HOW TO MAKE CANDY BOUQUETS
FOR FUN AND PROFIT

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Introduction

Dear Reader,

I would like to welcome you to the pages of my book! This step-by-step guide will teach you how to make your own beautiful candy arrangements. It includes a great deal of information on material and design techniques that produce professional looking arrangements, to marketing and selling tips!

I would like to pass on some advice. Please, do not become discouraged or upset if your first few candy bouquets do not have that polished expert look to them! If you are like most others, including me, you will need to make 4-7 bouquets before you begin to feel comfortable with your ability to make your bouquets. You should expect that your first few bouquets will be far from perfect! Do not worry about it! With practice, desire, and enthusiasm you will soon become very good at designing and making your candy bouquets!!! Believe in yourself; give yourself time to acquire these new skills!

If you have ever thought that you are not a creative person and are afraid that you might not have the talent to do this, look at me. When I first started making candy bouquets: I also had these doubts. I had never done anything like this before; I have always thought of myself as a logical mathematical type (Math was my favorite subject in school). I believed that I did not have a single creative bone in my body. Look at me now; I am making pretty candy bouquets that people like and which I ENJOY making (who would have thought?☺). If I could learn to make candy arrangements, you can learn to do it too! Everyone can learn. You do not have to be artistic (creative abilities are helpful, of course, but not necessary). Making a candy bouquet is like playing a musical instrument or learning a foreign language. You need to learn the basic elements before you proceed to composing more complex arrangements or sentences.

I am so glad that you have decided to learn the new skills of making candy arrangements! New knowledge and new skills always open new possibilities in life for us. The skills that you can learn from this book may open the following wonderful opportunities for you:

- You can start your own Candy Bouquet Business. Work part-time or full-time. You can work from the comfort of your home selling via the Internet, you can set-up a booth at your local flea market and sell your tasty products there on the weekends, or you can open a brick and mortar shop. It all depends on how much time and money you are ready and willing to invest in your business.
• If you already own a Gift Basket Business or a Gift Shop, candy bouquets can be a great addition to your product lines.

• If you are not interested in starting your own business, you can make beautiful candy bouquets as gifts. **Never-ever again, you will face the problem of what present to give to your family, friends, and colleagues.** I assure you, your gift will stand out and be unforgettable for the recipient. I always receive admiring responses for my candy arrangements. Candy arrangements are wonderful gifts for any occasion and for a person of any age! Who does not like candy, right?😊

This book consists of several parts:

1. **Basics of Arranging Candy Bouquets.**

   In this part, I describe and show you in photographs:
   • All the necessary tools and supplies you will need to make your own candy bouquets.
   • Techniques for attaching candies to a stick(s) and/or a stem(s).

   If you have ever seen a candy bouquet you have probably asked yourself, how they did attached all those candies. I will show you HOW. **There are different types of candies (I divided them into 5 groups) and respectively there are different techniques for attaching them to sticks.** I will show you step-by-step how to do it, illustrating my descriptions with lots of pictures, which I believe is very helpful.

   • How to Wire and Tape a Silk Leaf.
   • How to wrap your candy bouquet in cellophane.
   • Some useful tips and tricks that will help you make a beautiful and stable candy bouquet.
   • How to price your candy arrangements.

   **Please read the Basics of Arranging Candy Bouquets before proceeding to the next part of the book!!!**

2. **Assembling 14 beautiful pre-designed candy bouquets** that you will love making and your recipients will adore receiving. I will guide you step-by-step through the whole process of assembling these bouquets from choosing the materials to the finished products. **The instructions are easy to follow and each step is illustrated with pictures.**

   Based upon these bouquets you can create many others. **Do not be afraid to experiment, creating different variations of each bouquet!** Your imagination is your only limit!
Creating Candy Bouquets can be time-consuming but you can always tape bamboo skewers with floral tape, make large stocks of candy flowers, and do other activities ahead of time while watching TV or when you have a few minutes of free time.

**Note: You can reproduce and sell all the candy arrangements described in this book. By buying this book, you have bought the right to use these designs. However, you may not copy or reproduce/give away this book or any instructions from this book in any way or form. This book is copyrighted.**

3. **Overview of how to get started in your Candy Bouquet Business including legal issues and how to market and sell your candy bouquets!**

4. **Vendors’ List** which will save you a lot of money and time (that you would spend on research). I wish I had this when I started!

Are you ready to start? I hope you will enjoy the process as well as the results of your work. I wish you many beautiful candy bouquets and all the best to your future business!!!

If you have any questions, I will be happy to answer them. Write to me at products@ediblecraftsonline.com

Come and visit my site “**Incredible Edible Crafts**” at [http://EdibleCraftsOnline.com](http://EdibleCraftsOnline.com)

In the section “**Recommended Resources**” there are several interesting books that may be of value to you. Read more about these at [http://ediblecraftsonline.com/resources.htm](http://ediblecraftsonline.com/resources.htm)

Let me leave you with this: You can accomplish any dreams and goals if you will persist and believe in yourself! Never give up; just keep taking one step each day until you succeed! When you succeed with the help of this book, please let me know about it! I love to hear about the success of my readers!

