

# GINGERBREAD CHICKEN COOP

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## GINGERBREAD INGREDIENTS

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1 1/4 cups Crisco	
1 1/2 cups packed brown sugar	
2 cups corn syrup	
1 Tablespoon cinnamon	
1 Tablespoon ginger	
9 cups flour	
1/2 teaspoon salt	

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## LET'S MAKE IT!

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In a saucepan over medium heat, melt Crisco with brown sugar and corn syrup until sugar is dissolved.

Remove from heat and cool.

In a large bowl, combine flour & sugar & spices.

Add sugar mixture & combine. Expect a crumbly, stiff dough that's difficult to work with.

When cool enough to handle, knead until dough comes together.

Form into two balls, cover with plastic wrap and allow to rest for at least 1/2 hour at room temp.

# ROYAL ICING

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## INGREDIENTS

3 Tablespoons meringue powder	
4 cups sifted confectioners' sugar	
5 Tablespoons water	

## LET'S MAKE IT!

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Place sugar and meringue powder in stand mixer and stir at low speed.

Add water and mix for 7-10 minutes.

Keep covered with a damp paper towel while not working with it.

## DECORATING SUPPLIES

Glue Gun & glue sticks	Life Cereal (for roof)
Gel food coloring	Pretzel rods (for roost & tree)
small paint brush	Brown sugar (for dust bath)
toothpicks	Linguine pasta (for chicken legs)
decorator sugar or sugar pearls	Powdered sugar (for snow)
Wilton Candy Melts (I used red, green, white & dark cocoa)	Brach's butterscotch hard candies (for windows)
disposable cake decorating bags (I used a separate bag for each color of candy melts)	Marzipan candy dough (for molding chickens & eggs)
Wilton decorating tips #5 (for weathervane) and #21 (star), #48 (for siding), #12 (for filling seams on house), tip #104 (for icing roof/melting snow & making wreaths)	Chocolate river rocks (for walkway)
parchment paper or wax paper	White, Silver & Gold decorator's sugar
Shredded Wheat biscuits (for hay)	Silicone candy molds (for feeder & waterer) I had random molds on-hand, but any number of different molds will work.

## LET'S MAKE IT!

While dough rests, print & cut out the three templates below. Trace templates onto cardboard or a stiff, file-folder type paper & cut out.

Preheat oven to 350°F. Line 2 cookie sheets with parchment paper.

Roll out dough to 1/4". Place cardboard templates on top of dough & cut out pieces with a pizza cutter or large, sharp knife. (I cut an extra, half-moon window above door on my coop that is not shown in template)

Re-roll scraps & cut out free-form fence posts if desired. Bake extra parts and pieces of gingerbread that can be cut for use when the unexpected occurs. (We ended up cutting pieces to close gaps under the roof & install walls in between the nest boxes.)

Transfer to parchment paper & bake 12-15 minutes. Cool completely on baking sheet.

## **WINDOWS**

Unwrap a handful of butterscotch candies, place in a Ziplock bag & finely crush. Place cooled gingerbread walls with window openings on a parchment-lined cookie sheet, flat side down. Fill windows with candy shards. Bake in a preheated 350°F oven until just melted. It takes only a few minutes- watch it like a hawk. When melted, remove & cool completely on cookie sheet.

## **ASSEMBLE WALLS**

Build the gingerbread coop on a sturdy base. (I used a cake board on top of a piece of plywood cut to size.) Identify the center and front of the coop. Lay the four walls on the board, flat side facing up in their approximate permanent locations. Draw a line of hot glue on the board the length of the front wall & affix the wall upright on top of the glue. Use cans of food to hold the wall in place. Repeat gluing process with an adjacent wall, gluing seams the walls together. Repeat with remaining two sides.

## **MAKE & INSTALL ROOST**

Glue two pretzel rods pieces to floor & glue a pretzel rod to the top of those posts.

## **ROOSTING CHICKENS**

Mold marzipan into chickens, paint with food color gel & glue to roost.

## **ICE FLOOR OF COOP**

Spread royal icing on floor inside coop, sprinkle crushed shredded wheat on top of icing.

## **ATTACH NEST BOX ONTO BACK WALL**

Glue 3 nest box divider walls in place. Ice nest boxes white & cover with shredded wheat.

## **RAMP**

Use a piece of extra gingerbread to cut out a ramp, attach little rungs of gingerbread. Candy melt chicken poop is not optional.

## **ATTACH POP DOOR & FRONT DOORS**

Using hot glue.

## **ICE COOP BARNBOARD**

Mix red gel color into some of the icing & pipe onto outside walls with decorating tip #48. Ice from bottom to top. Press barn star into icing above nest box before icing dries.

## **FINISH SEAMS**

With white icing & tip #12, outline all corners, seams, doors & windows. Pipe Xs on doors & panes on windows.

