



Hints and Tips for Competitors of the Decorated Cake Competition

What Judges look for; What will lose points?

<p>Does the Exhibit comply with the Schedule?</p>	<p>Is the size correct? Are cleats present? Have posy picks been used? Are all the products/items used allowed to be?</p>
<p>Visual appeal/ WOW factor</p>	<p>Does your entry have something special – something that sets it apart? Does your entry have a focal point? Something that draws the eye? Are there too many details? Is it cluttered? Is the piece balanced? Not to be confused with an abstract presentation which is meant to be off-kilter.</p>
<p>Presentation and Cover</p> <p>This is about the cake boards and how well the cake itself is covered. It's also about the setup of the entry.</p>	<p>A decorated board retains more marks than a shop-bought board which hasn't been embellished or improved. Is there an additional presentation board? Is the baseboard and cake clear of dust and marks? If material is used, is it clean, pressed if appropriate or pleated if appropriate? Is it evenly spaced around a fabric covered board? If the baseboard is edged with ribbon, is it even and no glue marks? Are there gaps between the ribbon and the icing edge?</p> <p>If real cake, are the sides straight where meant to be straight? Is the cake centered on the board or otherwise placed evenly?</p> <p>Does the fondant icing smooth, no crazing or pin holes or cracks or bubbles? No fingerprints? No smudges? It needs to be as perfect as possible. Are sharp edges consistently sharp or consistently rounded? Buttercream or Ganache – is this smooth (if appropriate to design), no marks, bubbles, holes?</p>
<p>Overall Design & Concept</p> <p>Exhibit should have balance and color harmony Creativity</p>	<p>Does the overall exhibit work? Does the Theme/Inspiration come across? **Use of the Judging Information Sheet is helpful here. Is the assembly sound? Does the arrangement of elements balance? Yes, you can use a square board with a round (or other shape) cake – but does it detract? If your cake is not centered on the board, is the offset placement still balanced by the cake and other elements? Are the elements and techniques used proportionate?</p>

<p>Degree of Difficulty/Complexity</p> <p>What techniques have been used How difficult to produce is the technique</p>	<p>Don't fall into the trap of including lots of techniques! Far better to use fewer techniques and make them as near perfect as you can. The more techniques used, the more opportunity to lose points on mistakes – unless you can do them all well!</p> <p>Don't mistake taking a long time to achieve an effect, as being difficult. It simply is time consuming to achieve. However, how you present or place a time consuming technique is where you can gain back difficulty. For example, wafer paper circles are time consuming to prepare – the difficulty comes if placing them in swirling/moving pattern.</p> <p>Sugar florals and foliage are more difficult than Wafer.</p> <p>Moulds are easy to use – clean neat perfect outcomes used with creativity and seamlessly placed adds complexity.</p> <p>Hand modelled items are more difficult.</p> <p>Is the consistency of piped icing correct?</p>
<p>Quality of Workmanship</p> <p>Neatness and consistency Cleanliness</p>	<p>Is modelled work consistent?</p> <p>Are florals and foliage consistent? Finely edged and no cracks?</p> <p>No wires poking through?</p> <p>No finger marks/nail marks. No Glue marks</p> <p>Are joins neat? Is there glue overflow</p> <p>Is the piping even and the same?</p>
<p>Attention to Detail</p>	<p>Do flowers have calyxes – if appropriate?</p> <p>Are petals and leaves veined – if appropriate?</p> <p>Do florals and foliage have movement?</p> <p>Moulded items are neat clean and near perfect? And consistent?</p> <p>Do moulded figures have neat features? Proportionate? Neat joins?</p> <p>Sometimes, this means Step Away!</p>

Miniature Cake – this is a shrunken down representation of what might be a normal sized cake. Not to be confused with *just a small cake*. Everything is proportionally reduced.

Breakages Intransit - If something on your entry should break during delivery – don't fix it. Leave the broken piece/s as is and add a note onto your Judging Information Sheet – or there should be extra forms available so that you can quickly write one up. Judges know well, that sometimes these things happen and will allow for that.

Every Competitor who enters has made the first step!

Every Competitor who achieves delivery of their piece has already reached a major achievement.

Of all the visitors to see your entry, many will see a first prize winner, irrespective of the Judges decision.