**Note: Since I have no control over physical working conditions and individual skills, I disclaim any liability for unsatisfactory results. Follow the manufactures’ instructions for tools and materials used to complete these projects. I am not responsible for any injury or damage caused by the improper use of tools, materials, or information in this book.**

Warm wishes,
Lana Glass
Basics of Arranging Candy Bouquets

TOOLS AND SUPPLIES

To make a candy arrangement you will need some workspace, a few basic tools, and your supplies.

1. Cutting Tools.
   a) Wire cutters are used for cutting floral wire, floral stems, and bamboo skewers.
   b) A knife (plain, serrated, or hot knife) is used for cutting floral foam. When cutting Styrofoam, instead of using a hot knife, you can use a coping saw. It might be a little messier, but using the coping saw allows you to cut foam more precisely. You can buy a coping saw in a home improvement store for $7-10.
   c) Scissors are used for cutting the cellophane, ribbon, etc.

2. Adhesives.
   a) A glue gun and glue sticks (a glue gun melts a glue stick inserted into it) are used to secure materials (pin frogs, floral foam, etc.) to a base, to secure candy bars on a stick, and in various other uses. It is better to use a Low-Temp glue gun with extra strong glue.
Make sure that you use the right type of glue sticks for your glue gun (for example, low temp glue gun requires low temp glue sticks). Try to find glue sticks with the strongest adhesive strength you can.

b) Floral tape. It is made from wax and paper; it comes in green, brown, and white colors, and it is used to cover wires, floral stems, and bamboo skewers. It is necessary to slightly stretch the tape slightly to make it tacky.

c) Glue dots and Memory Zips can be used as an alternative to hot glue or white craft glue.

Glue Dots (mini and large dots in the picture) are double-sided adhesive dots; they bond to most surfaces including paper, plastic, wood, and more.

Memory Zips are clear adhesive strips, similar to Glue Dots.
I use Glue Dots and Memory Zips in some of my candy arrangements. They are easy to use, non-toxic, which is important when you work with candies and chocolates.

d) Adhesive tape (clear packing tape, tear-by-hand packing tape, and scotch tape).

e) Double-sided adhesive tape.

f) Thick white craft glue.
g) Floral sticky clay is used for securing floral foam to a base.


a) Floral pins are used to secure moss, cello, tissue paper, and other materials to the floral foam.
b) Dressmaker’s pins.

c) Stem wire is used as stem for “candy flowers”, to extend the length of floral stems, silk leaves, pearl strings, etc. It is sized by gauge, ranging from 16 to 28. The smaller the number, the thicker the wire. In the picture you can see 16, 18, and 20-gauge wire.

**Note:** Make sure to wear safety glasses when cutting the stem wire.

In Lowe’s or similar home improvement stores you can find 12 or 14 gauge wire that is stronger (and cheaper) than 16-gauge wire you can buy in craft stores. For example, I bought a bundle of suspended-ceiling hanger wire in 12 gauge (6 feet long, 50 pieces) for about $ 9.00. It is advisable to use heavy wire cutters with this thick wire.
**d)** Floral picks are used to extend the length of floral stems and have other uses. The length of floral picks can vary.

**e)** Paddle floral wire, usually thin in gauge, is wrapped around a paddle. It is used in making bows (26 ga wire) and in some other cases. It comes in different colors.
f) Anchor pins or frogs are small plastic holders, used to hold floral foam in place. Frogs are secured to the container using hot glue or floral adhesive clay.

![Anchor pins or frogs](image)

g) Floral Pin Frogs, they can be big or small (you can see a big pin frog in the picture). I use them in shallow or light containers for two purposes:

- To hold floral foam in place
- To stabilize the small or light container, because this pin frog made out of metal, is pretty heavy.

![Floral Pin Frogs](image)
h) The Hand Held Pick Machine. This device is light, compact, and easy to transport. The Hand Held Pick Machine allows semi-automatic attachment of metal picks to cellophane and tissue paper pieces, to the stems of fresh, dried, artificial flowers, and etc. It is a good alternative (especially when you are just starting your business) to a much more expensive Floral Pick Machine. You can find a hand held pick machine for about $22 in Michael’s Arts & Crafts Store, and with the 40% off coupon that you can find in practically every Sunday’s newspaper, it is even cheaper.

When you expand your candy bouquet business and have a lot of orders and more money to invest in your business, you can buy a Floral Pick Machine. The machine is expensive (about $150) but saves valuable time. Metal picks, from 1.25” to 4”, are serrated to aid in anchoring the flower stems, cellophane and tissue pieces, etc., are sold in stacks. The metal edges are sharp and care should be taken to prevent injury when working with them.

Here is one of the sites, which sell the picks and machines.
http://www.afloral.com/Wedding?search=pick+machine

You can also buy the Floral Pick Machine at Michael’s Craft Store with the 40% off coupon from Sunday’s newspaper.

4. Floral Foams. There are several basic types of floral foam: Oasis, floral foam for silk and dried arrangements, and Styrofoam. Oasis (high-density floral foam) and can be wetted for live flower arrangement. Styrofoam is used for silk and dried flower arranging.
Oasis usually comes in a block. Styrofoam for silk arranging is available in green or white. It is available in sheet form, in preshaped forms, such as balls, cones, and eggs, which can be used for making topiaries, and also in various wreath forms. Try to work with different kinds of floral foam to see which one you prefer.

