

Cutting out the house panels

1-2 recipes of gingerbread dough*

Pastry cutter, pizza cutter or sharp knife

Manila folders or foam core (optional)

Rolling pin

Additional flour

House panel templates

Parchment paper

Baking sheets

**To create a Christmas chalet, a gingerbread base, a few tall trees and some extra cookies, you'll need to double this recipe. If you just want to create the chalet with a few extra cookies, one batch will be enough.*

1. Remove half of the dough mixture from the refrigerator and let it sit for 10 minutes. Roll it out evenly onto a sheet of parchment paper to between $\frac{1}{4}$ - and $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch thickness, dusting the dough occasionally with flour to avoid sticking.
2. Cut out the house panels from the templates provided. If you intend to reuse them, trace them onto a manila folder or foam core. Place the templates onto the dough, as many as will fit, with about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch between the pieces. Use a pastry cutter, pizza cutter or sharp knife to trace around the panels and to cut out the front window. You should end up with 6 house pieces: 1 front, 1 back, 2 sides and 2 roof panels. Cut the dough removed from the front panel window in half, lengthwise, and separate to make the shutters.
Tip: Bake the shutter and door pieces on a separate baking sheet from the house panels—they don't need to bake as long because they're smaller. Start checking them for doneness after about 15 minutes in the oven.
3. If you can't fit all the pieces on the rolled-out dough, use the same steps on the remaining dough in the refrigerator for the rest of the pieces. Use cookie cutters on some of the remaining dough to make cookies. Frosted cookies such as gingerbread men, Christmas trees and reindeer will make great additions to your Christmas chalet.
4. Preheat oven to 350°F with the oven rack in the middle. While oven is heating, place the cookie sheets with the dough in the freezer about 5 to 10 minutes to help them bake evenly.
5. Bake dough panels until the edges are just beginning to darken, about 20 to 25 minutes. Rotate the cookie sheets halfway through the baking time to brown more evenly. Remove the sheets from the oven and place on cooling racks.
6. While the pieces are still slightly warm, lay the paper templates over them and use a large, serrated knife to trim off any uneven parts or areas that have spread past the pattern. Let pieces cool completely before assembling the house.



BERNARD'S BAKING TIPS:

- *Leave about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch between pieces when cutting out the dough, and transfer the dough to the baking sheet without removing it from the parchment paper. This will keep the dough from stretching out of shape and keep the pieces from running into each other when baking.*
- *Dough scraps can also be reused and rerolled, but keep in mind the more you reroll the dough, the "tougher" the dough becomes and the pieces will bake differently.*
- *After you've transferred the parchment paper to the baking sheets, place some small pieces of leftover dough on the corners to keep the parchment paper from curling up against your house panels and causing them to warp.*



Assembling and decorating the house

See step-by-step assembly photos at Hallmark.com/christmas/ideas/gingerbread-house/

Parchment paper

1 recipe Royal Icing

Food coloring in Christmas colors (optional)

Decorating bags or parchment paper

Decorating tips
(Basic house uses size 4 round tip, intermediate and advanced houses use a 3 round tip and a 16 star tip additionally)

