

# Gingerbread Decorating Contest



The Carl and Mary Welhausen Library invites you to participate in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Gingerbread Decorating Contest

**Entry Forms** may be picked up from the Library, located at 810 Front St., in Yoakum; or downloaded from the Library's webpage at [www.cityofyoakum.org/library](http://www.cityofyoakum.org/library), **now through November 18<sup>th</sup>**.

All **entry forms MUST be turned in no later than 6:00 p.m. on November 18<sup>th</sup>**. This will ensure that we will have space available to display your project. Entry forms may also be emailed to [librarian@cityofyoakum.org](mailto:librarian@cityofyoakum.org) by this date.

**Projects MUST be turned in by 6:00 p.m. on November 28<sup>th</sup>**.  
No late entries will be accepted.

Judging will take place on November 29<sup>th</sup>; and will be based on craftsmanship, composition, creativity, and completeness. Winners will be contacted after this date.

The main structure of your project **MUST** be made from gingerbread. All other components **MUST** be edible and delivered on a display base (*base does not have to be of edible material*). Those making their gingerbread from scratch will be awarded additional points. Recipes for the gingerbread and glue are available at the library or may be searched on the internet.

The Library display opens to the public on December 1<sup>st</sup>. Participants are asked to leave their projects at the library through December 31<sup>st</sup> as part of the library's Christmas display.

**Individuals may pick up their projects during the week of January 2, 2017.**  
Those not picked up during this week will be disposed of.



*For questions, please contact the library:*

*Phone #: (361) 293-5001*

*Email: [librarian@cityofyoakum.org](mailto:librarian@cityofyoakum.org)*

# Gingerbread Decorating Contest



## Entry Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization/Business (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Name (if child, under age 18): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Category *(please check one)*:

- Kids – Ages 5-8
- Pre-Teens – Ages 9-12
- Teens – Ages 13-17
- Adults/Families
- Organizations/Businesses

- ★ All entry forms MUST be turned in no later than November 18<sup>th</sup>
- ★ Projects MUST be turned in by 6:00 p.m. on November 28<sup>th</sup>
- ★ Judging will take place on November 29<sup>th</sup>

### Consent to publish name and photo in newspaper

I, \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby give my consent/permission for my name and/or child's name and/or picture to be published in the newspaper if selected as a winner of the Carl and Mary Welhausen Library's Gingerbread Decorating Contest. I further agree to hold harmless the Library, Library staff, City of Yoakum, and any other affiliated persons of the Library from any liability and/or legal issues that may arise from such publication.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Gingerbread Recipe

- 6 cups all purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 4 teaspoons ground ginger
- 4 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves or allspice
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/2 sticks (12 Tbsp) butter, softened
- 1 1/2 cups packed light brown sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 cup dark molasses
- 1 Tbsp water

*These recipes are provided to you to use if you'd like; it is not required. You may use your own if you choose.*

*Also, don't forget to search the internet for more great recipes and ideas.*

## Make the Gingerbread Dough

**1** Whisk together the dry ingredients in a large bowl, set aside.

**2** Using an electric mixer, beat on medium speed the butter and brown sugar until fluffy and well blended. Beat in the eggs, molasses and water until well combined.

**3** Beat half of the flour mixture into the molasses mixture until well blended and smooth. Stir in the remaining flour. Knead (or use your mixer's dough hook) until well blended. If dough is too soft, add a little more flour.

**4** Wrap the dough in plastic wrap and refrigerate at least two hours, preferably overnight. You can make it up to 3 days ahead of time. Let sit at room temperature for at least 10 minutes before rolling out.

## Create and Cut Out Pattern Pieces

Create a gingerbread house pattern by cutting out pieces of stiff paper (like that of a manila folder) or cardboard. I like cardboard because it's almost as thick as the gingerbread house pieces will be, and you can create a house model easily using the pieces. The following links are to gif images of the pattern that we used to make these houses. They should print out with the correct proportions (1 inch on the pattern = 1 inch in real life), but if not, the dimensions are also given on the pattern so you can use a ruler and create your own.

## Make the Gingerbread House Pieces

**1** Preheat oven to 350°F, with the oven rack in the middle. Have several flat cookie sheets ready, preferably ones that you know will not warp in the oven heat.

**2** Divide the dough in two. Spread parchment paper or wax paper on a large flat surface for rolling. Dust the paper lightly with flour. Working with one portion of the dough at a time, use a rolling pin to roll out the dough to an even thickness of 1/4-inch. Add a little flour to the surface of the dough, and check for sticking as you roll it out. If it sticks to either your rolling pin or the rolling surface, dust with more flour. If the rolled out dough is very soft, you may want to freeze it for an hour before cutting out the patterns.