Note: In Lowe’s or other home improvement stores you can buy sheets of white polystyrene insulation foam pretty cheap that you can use in your candy arrangements. Use a serrated or hot knife to cut this type of foam. For example, Weller Therma-Boost Heat Tool, which you can buy in a home improvement store, works well. Always exercise caution when using a hot knife.

5. Other Basic Supplies.

a) Cellophane. You can buy cellophane in rolls that you can cut to size or you can buy pre-cut cello pieces (more expensive). You will need different colors: green, yellow, red, blue, clear, and patterned cellophane.
b) Ribbon. You will need a variety of colors.

I like to use wire-edged ribbon because it is very easy to shape into a bow. You can easily form it the way you want.

c) Curling ribbon, which comes in different colors.

I love curling ribbon and use it in many of my candy arrangements.

d) Bamboo skewers are used as stems for “candy flowers”.
You can find bamboo skewers in the kitchen supply aisle at Wal-Mart and most grocery stores. Bamboo skewers are available in different lengths and thickness.

e) Tissue paper.

f) Of course, candy, chocolates, and candy bars.

g) Containers.
When choosing a container, consider the color, line direction, and size of the arrangement. The most common container is the vase. Other container types, are baskets of different shapes and sizes, mugs, cups, terra cotta pots, serving bowls, wine and brandy glasses, teapots, and other items made of glass, china, ceramic, plastic or metal which can used as a container for your arrangement.

h) Silk or dry flowers and greenery.

i) Your business cards that you put in your candy bouquets.
j) Feathers and pearl strings can add an elegant touch to a candy bouquet.

k) Chenille stem wire. I use it when making bows and as a decorative element in candy arrangements.

l) Furry yarn or something similar. I use it to cover the foam instead of moss, plastic grass or shredded paper.
m) Wooden dowels, which are used to make candy topiaries and in candy cakes, come in wide range of diameters.

Other nice to have items that can add interest to your arrangement or aid you in the construction of your arrangement that you may wish to consider buying:
• Themed ribbon: St. Valentine’s Day, Christmas, Mother’s Day, Easter, etc.
• Seasonal picks and ornamental items.
• Floral Pick Machine.
• Ribbon Imprinting Machine.

**HOW TO ATTACH CANDIES TO WIRE, BAMBOO SKEWERS, AND OTHER STICKS**

It depends on candies and their wrappers.

1. **Hard Candies and Chocolates, with wrappers that have twisted ends (or loose parts or “tails”),** such as butterscotch candies, cinnamon discs, coffee toffees, Lindt chocolate truffles, etc.

   a) Prepare the candy or chocolates, stem wire (16 ga) or bamboo skewers, green floral tape, and tools.

   If you use bamboo skewers, it’s better to attach the candy to the blunt, not pointy, end of the skewer.
b-1) Take the stem wire or bamboo skewer and floral tape. Cut a piece of tape and pull on it slightly to make it tacky. Wrap the tape around the top (just one-two rotations).

b-2) Take a candy or chocolate and twist the loose part of the candy wrapper tight;

b-3) Place the twisted end of the wrapper alongside the wire or bamboo skewer,
b-4) Then put the stem wrap tape around them. Tightly build up the tape at the base of the candy (wrap the tape about 4-5 times) to secure it well.

Variation of the method described above: You can wrap the loose part of the candy wrapper around the stem wire or bamboo skewer and then apply the floral tape over it.

c-1) After you join a piece of candy to the end of the wire/wooden skewer, you can join several more candy pieces down the wire/wooden skewer (I usually make “candy flowers” with one candy or 3 candy pieces)
One or Two inches down the wire or skewer attach the second piece of candy.
c-2) Go down 1”-2” and attach the third piece of candy on the opposite end of the second one.

If you use a bamboo skewer, wrap the rest of the skewer with floral tape so it is completely green. With green stem wire it is not necessary.
Sometimes candies or chocolates move around on the wire/skewer, if this is the case, simply move the candy back to the position where it belongs.

When attaching candies, twirl the stick while stretching and pulling the tape in a downward angle. The tape should be tightly wrapped without buckles or gaps along the stem. Smooth out the wrap tape for a more polished look.

If you are just a beginner, it will take you a while to make a “candy flower” but with practice it will become easier and you will get faster.

2. Hard candies that have excess wrapper such as Cream Savers, Life Savers, etc.  
   a)

b-1) Take the stem wire or bamboo skewer and floral tape. Wrap the tape around the top.
b-2) Take a candy, push it all the way to the top of the wrapper, and bunch up the remaining wrapper.

b-3) Wrap this excess wrapper around the stem wire or skewer or just lay it alongside the stem wire.
b-4) Wrap floral tape around the excess wrapper and the stem.

b-5) If you want, you can join more candy pieces down the stem, the way I described earlier in paragraph one.
3. Chocolates that have a loose part of the wrapper on one end and a wide base on the other.

There are two methods to attach these types of chocolates.

1\textsuperscript{st} method.

\textbf{a}) Prepare chocolates, stem wire (16ga), glue gun with glue sticks, colored craft sticks, clear scotch tape or packing tape, and tools.

