

"Cake Construction"

Notes on Transportation:
 Boxes may be used, *carefully*. Economical alternative is to use large plastic storage boxes: place non-skid liner on reversed lid, then cakes, then body of container *on top*. Try to keep colored icing out of sunlight when possible. Safest method is to bring all tiers separately and assemble them on site. All assembly remains the same *except* central dowel is omitted. Separated cakes are NEVER transported pre-assembled. To keep cakes from sliding around (and touching sides/ruining decorations) place each tier on its own "bumper" with non-skid liner between cake board and "bumper" and "bumper" and floor of trunk. "Bumpers" may be cake circles or smooth, non-footed separator plates. If footed separators *must* be used, use "bumpy foam" to transport. Use clean towels or fleece blankets to line the trunk area—these "grip" carpeting of car. In case of major emergencies (i.e. cakes topple or slip off "bumpers") icing will be kept clean by towel/blanket and may be repaired. Extra icing for borders and a repair kit should ALWAYS be brought along!

CENTRAL DOWEL: Sharpened wooden dowel pierces all the way down through boards in all tiers and into base when possible. Two wooden dowels or two wooden skewers (small cakes) can be used to prevent slipping as well as "spinning". *However*—cakes pre-assembled are very heavy and trunk space/height must be considered. Generally, only bottom two are pre-stacked — and never transported on stand or base (unless cardboard base). Note: some stands begin with a central pillar to which cakes are added, bottom layer on up. Every tier's board (cardboard circle) must have a circle removed from center and cake must be cored out (doughnut) before sliding onto central pillar stand.

DOWELS/STRAWs: giant "starch straws" (found in Asian markets), used for tapioca pearl drinks, make great supports. Wooden dowels are okay here.

PUSH-IN LEG PILLARS: Usually not "cuttable", may screw in or push into separator plate—or, will have hole for separator "feet" to fit into.

CAKE RUFFLE: glued, taped, or iced to board (or use ruffle board). Then, cake with its own board placed on top.

PLATE-PILLAR-PLATE: least sturdy separator method (sold at Michael's).

PLASTIC DOWELS: Not as wide as "Hidden Pillars" - "feet" don't fit inside. Stronger and thicker than wooden dowels.

SEPARATOR PLATE: use smaller size under next tier for stacked cakes. Use larger size for separated cakes (supports borders). If a hole is bored through plate can be used with central dowel.

WAXED PAPER: or parchment paper. To protect surface of buttercream cakes from having icing stick to upper plate and "rip off" when above tier is removed. Circle is removed to facilitate central dowel.

HIDDEN PILLARS/"CUTTABLE" PILLARS: Large cakes are heavy and need heavy-duty support. PVC pipes, cut exactly, can be used as well. "Hidden Pillars" (Wilton) are large, ridged pillars—feet on separator plates fit inside these. Other separator plates have screw-in or push-in legs (see above). Can be used as separators — cut taller than cake.

BOARD(s): Cardboard circle (foodsafe) same size as each cake layer plus frosting/crumb coat+fondant. For larger tiers, use double cardboards (glued or taped together) or foamcore board. Use a dab of icing to adhere cake to board.

BOARDS: for heavy cakes you will need two boards, joined together with tape or double-sided foam tape. This supports the weight of the cake as it is moved around and is inflexible so icing will not crack.

TAPE: Double-sided foam tape or carpet tape "glues" cake in place on cardboard base so it is unable to shift in transit. Non-skid shelf liner can also be used between these layers.

BASE: Cardboard (3 boards, with grain crossed, bound together and covered in cake board foil), masonite, plastic, serving tray, etc. Must be non-flexible or tiers can sag, flip off or icing can "crack".

NON-SKID LINER: aka "shelf liner" - used for lining kitchen shelves where glasses will be stacked, or for placing between plates to prevent scratching. Hole cut in middle for using central dowel.

STAND: Metal, plastic, wrought iron, etc. Or, simply a sturdy box or styro dummy covered with a tablecloth to provide height. Can also be pillars and plates with fountain inserted between.

