

# Poinsettia Tutorial

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*A stunning focal point in many Christmas floral arrangements, the poinsettia is available not only iconic red, but also coral, pink and ivory variations. As cake decorators, we have the option of creating a single, large poinsettia, a medium size to use as part of a spray, or a smaller flower for a smaller cake or spray.*

## Supplies

- Small/Medium Poinsettia 5 Piece Cutter Set
- Large Bract & Large Leaf Poinsettia 2 Piece Cutter Set (Optional)
- Poinsettia Veiner/ Mold Set
- White Wire— gauges 28, 26, and 24
- Green Wire— gauges 28, 24, 22, 20, and 18
- Light Green Floral Tape
- Gumpaste
- Vegetable Shortening
- Corn Starch Puff
- Grooved Board
- Small Rolling Pin
- Soft Cel Pad
- Cosmetic Sponge
- Large Cel Stick or Medium Ball Tool
- Medium Pin or Large Ball Tool
- Veining Tool
- Spring Action Scissors or Small, Fine Scissors
- Fine Tweezers (if hand shaping the centers)
- Crate Foam Former
- Multi-Purpose Former
- Wire Cutters, Needle Nose Pliers
- Egg White (or Gum Glue)
- Plastic Flap
- Gel Colors— AmeriColor™ Red Red, Lemon Yellow, Wilton® Moss Green
- Dusts—Ruby, Burgundy, Aubergine, Lime Green, Forrest Green
- Round and Flat Brushes
- Steamer
- Confectioner's Glaze or Spray Lacquer



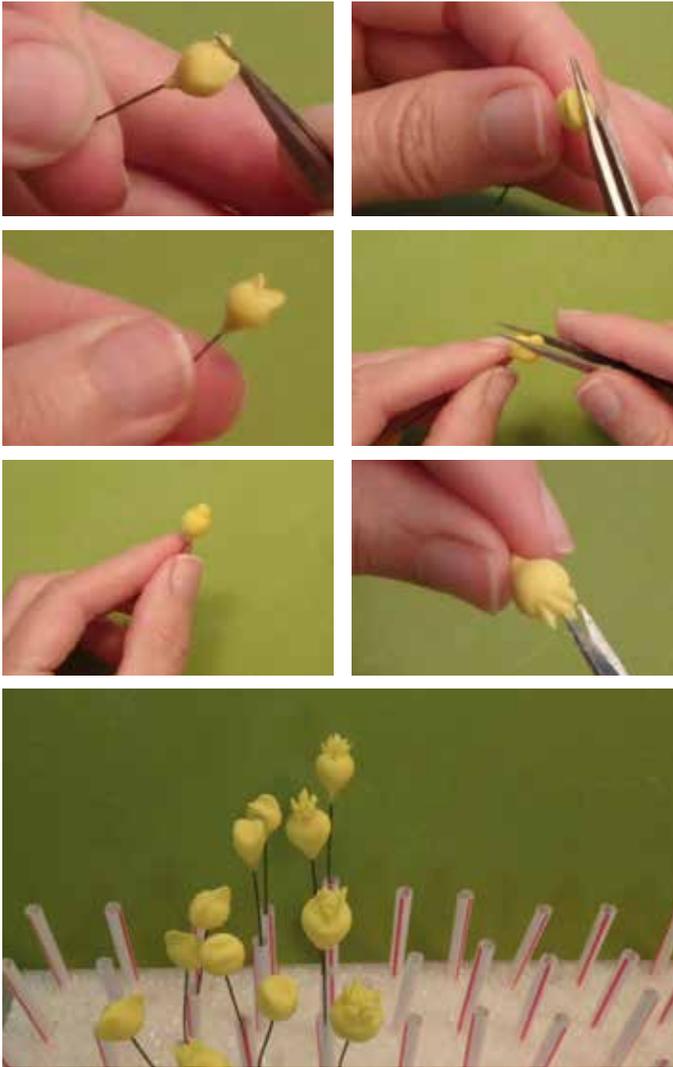
## Cyathium (Central Flowers)

The center of the poinsettia is made up of three sizes or stages of flowers—small, medium and large. These can be made either using a mold or by hand.