\textbf{b-1}) Take the stem wire, cut it to the desired length, and bend the stem wire end into a loop.
b-2) Take a craft stick of the same or a color that is close to the candy wrapper’s color. Using wire cutters cut a piece of a craft stick of the necessary length (it should not be longer than the candy base is wide).

b-3) Put some hot glue on the piece of the craft stick
b-4) and attach it to the candy base.

b-5) Attach the stem wire loop to the craft stick with hot glue.
b-6) Put a piece of clear scotch tape or packing tape over the glued area. Now the chocolate is really secure on the wire.

2nd method.

a) Prepare chocolates, bamboo skewers or stem wire, curling ribbon, pieces of clear cellophane, floral tape, and scissors.

b) Wrap a piece of clear cellophane around the chocolate creating a cylinder so that the candy piece is in the center of the cylinder.
c) Wrap the cello, below the flat bottom of the chocolate piece, around the stick or stem wire. Do not poke the bamboo skewer/stem wire into the chocolate.
d) Secure the cello to the stick with green floral tape.

![Image of a hand holding a candy on a cello attached to a stick]

e) Using a piece of curling ribbon, tie the top portion of the clear cello around the candy wrapper “tail” so the candy is secured well on the stick.

![Image of two candies on sticks with curling ribbons]
4. Large pieces of candy: candy bars like Snickers®, Milky Way®, Hershey’s®, Twix®, and others; bubble gum packages, etc.
Candy bars are attached in a different way, to prevent them from rotating on the stick and to really stabilize them.

a) Small candy bars.
   a-1) Take stem wire (16 ga) and bend it into a “V” shape or put a “zigzag” bend in the wire.

   a-2) Attach the bottom of the “V” or the “zigzag” end to your candy bar using hot glue; hold it for a few seconds. Put the clear packing tape on top of it.
Note: All candy bars should face the same way.

a-3) If you use a bamboo skewer, just tape one bamboo skewer with floral tape, glue the skewer to the back of the candy bar, and apply clear packing tape over the glued area for better attachment strength.

b) Regular Size and King Size Candy Bars.
If you use stem wire:

b-1) Bend stem wire (16 ga) into a “V” shape, and lay it on the back of your candy bar. Put some hot glue (use low temp glue gun) along the wire for more stability.
b-2) Apply the clear packing tape over the glued area for better attachment strength.

c) If you use bamboo skewers:

c-1) Take a whole bamboo skewer and a part of a skewer (its length depends upon the length of the candy bar). Attach them together by wrapping them with floral tape. I like to use a wooden skewer plus a part of another skewer instead of two whole skewers for two reasons:

1) I use fewer skewers, that is, I use skewers more economically.
2) When we insert the candy bar into the foam, the hole from one skewer is smaller than from the double skewers, and in the event that we have to rearrange the candy bars, it will not tear up the foam as much.
Note: For candy bars (in comparison with candy), I prefer to use thick bamboo skewers (there are thick and thin bamboo skewers).

Put glue generously on the floral tape wrapped stick where the candy bar will be attached. Attach the stick, using hot glue, to the candy bar so that its tip is very close to the top of the candy bar but not showing. Hold it for a few seconds to let the glue cool until the candy piece is secure. This way the bar is more secure on the stick. Then apply clear packing tape over it while the glue is still warm for better adhesion.

For more professional look, you can hide the sticks under the flap on the back of the candy bar.
- Lift the flap perpendicularly to the candy bar

- Glue the bamboo skewer as close to the flap fold as possible, using hot glue. Hold it for a few seconds to let the glue cool.
- Glue the loose part of the flap to the candy wrapper. You can also apply a piece of clear packing tape over it.

Note: Instead of bamboo skewers you can use strong 12 or 14 gauge wire you can buy in Lowe’s or similar home improvement stores.

c-2) For big and heavy candy bars use two whole bamboo skewers or strong 12 or 14 gauge wire you can buy in Lowe’s or similar home improvement stores. Lay 2 skewers next to each other and wrap floral tape around them, to form a double skewer.
Now you have a thick stick.

Put glue on the taped stick where the candy bar will be attached.

Attach the stick with glue to the candy bar and apply the clear packing tape over the top of the glue. I would advise you to be very generous with the glue any time you are attaching candy bars to sticks. So the candy bars will not fall off later.

Instead of applying hot glue on the taped stick, you can put hot glue in a line on the back of the candy bar from the top to the bottom. Then press a bamboo skewer into the glue and hold it until it is secured.
Note: When inserting these thick bamboo sticks in the arrangement, try not to rearrange them too much because you will leave big holes in the foam, which weakens the foundation.

5. Lollipops.

a) Take a lollipop, a bamboo skewer, green or white floral tape, and tools.
**b-1)** Cut a skewer in two. Place a skewer against the lollipop stick

**b-2)** and wrap the two together with floral tape.

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**HOW TO WIRE AND TAPE A SILK LEAF**

When making candy bouquets, sometimes you will want to use silk leaves to make the bouquet look more natural.

