

# Jane Asher's Spectrum Cake Recipe



## Ingredients:

For the cake mix, you can either use

- 1 x 400g packet  
**Jane Asher  
Sponge Mix**  
(Home Bargains)

OR

- 4 medium eggs
- 225g spreadable butter or margarine
- 225g caster sugar
- 225g self-raising flour
- 1 tsp vanilla essence
- 1-2 tbsp (15-30ml) milk

- **One 400g tub** ready-made vanilla frosting (Jane Asher from Home Bargains or other)
- Assorted **food colours** as desired!
- Or use the frosting from our **Spectrum cupcakes recipe** in this pack.

## Method:

- Pre-heat the oven to 180°C (165°C fan-assisted), gas mark 4. Lightly grease two 18-20cm sandwich tins and line the bottoms with baking paper.
- Beat together the butter or margarine with the caster sugar, by hand or in an electric mixer, until really pale in colour and light and fluffy.
- Break the eggs into a separate bowl or jug. Add the vanilla essence and lightly beat together.
- Very gradually, add the eggs to the butter/sugar mixture, little by little to prevent curdling, beating well between each addition. Don't rush it!
- Gently fold in the flour. The mix should drop gently off the spoon: if necessary add a little milk, but remember that if you are using liquid food colours they will loosen the mix when you add them.
- Divide the mix roughly into seven small bowls or mugs, and add food colour little by little to each portion, using a cocktail stick and stirring well with a teaspoon, until you have the colour you want.
- Smooth the cake mix into the tins - I started with Violet at the bottom and added Indigo and Blue on top, then in the second tin I started with Green and then added Yellow, Orange and lastly Red, so that my rainbow would begin at the top of the cake and go downwards (the colours are out of order in this picture, as I was still experimenting when I took it). Use a palette knife to spread each layer of mix into the tins, swirling them a little so they mingle slightly.
- Bake for 25-30 minutes in the centre of the oven until well risen and firm to the touch, or a knife inserted into the centres comes out clean.
- Allow to cool for a couple of minutes in the tin, then turn out onto a rack to cool completely. (Don't worry if the colour looks disappointing on the outside - it'll be quite different inside.)

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- › Meanwhile, divide about a quarter of the frosting into a number of little bowls (I did seven different colours but less would look just as pretty). Add colour to each and mix well. Put each portion into a small, disposable piping bag.
- › Once the cakes are completely cold, sandwich them together with a little of the kept back frosting, then add a very thin coating around the side and over the top. Chill for ten minutes or so (this will help to stop getting crumbs into the final coat). Keeping back a small amount for piping round the edge, spread the rest of the uncoloured frosting around the side of the cake, smoothing well with a palette knife.
- › Snip the end off each of the piping bags and pipe strips of colour across the top of the cake. Then (and this feels scary but is easier than it seems) pull the edge of the palette knife across the whole top, smoothing the strips of colour to flatten them.
- › Put the remaining vanilla frosting into a piping bag with a star or shell nozzle attached and pipe around the top and bottom of the cake.



## Top tips:

**Paste colours** are by far the best to use, as they are much stronger than liquid or gel colours and so you need considerably less, thus affecting the taste and texture of the cake minimally. And there are, of course, natural colours available, for those who react to colouring.

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**A turntable** makes the icing of this cake much easier to do, and I recommend investing in one if you enjoy cake decorating and intend to do more of it.



Raising **£200** could run our  
Parent2Parent service for a day.

# Spectrum Cupcakes Recipe



## Cupcake ingredients:

- **4 tbsp** boiling water
- **40g** cocoa powder
- **3 free range** large eggs
- **175g** unsalted butter (softened)
- **165g** unrefined golden caster sugar
- **115g** self-raising flour
- **1 tsp** baking powder

## Frosting ingredients:

- **225g** unsalted butter, very soft
- **500g** icing sugar
- **2-4 tbsp** whole milk or cream
- **2 tsp** clear vanilla extract

## Cupcakes instructions:

- › Line a muffin tin with paper cases. Sift the cocoa powder into a bowl, pour in the boiling water and mix into a thick paste. Add the remaining cake ingredients and mix with an electric hand whisk (or beat with a wooden spoon).
- › Divide the mixture equally between the 12 paper cases. Bake in a preheated oven at 200°C (400°F, Gas mark 6) for about 12-15 minutes until well risen and springy to the touch. Cool in the cases on a wire rack.

## Frosting instructions:

- › Make sure the butter is nice and soft, by getting it out of the fridge an hour or two before using it.
- › Whip the butter for a full five minutes, scraping down the sides with a spatula every minute or so. If you don't have a stand mixer, then a hand-held electric mixer will do the trick too.
- › Once you have whipped the butter, it should be very light and pale, and adding the icing sugar will only make it whiter. Beat it for a good minute between icing sugar additions.
- › We added different food colourings to our frosting to have lots of different colours and piped the icing with a star nozzle.



Raising **£40** could pay for a parent of an autistic child to have an hour-long telephone or online consultation with our Education Rights Service.