

## Gingerbread Recipe

1/2 cup	butter or margarine, softened
1/2 cup	brown sugar
1/2 cup	molasses
3-1/2 cups	all purpose flour
1 tsp.	baking soda
1 tsp.	cinnamon
1 tsp.	ginger
1/4 tsp.	cloves
1/3 cup	water

Cream butter and sugar thoroughly with electric mixer. Beat in the molasses. After blending all the dry ingredients, add alternately with the water to the butter-sugar mixture. The dough might become too stiff, so the last flour addition may need to be blended by hand. At this point the dough may be refrigerated for up to one week. Make sure you take it out 3 hours ahead of baking to become workable. 2-3 batches will be needed for each house.

To bake gingerbread, place about 1/3 of the dough on a cookie sheet that has been lightly greased with oil. Using a lightly dusted rolling pin, roll the dough to approximately 1/4 inch thickness. A dampened towel under the cookie sheet will prevent it from slipping while rolling. Trace pattern onto dough. Remove extra dough and bake in 375° oven for 8-10 minutes. Make sure the dough is baked all the way through. After baking, let the gingerbread cool on the cookie sheet for 10 minutes. While warm, place the pattern back on top and trim around the edges. After 10 minutes, remove to cooling rack and cool completely. It is best to bake the house 48 hours before building.

*Recipe provided by Melody Stanko*

## Royal Icing

3 Tblsp.	meringue powder
4 Cups	sifted confectioner's sugar
6 Tblsp.	water (1 T. less for stiffer icing)

Beat all ingredients at low speed for 7-10 minutes, or until icing forms peaks. Store in air tight container. To give decorations a shiny show effect, add 1 T. corn syrup to 1 cup royal icing.



## Helpful Hints

1. Bake gingerbread to a dark brown. The Creation will be sturdier by reducing moisture in the Gingerbread.
2. Supports, if needed, can be something other than edible food. However, **ALL SUPPORTS MUST BE COVERED WITH EDIBLE FOOD.**
3. The Creations will be displayed in sunny windows and the sun is not kind to all items. Try to avoid items such as chocolate, marshmallow creme or other items that melt in the sun.