**3** Rub a little flour over the surface of the dough. Place the pattern pieces on the dough, as many pattern pieces as will fit on the dough. Use a small sharp knife to cut out the pattern pieces from the dough, wiping the knife surface clean frequently. Depending on how soft the dough is, you may need to use scissors to cut the wax paper or parchment paper. You can cut out the patterns through the dough and parchment paper, placing the dough pieces with the paper directly on the cookie sheets. If you are not using parchment paper or wax paper, you may need to use a large metal spatula to transfer the dough pieces to a greased cookie sheet. Space the pieces on the cookie sheet an inch apart from each other. If dough pieces stretch during the transfer process, push them back into shape. You can cut out a door and window(s) at this point, or you can wait until after baking, soon after the pieces have come out of the oven while the cookies are still warm.

**4** Bake in a 350°F oven until the edges are just beginning to darken, 11-15 minutes for the large pieces, 6-8 minutes for the small pieces. Rotate the cookie sheets half way through the baking for more even browning. Remove the sheets to racks to cool, about 15 minutes.

While the pieces are still slightly warm, lay the pattern pieces over them and use a large straight chef's knife to trim off any parts of the pieces that have through cooking spread beyond the pattern.

Remove pieces to cool directly on racks to cool completely.

simplyrecipes.com

### **Royal Icing** (may use as the glue and/or decoration)

Royal icing is not only used for decorating, but it is the mortar that holds the gingerbread pieces together to form the house. The following proportions should make enough icing for both the mortaring step and for decorating for one gingerbread house.

- 2 large egg whites
- 2 2/3 cup powdered sugar, divided

**1** Whisk together until smooth the egg whites and 1 1/3 cups of the powdered sugar.

**2** If you are planning to eat your gingerbread house, and are concerned about the safety of raw eggs, you can microwave the egg white powdered sugar mixture for several seconds (30-40) until the mixture reaches a temperature of 160 degrees, but not higher than 175°F. You can also use pasteurized dried or liquid egg whites.

**3** Add the remaining 1 1/3 cup of powdered sugar to the sugar egg mixture. Using an electric mixer, beat on high speed until the icing holds stiff peaks. If it doesn't form stiff peaks, add more powdered sugar.

**4** Place a dampened clean towel over the bowl of royal icing. Keep this towel over the icing to prevent it from drying out while you work with it.

**5** When you are ready to mortar or decorate, fill a pastry bag with the icing. If you don't have a pastry bag, you can make your own with a re-sealable plastic freezer bag, just cut off the tip (a small cut) of one of the corners of the bag. Plastic or metal piping tips are available in supermarkets which you can also use with a freezer bag, for more controlled piping.

simplyrecipes.com

### **Gingerbread House Icing Glue**

3 Tablespoons meringue powder (available wherever cake decorating supplies are sold)

1lb powdered sugar (about 3 3/4 cups)

4-6 Tablespoons cold water

In a glass bowl, combine the dry ingredients. Add 2T water. Mix well. Add more water as necessary to reach a very thick consistency. When you drag a knife through it, you want to see a clean path left. If it's too thick, add a *tiny* amount of water, mix, and pull your knife through again. If it's too runny, add more sugar.

Put icing into a zip-seal baggie & cut off a corner. I found a slightly large hole worked best (my icing came out about as thick as a squirt of toothpaste).

Quickly dries! If you get a nice, thick consistency, there is no need to hold each piece in place forever (about 10 seconds will do).

kidsactivityblog.com

### **Caramel Glue**

The caramel acts as the glue that holds your house together. When you are ready to assemble the house, start making the caramel. Because this cools quickly and hardens you can't make this ahead of time.

- 1 1/2 cups of granulated sugar

- a small squeeze of lemon juice

Put the sugar in a saucepan and cook over high heat, stir the mixture until it starts caramelize and turn a deep amber about 10 minutes. Remove off the heat and begin to use immediately.

Dip each adjoining side of the walls of the house in caramel and hold together for a few seconds. The caramel will harden holding the pieces together. Once all 4 walls are held together, you can attach the roof by using a spoon or small brush to trace the V-shape and attach the roof pieces.

globetrotterdiaries.com

**Ideas for items that may be used for decorating:**

Lifesavers	Breath Mints
Candy Canes	Pretzels
Hershey Kisses	Sweet Tarts
Edible Glitter	Gummy Bears
M & Ms	Fruit Snacks
Cereal	Nuts
Crackers	Fruit By The Foot
Sugar	Fruit Roll Ups
Licorice	Mini Candy Bars
Sour Straws	Kit Kats
Popcorn	Rice
Marshmallows	Pasta
Cookies	Beans
Gumballs	Dried Fruit
Fruit Stripe Gum	Ice Cream Cones
Sprinkles	Lollipops

These recipes and ideas were obtained from the web; the websites are listed within this text.



Images were obtained from various websites by doing an image search.

