Mortarboard cake

Crafter Level: Easy
Time Needed: 2 hours

What you'll need

- Cake mix
- 2, 6-inch round cake pans
- Muffin tins (optional)
- Can of cake frosting
- Food coloring
- 1 recipe Royal Icing
- 9 1/4-inch square of cardboard
- Waxed paper
- 1 piece of candy-coated chocolate or bit of rolled fondant for tassel "button" in school color to match frosting
- Tassel

How to make it

1. Bake your cake according to box instructions using the two 6-inch round cake pans. Use muffin tins to bake any leftover batter (optional).

2. Make your Royal Icing (see recipe below), and cover with damp cloth until needed. Add food coloring to both canned frosting and Royal Icing (matching colors).

3. Assemble cake layers and frost the outside of the cake with the colored canned frosting, as evenly as possible.

4. Evenly frost the bottom of the cardboard square with the colored Royal Icing. Place cardboard on waxed paper to let icing harden for about an hour. Keep your remaining royal icing covered until you're ready to use it again.

5. Then frost the top and sides of the cardboard with more colored royal icing. Let harden.

6. Place cardboard on center of frosted 6-inch layer cake.

7. Add candy "button" to center of cardboard by securing it with a dot of royal icing. When button is set, loop end of tassel over the button.

Royal Icing recipe

(Borrowed from our Home Tweet Home Spring Gingerbread Birdhouse Easter Idea. Recipe courtesy of Bernard Shondell.)

- ¼ cup meringue powder (available at most craft stores)

- ½ cup water

- Approximately 6 cups confectioners' sugar

1. In a spotlessly clean and grease-free mixing bowl (glass or metal), beat meringue powder and water until foamy and powder is dissolved.

2. Add confectioners' sugar to mixture and blend until incorporated. Beat on high about 5 minutes until stiff peaks form. Make sure you beat the icing long enough—it should be glossy white and similar in consistency to caulk for best results.

3. Cover bowl immediately with a damp towel or plastic wrap to prevent it from drying out—keep it covered both before and during use.