

# Gingerbread nativity set

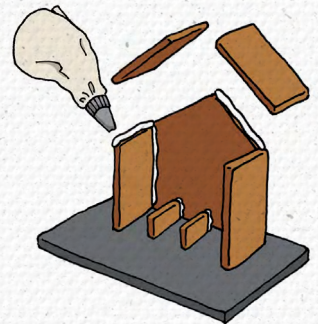
## Ingredients

- 500g/4 cups plain or all-purpose flour
- 1 ½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 3 tsp ground ginger
- 190g/¾ cup unsalted butter
- 155g/¾ cup dark muscovado or molasses sugar
- 5 tbsp golden syrup or molasses
- 2 packets powdered egg white (each substituting 1 egg white)
- 500g/4 cups icing sugar
- 20g/3 tbsp cocoa
- 4 jelly sweets (e.g. fruit pastilles)
- 4 smaller jelly sweets (e.g. midget gems)
- 1 long, flat sweet (sugar belt)
- Shredded Wheat or bran, crushed

## Equipment

- Templates (see page 48)
- 2 large mixing bowls
- Wooden spoon
- Saucepan
- Baking paper or parchment
- Rolling pin
- Table or eating knife
- Cookie or baking sheets
- Sharp knife
- Sieve
- Piping bag and nozzle with large hole
- 1 board, tray or very flat plate
- Rectangular box (15x10cm/6x4") – a 6-egg box should be perfect

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/gas 4.
2. Mix the flour, soda and ginger in the mixing bowl.
3. Tip the butter, sugar and syrup in the saucepan and heat gently. Once melted, pour the mix into the bowl. Mix everything together until you have a tough dough (add a drop of water if needed).
4. Put a large piece of baking paper onto a flat surface. Sprinkle flour onto the rolling pin and roll out half of the mixture until it is 5mm/¼" thick. (You may need to do this in two halves.)
5. Place the back and two roof cut-outs on top of the rolled-out dough with at least 5cm/2" between the pieces. Cut them out using the table knife. Put the spare dough to one side. Gently slide the baking paper and dough pieces onto the baking trays. Take off your templates.
6. Repeat with the other half of the dough. This time cut out the two sides and the two manger pieces.
7. Put the dough pieces in the oven for 12 minutes (for golden syrup) or 14 minutes (for molasses). The pieces should be dark and crisp.





8. Take them out of the oven and leave to cool for a few minutes. Once cool, very carefully trim the edges with the sharp knife to make them neat and crisp. Leave to cool completely. You should have enough left-over dough to make spare pieces if you have any breakages. You could use it to make a second stable if you like (but you'll probably need extra icing and sweets), or freeze the raw dough, or even use it to make some tree decorations (on page 8).
9. Wash the mixing bowl and wooden spoon. Make up one egg white according to the packet's instructions. Sieve 250g/2 cups icing sugar and 10g/ 1 1/2 tbsp cocoa into the bowl; then pour in the egg white and mix well. Scrape it into the piping bag (attach the nozzle beforehand!).
10. Stick the back piece in place: pipe a line of icing on the board, towards the back. Pipe a generous line of icing onto the bottom of the back piece. Hold it in place for 5 minutes.
11. Now stick the side pieces in place: pipe another 2 lines of icing on the board coming away from the back piece. Gently hold the back piece and pipe lines down each end from top to bottom. On the side pieces, pipe icing on the bottom of one of the short sides, and at the edge of the long side along the bottom. Gently put these pieces in place and hold them for 5 minutes. Place the box between the pieces to hold them in place and leave overnight to dry.
12. Make another batch of icing as you did yesterday, using the remaining ingredients. Remove the box.
13. Stick the manger in place. Pipe 2 lines of icing on the board in the middle of the stable for the manger. Pipe icing along the bottom of a long side of both of the manger pieces. Stick them down and hold them in place for 5 minutes.
14. Now it's time for the roof. Pipe icing along the 4 top edges of the stable. Turn the roof pieces over (you want to pipe icing on the side that you will not see from the top). Pipe icing along one long and one short edge of each piece. Turn them over and stick them in place. Hold them gently for 5 minutes. If there is a gap between the roof pieces, pipe icing to cover it (you can sprinkle hay there later to hide it!). Leave for at least 4 hours to dry completely.
15. Meanwhile, while the icing in the bowl is still soft, make your people. Stick the sweets on top of each other: 2 big ones first and the smaller one for the head. Cut the flat sweet down to make the scarf or hair and stick in place. Stick two small sweets together for baby Jesus.
16. Once the stable is dry, put the crushed Shredded Wheat or bran around the stable floor for the hay. Use it to cover any gaps too. Put a big handful into the manger. Lay baby Jesus in the manger and put the people either side for Mary and Joseph.
17. Stand back and admire all your hard work! Be sure to take lots of photos before you eat it!