There are two ways of wiring and taping silk leaves. I found this technique on the site [http://www.visionsofsilk.com](http://www.visionsofsilk.com)

*The first method.*
a) Take floral tape, stem wire (in this case I used 20 ga stem wire), and a branch with silk leaves (from which you cut off individual leaves using wire cutters).

b) Take the silk leaf and push the wire through the fabric. Pass the wire behind the stem of the leaf, and poke it back through the other side. If it is difficult to push the wire through the leaf, make a hole for the wire using a needle.

c) Bend the wire back to meet the long wire.
d) Tape the silk leaf to the wire.

e) To give the leaf a more natural appearance, flare it out near the stem tape.
The second method.
Take the leaf with a little bit of stem left on it, put it alongside the wire and apply the floral tape over remaining stem and the stem wire.

HOW TO ADD CELLOPHANE OR TISSUE PAPER PIECES TO YOUR CANDY ARRANGEMENT

Practically all candy arrangements are created using cellophane or tissue paper pieces.

There are 3 methods for inserting cellophane or tissue pieces into the floral foam.

a) Using the Hand Held Pick Machine.
There are two methods for preparing cellophane/tissue paper to be attached to floral picks.
1\textsuperscript{st} method.
- Take a cello piece, pinch it in the middle and with your other hand loosely pull it up into a cone shape.

- Take the hand held pick machine. Insert a steel pick fully into the groove of the pick holder.
- Insert about \( \frac{3}{4} \)” of the closed corner of the cello piece into the groove of the pick holder.

- Squeeze the handles firmly to close the jaws.
2nd method. Take cellophane or tissue paper and cut square or rectangular pieces (their size may vary depending on the arrangement, for example, 7” x 8” pieces). Take one of the rectangles and loosely fold it in half the short way (to make a 7” x 4” rectangle) and then in half the long way (to make a 3.5” x 4” rectangle). Don't worry about making them perfectly sized. Do not crease the folds.

Then take the bottom edge (with the closed folds) and fold one flap at 45° angle toward the long fold and do the other flap the opposite way.
Insert a steel pick and about 3/4" of the closed corner of the folded cello piece (the point that would be the center of the rectangle, if it was unfolded) into the groove of the pick holder and squeeze the handles firmly to close the jaws. Open and remove the cello or tissue paper piece with a pick attached. Fluff the cellophane out.

Now it is ready to be inserted into the floral foam. Make as many pieces with pins attached, as you would like for your arrangement.
b) Using floral picks.

Take a cellophane or tissue paper piece and create a cone shape using 1\textsuperscript{st} or 2\textsuperscript{nd} method described above.

Take a green floral pick, put about 1/2" of the closed corner of the cello or tissue paper piece against the blunt end of the pick, and wrap the wire tightly around it. Fluff the cellophane out. Now the cello or tissue paper piece is ready to be inserted into the floral foam.
c) Take tissue paper or cellophane (the color depends on the primary colors of your container and candy wrappers). Cut the tissue paper or cellophane into square pieces.

Take a cellophane or tissue paper piece, pinch it in the middle and with your other hand loosely pull it up into a cone shape.

Take a toothpick, a piece of a bamboo skewer, or a lollipop stick, put the closed corner of the cello/tissue paper against the blunt end of the “skewer” and wrap floral tape around them.
Continue wrapping the tape down the stick until it is completely covered. Fluff the cellophane/tissue paper out.
ATTACHING PIECES OF CELLOPHANE OR TISSUE PAPER TO CANDY FLOWER STEMS

When you make “candy flowers,” you can attach one or several cello pieces to the stick.

Some candy flowers are taller than others are, in these cases you will need longer sticks to make the ‘flowers.’ Take two bamboo skewers; lay them side-by-side as shown in the picture, and wrap them together using floral tape. This process allows you to make sticks in any length you need.

The taller the candy flower, the more cello pieces you will want to attach to the stick.
I recommend wrapping 3-4 cello square pieces about 1”—1 ½” apart under the candy bar of the tallest candy flower sticks. Thus, you can create a tall and full looking bouquet.

Take a piece of cellophane and carefully poke the stick through the center of a cellophane piece. Alternatively, fold the cellophane square in half and fold it in half again across the first fold and cut the tip off of the corner. You will end up with a small hole in the center of your unfolded cellophane piece.

Pull the cellophane into a cone shape and secure it to the stick with a piece of green floral tape. Fluff the cellophane out.

**Note:** Use a hair clip to hold the cello in place on the stem while applying floral tape. Attach the second, third, etc. cello pieces to the stick the same way.
HOW TO ADD CURLING RIBBON TO CANDY ARRANGEMENTS

I love curling ribbon and use it a lot in my candy arrangements. Ribbon sprays give candy bouquets a festive look.

Choose several colors of curling ribbon; they should match the color scheme of the candy bouquet.

1) Cut several pieces 15”-25” in length. Curl each piece with scissors. Then gather one end of each ribbon together with the others.
2) Staple the ends together.

3) Place the end of the ribbon bundle along the end of the floral pick and wrap the wire around them.

4) You can also attach the end of the ribbon bundle to the blunt end of a bamboo skewer/lollipop stick using floral tape. Continue wrapping the skewer until it’s all covered.
Your ribbon spray is ready to be inserted into the arrangement. You can use one or several ribbon sprays in your candy bouquets.

**HOW TO WRAP YOUR CANDY BOUQUET IN CELLOPHANE**

Wrapping your finished bouquet with the cellophane is optional. The advantage of wrapping is that the bouquet will be more stable, which is especially important during
shipping, and it will look more finished. However, some bouquets are great as they are, without wrapping.

