

You will need: a big bowl (preferably chilled); a whisk, eggbeater, or stand mixer; a plate, serving platter, or baking sheet; a half pint of heavy cream or store-bought whipped cream; vanilla extract; powdered sugar; a box of thin wafer cookies (chocolate wafers, ginger thins, etc.); decorations for the outside of the cake (M&M's, chocolate chips, crushed cookies, fruit, nuts, etc.)

Step
1

If you're whipping your own cream rather than using store-bought, **pour the cream** into the chilled bowl and add a **drizzle of vanilla** and a couple of **spoonfuls of powdered sugar**.

Step
2

Whisk or beat the cream until **stiff peaks** are clinging to the whisk or beater.

Step
3

Spread the whipped cream on one side of a cookie, then top with another cookie and spread more whipped cream on the top side of that cookie. Place on your plate or baking sheet and keep **stacking cookies** on top of one another and spreading whipped cream in between until you can comfortably turn the stack on its side, **like a log**. Build the cake as long as you want it.

Step
4

Spread the remaining whipped cream all over the outside of the cake.

*From the store to the kitchen to the table: We outline the steps that get you from raw ingredients to your dinner tonight, free of measurements and complicated techniques. It's a method you'll remember and whip out whenever you like. It is the most basic way to make the thing you're making.

Step
5



Put the cake in the refrigerator and **chill at least one and a half hours**. (The longer it chills, the softer the consistency of the cookies will be.)

Step
6



Remove the cake from the refrigerator and **decorate the outside** with the garnish of your choice.

Step
7



Cut the cake a bit diagonally so that you can see the individual layers and serve.

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Illustrations by Bill Russell. Find this online at www.chow.com/stories/11724.