### Molded Centers:

Using dark lemon yellow gumpaste, roll a #4 ball into a sausage and insert into the small mold, pressing down with the small ball tool. Dip a 28 gauge green wire with a small hook into egg white or gum glue and insert into the paste. Flex the mold on both sides. Remove and mold around the base. The medium size is made the same way, also using a #4 ball of paste.





For the large cyathia, begins the same way except using a #5 ball of paste, then pinch a small portion at the top into a column. Using a pair of spring action scissors, make small snips at the top to create “hairs” (a small radish shape).

**Bracts (Petals):**

The bracts of the poinsettia are what most people consider to be the petals, or the colored part of the flower. These can be made using red, coral, pink or ivory gumpaste. For a dark red, gel color may be added while making the gumpaste for the best results. If using pre-made gumpaste, mixing red powder with a small amount of white vegetable shortening before adding to the paste will create less stickiness and difficulty.

Using the gumpaste color of your choice, roll a #14 sausage over the 5 ridges of the board, rolling up and rolling down gradually until the paste is thinned out appropriately. Remove and turn over. Cut out the appropriate number of extra small bracts for the size desired. (Keep the bracts you are not working on covered in your plastic flap so they don’t dry out!) Dip a 28 gauge white wire into egg white and gently insert half way up the bract. Mold around the base. Vein on the flat side (wire facing up) pressing with a cosmetic sponge. Remove from veiner and place on soft side of the Cel Pad (wire still facing up). Soften the edges of the bract using the medium ball tool. Turn the bract over and hollow the base using the veining tool. Place on foam former or a multi-purpose former to dry. Once petals are dry, using light green half-width floral tape, tape the wire from the base of the petal about one inch down.

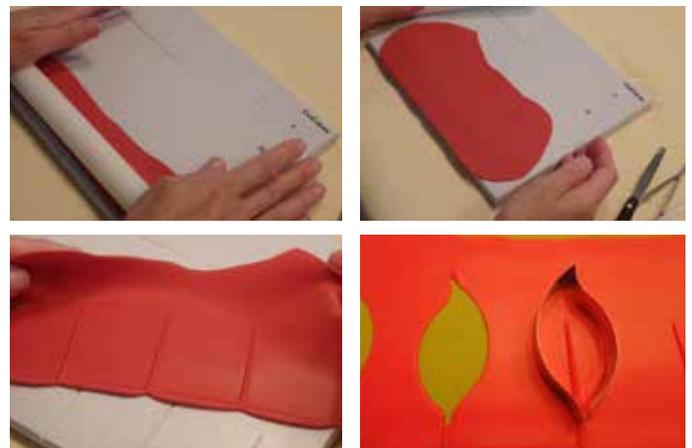
The large flower is made the same way as the small and medium, except use a #5 ball of paste. Once it is removed from the mold, using a pair of spring action scissors, make small snips at the top to create “hairs”.

\*Note—A blue nine-cavity mold is shown which is now a six-cavity mold available thru First Impressions Molds™. There is now a green three-cavity mold available that works better (but didn’t arrive in time for the picture) available thru International Sugar Art Collection (ISAC).

