

## HOW DO THEY DO THAT?

This month's wonderful tutorial was created by our friend Tami Utley.  
Let's get started :-)

### Clay Gun String Work

By Tami Utley

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For Design and Assembly:

Fondant

Tylose

Sharp knife

Clay gun with assorted round size disks

Strip of paper or adding machine tape

This project will have four layers of overlapping string work, so each string will overlap the previous string and they will look interwoven.

1. Start by kneading 1/2 C [fondant](#) with 1/2 tsp. [tylose powder](#) or CMC.
2. Take adding machine tape or a strip of paper and measure around the cake so the ends just meet. Fold in half lengthwise, then in half again and again until the paper is about 1" in size. Unfold and place along the top edge of the cake. Mark around the top edge of the cake at each fold using a pin or tiny dot of icing making sure to keep them all level or equidistant from the top edge



3. Set up icing tips 1-5 and compare to round clay gun discs. Mark the discs corresponding to the icing tip size with a permanent marker. Some discs might have more than a single hole, but that is ok, as long as the size matches an icing tip.

(Sugar Delites carries the [Sugarcraft clay gun](#). Personally, I love it.)

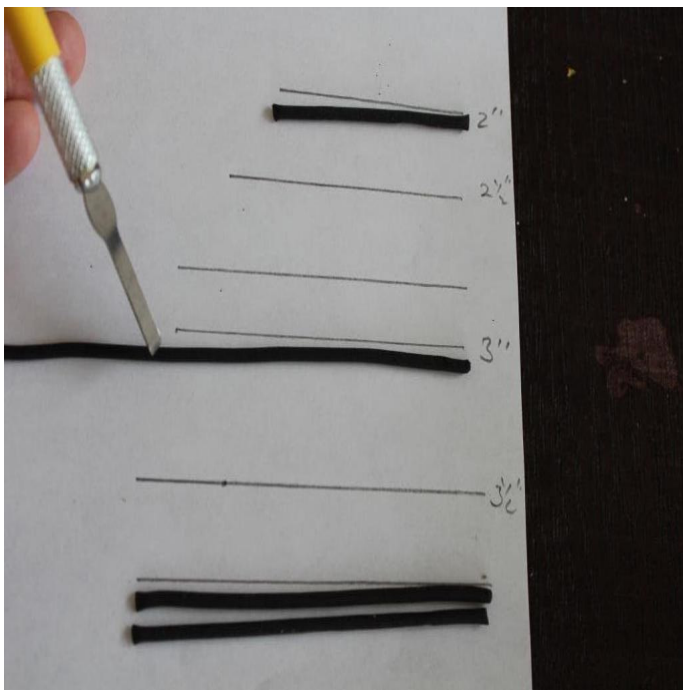


4. Place the modified fondant into a clay gun with a #2 tip size disk opening (Mine has multiple holes). Make sure the fondant has been kneaded and is at a workable stage. It might be necessary to coat the fondant with cornstarch so it is in sticky, or coat the inside of the clay gun barrel with a little shortening. Crank the clay gun to extrude the stings. It is important to keep any strings not being worked with covered so they don't dry out.





5. There are two ways to measure the strings. The first is to draw a set of lines and cut the fondant to consistent sizes. This will give consistent size strings with no guesswork. Start with the longest string at 3 1/2". (the size can be any length desired). When cutting the fondant strings, be sure to use a sharp blade so as not to depress the string end, though for this cake the ends will be covered.



5. Use a dab of water on the first mark and attach one end of the fondant string, skip the next mark and dab water on the following mark (3rd). Attach the other end of the string .





6. Now dab water on the mark that was skipped (in the center of the string now on the cake) and attach one end of the fondant string. Skip the next mark (it already has the end of the first string attached to it) and dab water on the next mark. Attach the other end of the string. If counting, this was the 4th mark from the beginning and the strings are now overlapping.

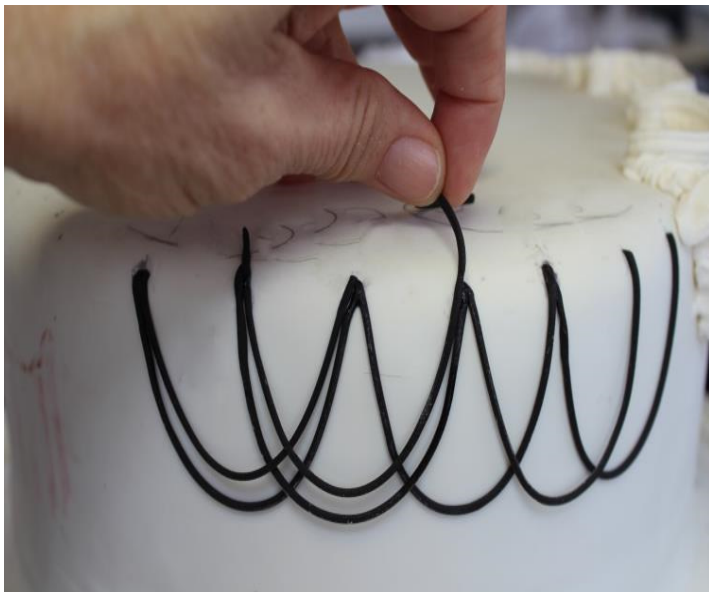
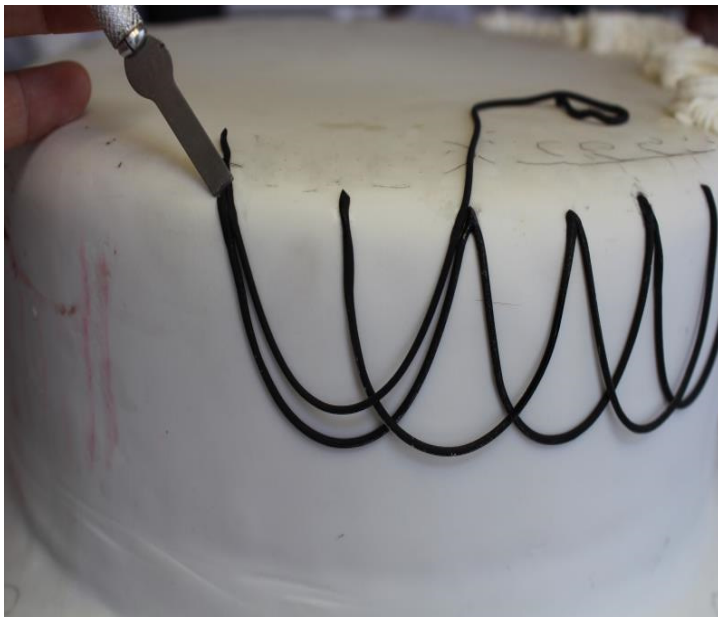


