edge and along one side edge of end wall panel with gable.
- 9) Join baked end wall panel with gable perpendicular to wall panel end on base—with decorated side to the outside—and press edges together. Hold until it bonds.
- 10) Repeat steps 6 through 9 with remaining baked wall and end wall panel with gable.
- 11) Let house walls rest and mortar dry and harden before attaching roof.
- 12) To attach roof, run bead of mortar along both gabled end slopes of end wall panel. Press each roof panel gently in place along slope.
- 13) Allow roof panel mortar to dry and harden before moving house or continuing decorating.
- 14) Continue to **Decorating the Gingerbread House** section, step 11.

Helpful Hints: A heavy piping of mortar on inside of baked panels provides additional stability.

For mortar to not show on exterior of house, place to the inside of edges of baked panels.

Mortar should hold baked wall panel in place until supporting baked house panels are added. Use soup cans or other heavy items to rest baked panels against if needed.

Baked roof panels can be decorated either before—while flat—or after house has been built.



Decorating the Gingerbread House

Time: Take as much as you need! House panels should be cooled completely.

- 1) Assemble decorating bag with coupler and decorating tube #4 piping tip.
 - Cut ~2 inches off narrow end of bag.
 - Place coupler base inside bag—threads first—and push through narrow hole.
 - Place decorating tube on coupler base over bag.
 - Place coupler ring over decorating tube and screw onto base.
- 2) Place decorating bag—decorating tube first—into tall drinking glass and fold sides of bag over rim.
- 3) Transfer white icing to bag until ~½ to ¾ full.
- 4) Gather end of decorating bag from around glass and twist until all air is forced out of bag and icing is pushed into decorating tube. Secure end with rubber band.
- 5) Repeat steps 1 through 4 with second decorating bag using green icing and decorating tube #48 (basket weave).
- 6) Set decorating bags aside until ready to use. Refrigerate if not decorating right away.
- 7) Use decorating bag with white icing and decorating tube #4 to decorate windows and/or doors on baked walls and end wall panels with gable before building house.
- 8) Use icing to “glue” candies in place or shutters on windows. Or create shutters with white or green icing and decorating tube #48 (basket weave) with serrated edge up.
- 9) Switch to decorating tube #30 (closed 8-pointed star) to decorate white or green rosettes on wreath. Or use rosettes to glue candies.
- 10) Return to **Building the Gingerbread House** section, step 4.
- 11) Once house is built and baked house panels have bonded, glue peppermint sticks to corners of house with icing.
- 12) Decorate baked roof panels. Use icing to glue baked shingles or candies to roof. Use decorating tube #30 (closed 8-pointed star) to create rosette “snowdrift” borders.
- 13) Add path or other decorations around house to create gingerbread house tableau.
- 14) Finish with dusting of powdered or granulated sugar if desired.

Helpful Hints: Practice piping and decorating to get a feel for icing. Refrigerated icing can lose consistency. Add powdered sugar or water if needed and whip for ~3 to 5 minutes. For decorating—rather than building—a looser consistency of icing may be preferable. Use impressions on baked wall and roof panels as guides for icing. If peppermint stick is broken, use a touch of icing to glue it back together. To dust with powdered sugar, place sugar in sifter or metal strainer. Lightly tap sides to shake powdered sugar over house. To dust with granulated sugar, wet a pastry brush with water and lightly brush roof and other areas of house to be dusted so granulated sugar will stick. Our house illustration design and other decorating suggestions can be found at gingersbreadboys.com/pages/how-to-decorate-a-gingerbread-house.