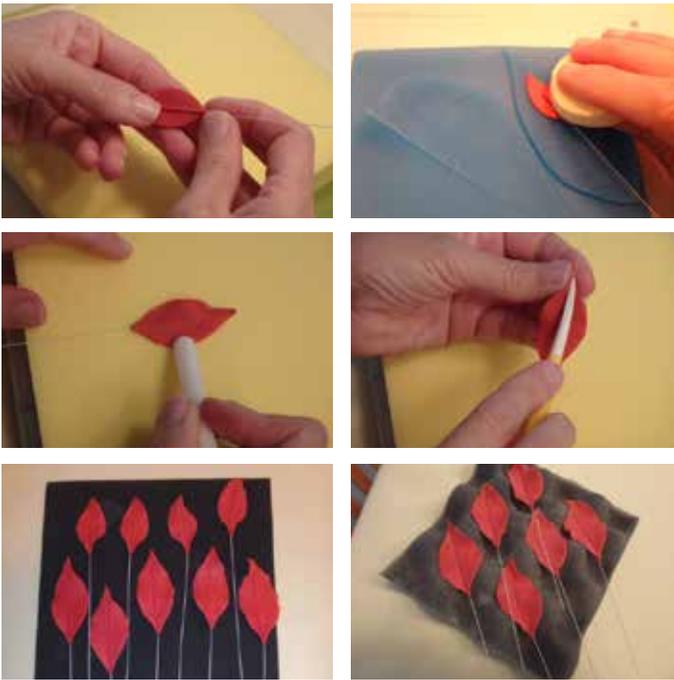
**Hand Shaped:**

To create the small cyathia, insert a 28 gauge green wire with a small hook and dipped in egg white into a #4 ball of dark lemon yellow gumpaste. Mold and taper around the base forming a small balloon shape. Using tweezers, at an angle, pinch each side creating two ears or a heart shape.

The medium cyathia is made the same way, except instead of creating a heart shape, use the tweezers to make two pinches parallel to each other making a lip shaped balloon.



*Article continues on the next page.*



edges, use a flat brush to dust Aubergine from the edge towards the center, both front and back, giving the bract more shading and definition. The base of each bract is then dusted with Lime Green, front and back.

**Leaves:**

Once dry and the bases are taped, use a soft round brush to dust the center with Lime Green. With a flat brush, dust the edges, from the edge towards the center, and up the center vein with Forrest Green. Dust the base of the leaf with the accent color (Ruby/Burgundy mixture, in this example). Dust both the front and the back in this fashion.

After the leaves are dusted, steam them to set the colors and then paint or spray with Confectioner’s Lacquer.

\*More color options, along with fantasy options, are available in Nicholas Lodge’s Craftsy class, “Sweet Seasons Winter Poinsettia.”

**Green Leaves:**

Using pale moss green gumpaste, roll a #16 sausage over the 5 ridges of the board, rolling up and down gradually until the paste is thinned out appropriately. Remove and turn over. Cut out the small and medium leaves. Keep the leaves you are not working on covered in your plastic flap so they don’t dry out! Dip a 24 gauge green wire in egg white and insert it half way up the leaf. Mold around the base. Vein the flat side (wire facing up) pressing with a cosmetic sponge. Remove from the veiner and place on the soft side of the pad (wire still facing up). Soften the edges using the medium pin or large ball tool. Turn the leaf over and hollow the base using the veining tool. Dry on the multi-purpose former. Once petals are dry, using light green half-width floral tape, tape the wire from the base of the petal about one inch down.

To make the large leaf, use a #13 ball of paste on the longer ridge, repeating the above steps using a 22 gauge wire.