There are several ways of wrapping your arrangement. Here are two of them.

1\textsuperscript{st} method.
a) Spread the cellophane out on a flat surface placing your candy arrangement in the center.

![Image of cellophane spread out on a flat surface with candy arrangement]

b) To cut the cellophane to the correct length, hold up one end of the cellophane, and the other end that is still attached to the roll, and bring them together above the basket, making sure to leave at least 5-6” extra cellophane above the top of the basket.

![Image of cellophane being cut and placed over the candy bouquet]

c) Cut the cellophane from the roll and bring both ends together above the candy bouquet. Then pull up the other sides of the cellophane so that all of it meets in the middle above the bouquet.
d) Take a piece of curling ribbon and wrap it around the gathered cellophane.

e) The sides of the cellophane may be too short to reach the top of the bouquet. If this is the case, fold these sides over and fold them back behind the bouquet. Secure the folds with a piece of clear tape.
f) Now gather the excess cellophane above the curling ribbon into a bunch and cut the bunch straight across leaving above 5” of cellophane above the curling ribbon. Fluff the cellophane out.

**Note:** Do not worry if you can’t cut the bunch straight, nobody will notice.
g) As a finishing touch, add a bow. You can glue it to the cellophane or you can tie it to the wrapped bouquet using the loose curling ribbon.
2nd method.

a) Cut a cardboard base of the appropriate size (it can be a rectangle, square or circle). Wrap it with a piece of cellophane (choose the color that is prominent in your candy arrangement), securing it to the backside of the cardboard base with pieces of clear packing tape.
b) Take a roll of clear cellophane and cut a rectangle with the following parameters:
   Width=2 x height of the bouquet
   Length= perimeter of the cardboard base + 4 inches

c) Take the cellophane rectangle/circle you cut in step 2 and wrap it around the cardboard base, securing the cellophane to the back of the base with pieces of packing tape.

d) Put your bouquet in the center of the wrapping bag you have made.
e) Gather the cellophane above the bouquet, take a piece of curling ribbon, and wrap it around the gathered cellophane. Attach a bow as a finishing touch.

**Note:** Instead of clear cellophane you can use shrink-wrap. You use a heat gun or hair dryer to shrink the wrap. The wrap gains strength as it shrinks for a professional finish.
HOW TO MAKE BOWS

There are many types of bows that you can make. Here is an example of one of them.

**Step 1.** Before making the bow, do this.

a) Cut a piece of thin wire, to tie the bow with later, and put it aside.

b) Cut a piece of ribbon, to create tails that will be attached to the bow at the end of the process.

**Step 2.** Remove a long length of ribbon from the spool. Do not cut it off the spool yet; you will do this after making all the loops. Make a small loop using one end of the ribbon as shown. This will be the center of the bow.

**Step 3.** Twist the longer end under the loop to show the right side of the ribbon (shiny side if you work with satin ribbon).

**Step 4.** Make a loop underneath to one side.
Step 5. Twist the ribbon again under the center loop and make a loop to the other side.

Step 6. Continue making loops in this manner twisting the ribbon so that the right side of the ribbon is always facing up. Make the same number of loops on each side (for example, 5 loops on either side, 10 total). You can make the same size loops or start with smaller loops in the middle increasing their size as you move outward from the center of the bow.

Step 7. To hold the bow together, thread a piece of thin wire though the center loop and around the ribbon and twist it up as tight as you can at the back.
**Step 8.** Take the piece of ribbon that you prepared for the tails. Put at the back of the bow in the middle of the bow. Secure it to the bow by twisting the wire around it. Now you have two tails.

1) There are good how-to instructions, with pictures, on how to make different kinds of bows at the following site [http://www.save-on-crafts.com/howtomakebows.html](http://www.save-on-crafts.com/howtomakebows.html)

To be a confident bow maker requires practice. Purchase a large inexpensive roll of ribbon and practice making basic bows.

2) There are several good videos on how to make bows on “You Tube” – [http://youtube.com](http://youtube.com). Just enter “how to make a bow” in the search window and you will get quite a few results.

3) You can buy ready-made bows and use them in your candy arrangements, especially when you are just starting your candy bouquet business.
4) You can also use one of the Bow Maker tools that you can buy at your local craft store.

**IMPORTANT NOTE ON USING CANDY PRODUCTS OF DIFFERENT MANUFACTURERS FOR COMMERCIAL USE**

If you use candy to make candy bouquets for sale, it would be a good idea for you to obtain permission from the company to use their products. Become familiar with the candy manufacturer’s requirements and copyrights. You can obtain this information and contact details on their sites.

**REMEMBER: THE ORIGINAL WRAPPER OF ANY CANDY PRODUCT MUST ALWAYS STAY INTACT.**

The Hershey has very specific policies on how and what way their products can be used. Here they are:

“Many inquiries have been received by Hershey regarding the requirements and conditions for use of HERSHEY’S ® milk chocolate bars and/or other of our candy products in connection with candy wrapper announcements. "Candy Wrapper announcements" are wrappers designed to fit around an existing candy product. These wrappers usually bear creative designs and messages and are made to be sold or given to others.