7. The second way to make the strings is to just "eyeball" the length the strings should be. Using a long piece of extruded fondant, just attach one end to the 3rd mark on the cake (this is where the first string ended), skip the next mark and attach to the following mark. Adjust the length to make sure it is even and then just cut the extra length off from the top. This is a little riskier in getting the lengths of the sting work even all the way around. But it is slightly faster.





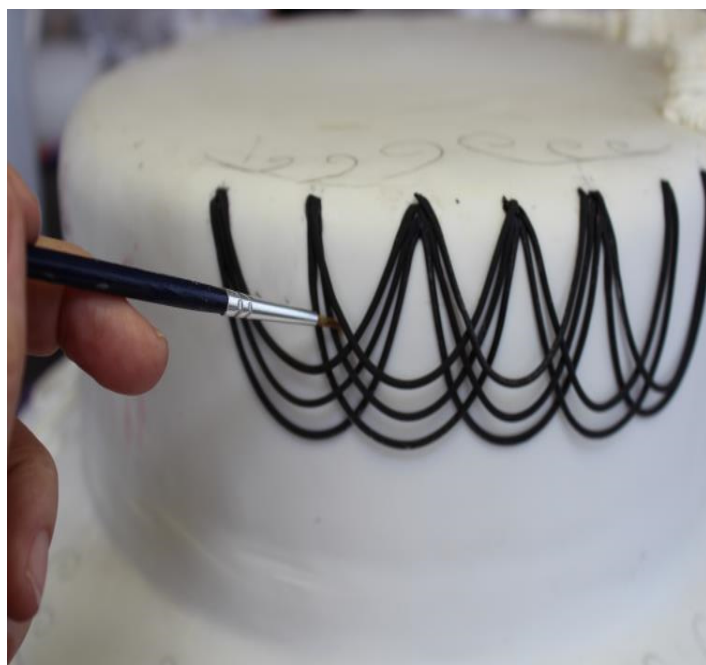
8. Continue in this manner around, and then start the second layer of strings in the same manner as above. These are 3" in length and attached right next to (or on top of) the end of the string that is already on the cake.



9. Continue around and start a 3rd row, these are 2 1/2" in length.

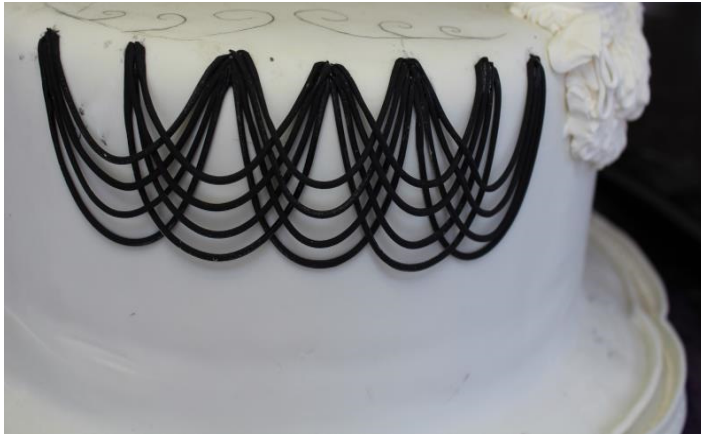


10. At any time a paint brush can be used to adjust or move a string that isn't sitting even.



11. The last row is 2" in length.





12. Finally cover the string ends with flowers, dots, whatever the design calls for. For this cake, a Lambeth style cushion at the base is also done with a clay gun. By using discs that are the sizes of #5 though #1 tips, the string work is layered and Lambeth style overlapping is achieved. (Pic 13)



(You can see a [tiny rose mold](#) here.)

It is also possible to do scrolls and many other designs. Although piping is much faster way to do string work, this is a bit stronger. It is a good alternative for those who would prefer not to use royal icing, work with small tips and don't have to guess to achieve consistent string lengths.

**She did it again! Another FANTASTIC tutorial by Tami! Thank you SO much. If you would like to do a tutorial for our newsletter, please contact me first with the content. We would love to feature your work. In return, we will give you a \$25.00 Sugar Delites gift certificate. Jennifer@SugarDelites.com**