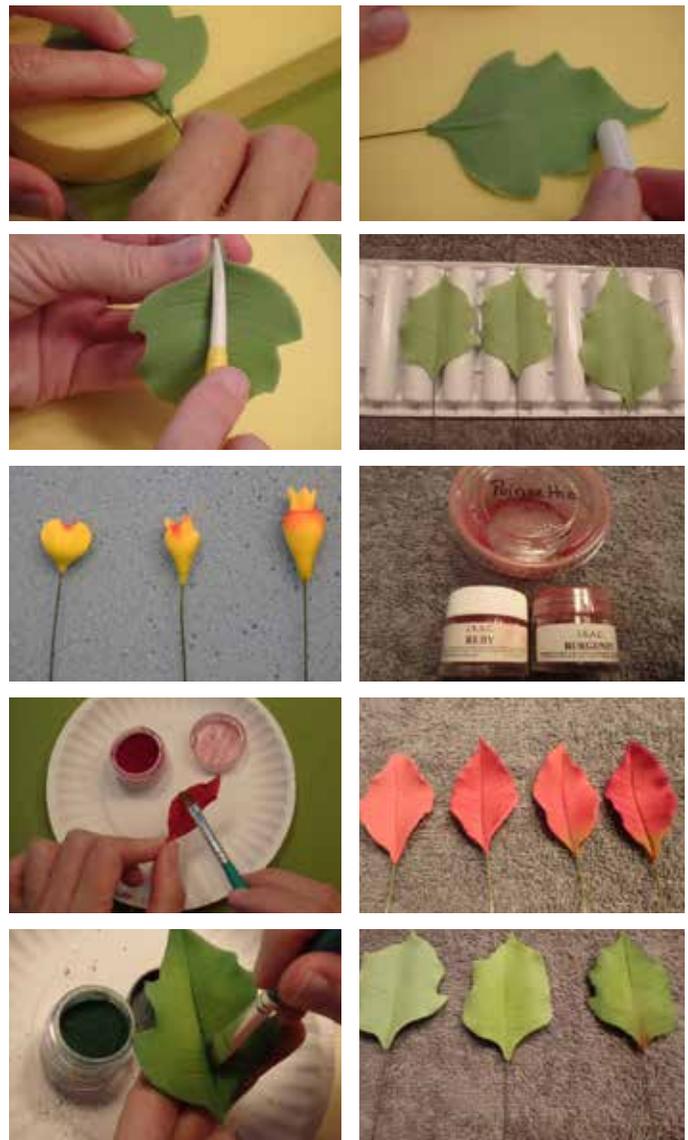
**Dusting**

**Cyathium/Yellow Centers:**

Once centers are dry dust all three sizes with Lime Green dust at the base. If doing a white or ivory poinsettia, this is all you will need. For other colors, dust an accent color between the ears or lobes of the heart shape, on one side of the lips of the medium size, and at the base of the snips (or “hairs”) of the large flowers. (I used Ruby for my accent color.)

**Bracts/Petals:**

Once dry and the base is taped, using a soft round brush dust the center, both front and back of each bract with a mixture of Ruby and Burgundy dusts for a dark red poinsettia. On the



### Assembly:

The assembly for the poinsettia is slightly different than most flowers. In order to keep the flower more realistically flat, the components should be divided into three fairly equal groupings. Next, bend the wires at right angles to the bracts/leaves with the smallest size about 1/4" from the base, increasing the distance slightly for each increasing size, i.e. the extra small 1/4", the small 3/8", the medium slightly more, etc.

Tape each grouping to form one-third of a circle, starting with the yellow cyathium/centers, bracts, and then leaves, using half width light green floral tape. Once this is completed, use full-width light green floral tape to join two of the sections; then add the third section. Adjust the spacing of the petals/leaves by gently grasping the pieces near the wires (not at the tips—they may break!) to perfect the shape of your flower. Steam the finished poinsettia to set the colors on the cyathium and bracts/petals.

\*Note—I like to have a folded hand towel on my work space during assembly for extra padding in case of accidental dropping or tapping of pieces on the table. You don't want breakage this close to completion!



### Production List

Small Poinsettia (approximately 6" diameter)  
2 each cyathium 28 gauge green wire  
5 each extra small bracts 28 gauge white wire  
7 each small bracts 28 gauge white wire  
3-5 small leaves 24 gauge green wire  
Assembly 20 gauge green or white wire

Medium Poinsettia (approximately 8" diameter)  
3 each cyathium 28 gauge green wire  
4 each extra small bracts 28 gauge white wire  
5 each small bracts 28 gauge white wire  
7 each medium bracts 26 gauge white wire  
2 each small leaves 24 gauge green wire  
3 each medium leaves 24 gauge green wire  
Assembly 18 gauge green or white wire

Large Poinsettia (approximately 10" diameter)  
5 each cyathium 28 gauge green wire  
4 each extra small bracts 28 gauge white wire  
5 each small bracts 28 gauge white wire  
6 each medium bracts 26 gauge white wire  
7 each large bracts 24 gauge white wire  
2 each small leaves 24 gauge green wire  
3 each medium leaves 24 gauge green wire  
3 each large leaves 22 gauge green wire  
Assembly 18 gauge green or white wire



Article continues on the next page with a recipe for gumpaste.

