

# Bake Like A Pro With 10 Easy Tips



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(NAPSA)—Whether it's a school party, personal accomplishment or just because, every day, there are occasions that call for special treats or desserts. Even with a full schedule, busy moms can bake and decorate beautiful cupcakes that would be perfect for any gathering.

The key is to use quality ingredients and products designed for the job. To help, best-selling authors and cupcake gurus Karen Tack and Alan Richardson share their best tips for baking cupcakes like a pro every day.

- Start with a good cupcake pan. It should be silver colored and a little on the heavy side.

- For cupcakes that look as good as they taste, use an aluminum foil-lined baking cup that's designed to keep its pattern after baking, such as Reynolds StayBrite Baking Cups. Baking cups that are not foil lined can lose their color while baking.

- Before mixing your cupcake batter, make sure to bring all ingredients to room temperature. This way, the ingredients are more likely to blend together easily.

- Remember, if you mix cold items into your batter, you run the risk of having a lumpy consistency. This might lead you to over-

mix the batter and overmixing can cause cupcakes to be chewy instead of moist.

- Pinch the ends of your baking cup with paper clips to make your cupcakes into different shapes, like a star or a football.

- Only fill your baking cup  $\frac{2}{3}$  to the top. They will rise to the top of the liner while baking.

- Simply use a serrated knife to trim the top of your cupcakes so they are flat, rather than rounded like a mushroom cap you may find in a bakery. This makes it easier to decorate the top of the cupcake.

- Chill your cupcakes before you frost them so they won't crumble while you're handling them.

- Wipe the excess frosting off the spatula on the edge of the can before going back for another swipe. If you have extra frosting on your spatula, you will never get a clean peak on your cupcake top.

- Keep frosting at room temperature before spreading it on your cupcakes. If frosting is too cold, it will be difficult to spread and can tear the cake. If frosting is too warm, it becomes runny and messy.

For more tips and for fun-filled recipes, visit [www.cupcakecentral.com](http://www.cupcakecentral.com).