Hershey Chocolate & Confectionery Corporation, the trademark management
subsidiary of Hershey Foods Corporation, and Hershey Foods Corporation (collectively "Hershey"), must require that candy wrapper announcements satisfy the following requirements:

1. The candy wrapper announcement must not contain any trademark owned or licensed by Hershey or in which it has proprietary rights including, but not limited to the following: HERSHEY'S ®; HERESHEIS ®; HERETHEYARE ®; HE& SHE'S ®, MR. GOODBAR ®; MR. GOODBUY ®; MR. GOODGUY ®; MS. GOOD GIRL ®; PAYDAY; ANNOUNCING IT'S A and Design®; IT'S A HERSHEY'S®; the famous HERSHEY'S® trade dress, that is, the color and design of the wrappers for HERSHEY'S® milk chocolate bars.

The candy wrapper announcement must not contain any trademark that is similar in appearance, pronunciation or commercial impression to any trademark owned or licensed by Hershey or in which it has proprietary rights. For example, and not by way of limitation, we consider infringing wrappers that are confusingly similar to our ANNOUNCING IT'S A and Design® mark (Registration No. 1,396,706) for wrappers with a cutout which exposes either the letters "SHE" or "HE" from the underlying HERSHEY'S ® are printed in pink or blue, respectively. As additional examples only (and this is not an exclusive list of uses we would find infringing), we would consider the following damaging to our trademark rights: GOOD & PRECIOUS used in conjunction with the trade dress associated with our GOOD & PLENTY products; OUR NEW JOY in association with the trade dress associated with our ALMOND JOY product; MR. GOOD BABY whether or not used in association with the trade dress associated with our MR. GOOD BAR candy product; and any modification to the plume extending from our KISSES® candy product.

2. The original wrapper for the HERSHEY'S® milk chocolate bar or any other of our candy products must remain intact, and the candy wrapper announcement must cover (but not be glued onto) the entire wrapper without any cutout which would expose any portion of the underlying wrapper.

3. Please be aware that chocolate quickly absorbs odors that may result in off-flavors. Please, therefore, do not use any form or glue or adhesive when securing the candy wrapper around the bars that has an odor or flavor that might migrate to the chocolate or that is otherwise not proper for use on food product packaging.

4. If you are over wrapping any of our HERSHEY'S MINIATURES® candy bars, you must include in the package to your customer the following notice:

IMPORTANT PRODUCT INFORMATION
This product contains an assortment of HERSHEY'S MINIATURES ® chocolate bars, which includes MR. GOOD BAR ® chocolate bars, and KRACKEL ® chocolate bars. Allergy Information: Contains peanuts and milk ingredients. For a detailed ingredient listing, call 1-800-468-1714 (Your Business Name) (Your Business Telephone Number)

5. In the event you wish to refer in any advertising literature (including web sites) to the HERSHEY'S® candy bars or any other product of Hershey Foods Corporation, you must capitalize the brand name, e.g. "HERSHEY'S", place the registered trademark "®" after the brand name, e.g. "HERSHEY'S®", and you must place the following statement in your advertising in a manner clearly indicating to whom these trademarks belong: "Trademarks indicate products manufactured by Hershey Foods Corporation. There is no affiliation between Hershey Foods Corporation, its divisions or subsidiaries, and ________________ (insert your business name)."

Hershey cannot and will not endorse or sponsor your business, or appear to do so, or sanction your use if a wrapper that may violate its proprietary rights in some fashion. Please be aware that Hershey reserves the right to object to your wrappers in the future if it is determined that your wrappers violate Hershey's proprietary rights.

We appreciate your interest in Hershey's products and trust that you will understand that we must zealously protect our trademarks and copyrights in order to protect our shareholders and you, the consumer. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.”

I would recommend that you include with each of your bouquets a note about what candy (with allergen information) and what candy manufacturer you used in your arrangement.

TIPS

1. a) Extend the lengths of floral stems by placing a stem wire or a bamboo skewer against the stem; secure together with green floral tape.
b) Or wire the stems to wooden picks.

2. Pearl strings add an elegant touch to a candy arrangement. Wire and tape pearl strings before putting them in the bouquet. Place the stem wire alongside the white part of the strand, and then stem tape in place.

Note: instead of green stem wire you can use white in this case.
3. To prevent cut ribbon from fraying apply a little bit of clear nail polish along the edge of the ribbon.
4. Some candy flowers are very easy to open and eat: just untwist the loose end and remove the candy.

The best thing about many candy arrangements is the fact that they look GOOD even after the candy is removed! Put a note in with your candy bouquet suggesting that people unwrap only the unattached end of the wrapper to remove a candy when it’s possible. The candies look like buds while they're wrapped; they look like blooming flowers with the candy removed. The recipient also can put a crushed piece of paper in place of the removed candy. So candy arrangements can be enjoyed long time after the candies have been eaten!

5. Glue the wooden skewer to the back of a candy bar so that its tip is very close to the top of the candy bar but not showing. This way the candy bar is more stable on the stick.

6. When you put the foam in the container, the foam should fit snugly. To achieve this, sometimes you will need to cut additional wedges of foam and put them in the container around the main foam block.