## Nicholas Lodge Gumpaste Recipe

### Ingredients:

Fresh or Pasteurized Egg Whites 125 grams

Powdered Sugar 725 grams + 100 grams

Tylose Powder 25-28 grams

Vegetable Shortening 20 grams

1. Place the egg whites in a KitchenAid® mixer bowl, fitted with the flat paddle or scraper paddle attachment.
2. Turn the mixer on high speed for 10 seconds to break up the egg whites.
3. Turn the mixer to the lowest speed; slowly add the 725 grams of powdered sugar to make soft consistency royal icing.
4. Turn up the speed to setting 3 or 4 for about two minutes.
5. Make sure the mixture is at the soft-peak stage. It should look shiny, like meringue and the peaks fall over. (If coloring the entire batch, add the paste, gel or liquid color at this stage, making it a shade darker than desired.) Also, white gel color can be added to make whiter gumpaste.
6. Turn the mixer to the slow setting and sprinkle the Tylose in over a 5 second time period. Turn the speed up to the high setting for a few seconds. This will thicken the mixture.
7. Scrape the mixture out of the bowl onto a work surface that has been sprinkled with some of the reserved 100 grams of powdered sugar. Place shortening on your hands and knead the paste, adding enough of the reserved powdered sugar to form a soft but not sticky dough. You can check by pinching with your fingers and they should come away clean. Place the finished paste in a zip-top bag, then place the passed paste in a second bag and seal well.
8. Mature the paste for 24 hours if possible before use, keeping in a cool environment.
9. When you are ready to use the paste, cut off a small amount and knead in a little vegetable shortening into the paste. If coloring at this stage, knead the color into the paste until the desired shade is achieved.
10. When not in use, the paste will need to be stored in the refrigerator. Before use, remove from refrigerator and allow the paste to come to room temperature. Paste may also be frozen.

*If you'd like to learn more, there is a YouTube video of Nicholas Lodge making his gumpaste posted by Craftsly.* 🍷

## A Sincere “Thank You”

Bonnie Brown, Boynton Beach, FL

It was with a combination of sorrow and surprise that, just before making my final plans to attend the 41st ICES Convention in Mobile, I learned I would not be able to attend. My husband had to undergo (surprise!) surgery to repair a torn rotator cuff and remove bone spurs in his right shoulder.

In spite of that and even in my absence, you the membership of ICES gave me the honor of electing me to the post of Vice President.

Thank you to all the wonderful members of the Florida Chapter of ICES for their tireless campaigning (especially Merrie Lee Reese who walked all over with my “face on a stick”) and to the entire membership body for their confidence and trust, I am truly humbled.

I promise to draw on my 40 years of sales and marketing experience within the hospitality and travel industry to assist the Board of Directors and our members in their efforts to have our organization grow and to maintain the status, recognition and presence ICES enjoys. 🍷



### Welcome New ICES Members\*

Stephanie Ables, TX

Suzanne Allen, OK

Rose Ann Barba, TX

Christine Benfer, PA

Debora Brown, TX

Pamela Camel, Panama

Arianna Diaz, Venezuela

Melissa Estes, ME

Rachel Fang, TX

Krista Friemel, TX

Lisa Gardner, NC

Amanda Gaut, MD

Camila Guevara,  
Colombia

Melissa Harris, TX

Brenda Harrison, OK

Kassy Jimenez, TX

Akande Kofoworola

Oluwatemitto, MI

Keri Michael, TX

Adeoba Morayo  
Peace, MI

Akande Oreoluwa  
Abimbola, MI

Reggie V Pagan, MA

Jennifer Sherwood, TX

Janet Strain, AZ

Stacy Suess, TX

Laura Villafani, TX

Sara L Weber, TX

\*These members signed up during October 2016.