Various candies for decorating

1. Pick a solid base for your gingerbread house, such as a thick, sturdy piece of cardboard lined with florist foil, a cake stand, or plate. If you want to create a gingerbread base, roll out your remaining dough and cut a circle using a round, 8-inch cake pan as a template. Bake at 350° for about 30 minutes and let cool.
2. Color your icing (optional). Drop a decorating tip (size 4, round) into a decorating bag and add your icing. Pipe a thick line of icing along the bottom and sides of the front panel and along the bottom of one side panel (it doesn't matter which side). Press the front and side together down on the base. Hold in place for a few minutes until the icing is partially set.
3. Pipe another thick line of icing on the side and bottom edges of the second side panel and place it against the edge of front piece and base. Hold in place to set. Repeat with the back piece, aligning all the corners and edges. Get an extra set of hands or cans from your pantry to help hold the panels in place, if necessary. Pipe additional icing along the seams inside the house to fill in any gaps and add stability. Let stand for at least 20 minutes before adding the roof pieces.
4. For the roof, pipe icing all along the top edges of front, back and two sides. Place both roof panels on the structure at the same time, making sure the top edges of the roof panels are touching each other. Hold in place for a few minutes to set. Pipe more icing along the top seam. Let the whole house stand for at least an hour before adding decorations.
5. Decorate the shutters, let dry, then carefully add a line of icing to the back of the shutters to attach them to the front of the house, on either side of the window.
6. Use icing to "glue" pieces of candy to the front, back and side house panels. Use various tips to make additional decorative designs (optional).
7. Add a path to the front door with a layer of icing and small jelly beans or other small candies for paving stones.
8. For the roof, use a spoon or spatula to add heaps of white icing. Smooth them into mounded shapes for a snow-drift look. Add small candy canes and peppermints before icing is set for additional decoration. Top roof seam with a row of colorful gumballs, adding additional icing to seam if necessary.
9. Complete your house by adding more icing to the perimeter for a snowy landscape. Embed frosted cookies—such as gingerbread men and Christmas trees—and larger candies around the perimeter.

Next, we'll show you how to create a pretty tree from remaining dough that you can decorate and add to your scene.





Assembling and decorating the house



BERNARD'S BAKING TIPS:

- *Don't have an extra set of hands to help in the kitchen? Grab some cans from your pantry to help hold the gingerbread panels in place.*
- *If you don't have decorating tips, just cut the end off your parchment bag and ice away.*
- *These are some of my favorite candies for decorating gingerbread houses for Christmas: foil-wrapped chocolates, gumdrops, peppermints, mini candy canes, jelly beans, Necco Wafers, chocolate-covered red and green candies, and gumballs.*



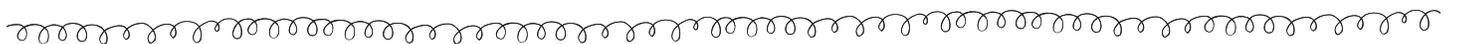
Easy



Intermediate



Advanced





Cutting and assembling a tree

1. Roll out your leftover dough and cut a freeform tree with a sharp knife. Make the base relatively straight for standing, but don't worry about the tree being uniform or symmetrical.
2. Bake tree as you did the house panels, about 20 to 25 minutes.
3. Remove the sheets from the oven and place on cooling racks.
4. Let the tree cool completely before adding it to the house.
5. Decorate tree with royal icing and candies. Let dry.
6. Add a generous amount of icing to the base of the tree and prop it carefully against the house for stability.





Gingerbread House Template

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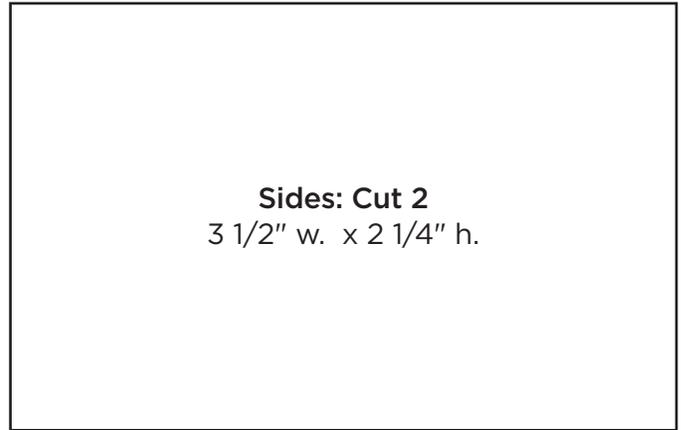
Roof: Cut 2
5" w. x 8 1/4" h.