## **BARN STAR**

Roll out a small piece of marzipan & cut out into shape of a star, dip one side in gold sparkling sugar.

## **SHINGLE ROOF PANELS**

Ice a line across the bottom edge of roof panel & affix Life cereal squares side by side. Repeat in rows, overlapping the row above slightly each time. When coop siding is complete, add roof panels with hot glue.

## **ATTACH ROOF**

Add panels with hot glue. With tip #104, pipe melting snow onto roof ridge, down roof randomly & along front of roof. Sprinkle roof with powdered sugar.

## **FENCE**

Assemble sections individually with hot glue, then attach fence around run

## **CHICKEN RUN**

Melt dark chocolate candy melts & spread on floor all the way around coop. Add chocolate river rocks to floor at coop entrance, sprinkle remaining ground area with shredded wheat

## **WEATHERVANE**

Tape weathervane template (see template #3, above) onto work surface. Place parchment paper or wax paper on top & tape in place. Place red candy melts in a small bowl and microwave 30 seconds at a time. Remove, stir and repeat in 30 second increments until just melted. (It shouldn't take more than 2 minutes total. Careful not to over-heat) Fit decorating bag with tip #5 & pour candy melts into bag. Trace outline of weathervane & fill center. Work quickly before candy melts harden. Candy melts will harden in the piping bag. Remove the metal tip from piping bag & place bag back into the microwave for 15 second increments (shouldn't take more than one or two). Use a toothpick to clean out metal tip before replacing.

## **WATERER**

Base=red candy melts in chocolate mold. Top=white candy melts in chocolate mold. Water=white decorator's sugar in base

## **FEEDER**

Top & bottom=white candy melts in candy molds. Carve out centers slightly. Attach top to bottom with candy melts. Fill with real chicken scratch or other grains.

## PLANTERS

Base= red candy melts in candy molds. Leaves= green candy melts with tip #104 piped onto base.  
Red berries=red candy melts with tip #5

## FEED BAG

Spare piece of gingerbread covered with white candy melts, red and blue piped on at 3:30 in the morning after hitting the dead-tired wall.

## TREE

Pretzel rod, pretzel sticks dipped in chocolate candy melts. Anchor with green candy melts grass

## WREATHS

Green candy melts piped with tip #104 in circles on parchment paper. Red candy melts piped onto green circles with tip #5 I think? Attach to fence, doors and coop with a dab of candy melts.

## CHICKENS & EGGS

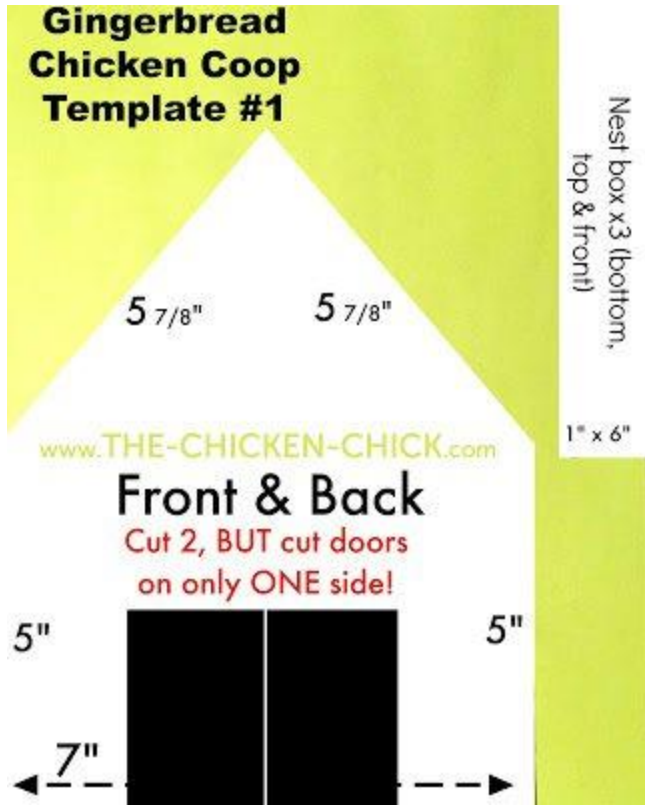
Marzipan molded by hand, decorated with candy melts or painted with food coloring gel. Rooster's legs=linguine. Attach to base with candy melts.

## NEST BOXES

Shredded wheat in bottom of nest boxes. Marzipan eggs colored with food coloring gel.

## DUST BATH AREA

Marzipan hen. Legs=linguine. Sand=dark and light brown sugar.



**Gingerbread  
Chicken Coop  
Template #3**

Don't cut out  
weathervane  
template on dough  
Set aside for later.



8"x4"

Side wall #1  
Cut out windows



[www.THE-CHICKEN-CHICK.com](http://www.THE-CHICKEN-CHICK.com)

8"x4"

Side wall #2  
Cut out pop door



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