Gingerbread House Template

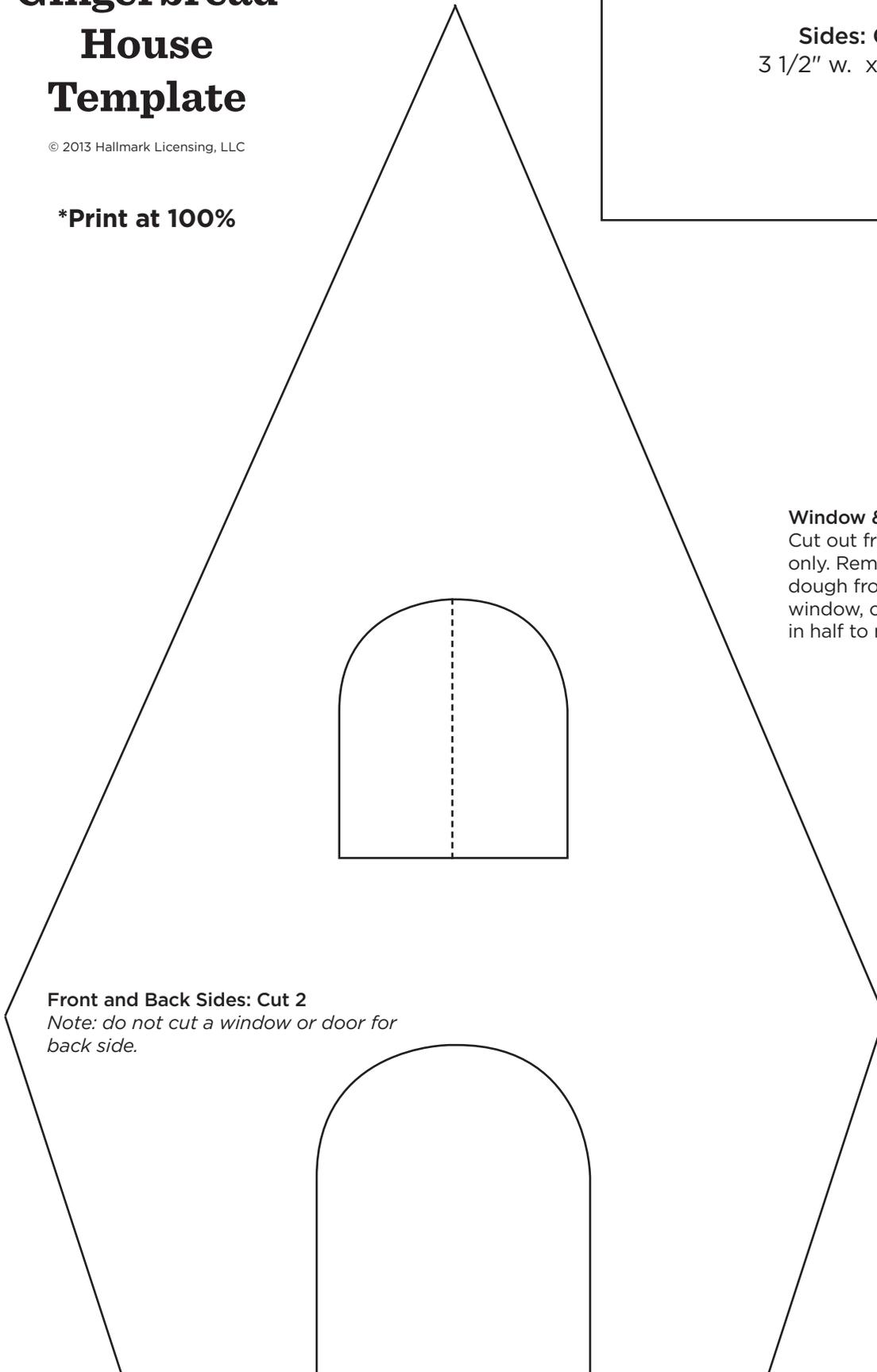
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Window & Door

Cut out from front side only. Remove scrap dough from both. For window, cut scrap dough in half to make shutters.



Front and Back Sides: Cut 2

Note: do not cut a window or door for back side.