7. When you add a toy animal or figure to your bouquet, it gives the bouquet a new dimension.
   a) If it is a plastic, wooden, or metallic toy, just attach a piece of bamboo skewer or a piece of 16-gauge wire bent into a V-shape to the back of the toy using clear packing tape. Then the toy is ready to be placed into the arrangement.
b) To add a teddy bear, a stuffed rabbit, etc. to your candy arrangement, just attach a piece of bamboo skewer, a lollipop stick, or a piece of 16-gauge wire bent into a V-shape to the back of the animal using a little bit of hot glue. Now you can insert the skewer/wire attached to your stuffed animal into the foam and it will be stable.

If you don’t want to use glue on a toy, fix a piece of 16-gauge wire bent into a V-shape to the back of the toy in several places using thread and a needle.
Or you can use a piece of chenille wire the same color as the toy, like a bread wrapper tie to hold the toy to your skewer/wire.

c) You can secure a toy to the floral foam by placing a piece of wire bent into a “V” shape over the toy’s legs.

8. A helpful hint for attaching cello pieces to candy flower stems. Use a hair clip to hold the cello in place on the stem while applying floral tape or tying curling ribbon.
9. **How to wrap bamboo skewers with floral stem wrap tape.**
Take a bamboo skewer and a piece of floral tape. Stretch the tape a little bit so that it becomes tacky. Wrap the floral tape around the blunt end of the skewer; make 2-3 rotations. Put the pointy end of a skewer on a table; rotate the skewer with one hand, holding the floral tape at an angle with the other hand. Tape the whole skewer.

10. **How to add weight to a container to make it more stable.** When you create a candy bouquet in a paper or plastic box, cup, or pot (for example, in a paper popcorn box) that is very light, you need to add weight to the bottom of the box.

   a) Plaster of Paris can be used to add weight to a container. Take the container that you want to use, place a baggie in it, and pour the plaster mix into the bag. The amount of plaster used will depend upon the container’s size and the height of the bouquet. After the plaster has set, put foam on top of the plaster.

   b) You can use a metal floral pin frog, which is pretty heavy, or you can put some modeling clay, or sand in a Ziploc bag in the bottom of the box, etc. On top of this, place a piece of cardboard and then some foam.

   To prevent the foam from popping out of the box, tape the foam down to the box with a piece of clear packing tape. I recommend that you only extend the
packing tape down the sides of the box about 3/8” so the recipient will not see the tape.

11. How to price your bouquet.

The price of your bouquet = the cost of all the materials you used (candy, container, cellophane, floral foam, etc. and don’t forget to include shipping cost if your order materials on the Internet or from a catalog) + your labor cost (decide how much you are going to pay yourself per hour) + your desired profit (additional mark up).

Note: Look at the prices of your competitors. If your competitors charge substantially less for similar candy arrangements as yours, you probably need to rethink your prices or the vendors from which you buy materials. However, do not price your arrangements too low. Remember that making candy bouquets is very time intensive, so it is a mistake to compare the prices of candy bouquets with the prices of gift baskets.

12. Create your business cards. Punch a hole in top corner of your business card; using a piece of curly ribbon, attach your card to the stem of one of candy flowers. Include your business card with every candy bouquet you sell.

13. I would also highly recommend that you include a caution note with every candy bouquet. Something such as, “Warning! This candy bouquet contains sharp metal/wooden pieces that could cause injury. Be cautious when disassembling the bouquet. Do not allow children to take the bouquet apart, or handle or play with the individual pieces.”

14. When you use a container with a narrower opening, it is easier to create a fuller bouquet with less cello and candy. When a container has a larger opening, you need more cello/tissue paper (and more time too) to create a nice full bouquet. Keep this in mind when choosing a container for your arrangement.

15. Gather a number of file folders and label each of them with the type and color of cellophane and foil. During your spare time cut your cello/foil into squares. Place each cut piece in the appropriate folder.

16. The shelf life of a candy bouquet depends on the type of candy used in the bouquet. A chocolate candy bouquet can have a shelf life of 4 or 5 months as long as it is stored in an area with low humidity, and room temperatures cool enough to keep the chocolate from melting. A hard candy bouquet can last for 6 to 8 months. All types of candy will change texture when exposed to very cold or very hot conditions.
So you should protect your bouquets from direct sunlight and drastic changes in temperature.

Chocolate contains cocoa butter, a vegetable fat that is sensitive to heat and humidity. Chocolate will melt in temperatures above 75°F. The cocoa butter can rise to the surface and form a discoloration called "cocoa butter bloom." Condensation on milk or semi-sweet chocolate may cause the sugar to dissolve and rise to the surface as "sugar bloom." The “bloomed” chocolate is safe to eat, but it may have a loss of flavor and texture changes.

So if you use a hair dryer or heat-gun to shrink wrap the bouquet, be sure to keep it away from the chocolates or you may cause your candies to incur "chocolate bloom" - - a white residue left when untempered chocolate suffers from changing temperatures. Your customer would see this after they remove the wrapper. While it's safe to eat, it can make or break a future business sale. Thus, store your chocolate products well wrapped and in a cool, dry place (55-60°F).

17. In general, everything you use in your candy arrangements (for example, cello bags you put your arrangements in, glue, etc.) should be safe and without odor that the candy or chocolates can absorb.

18. When I attach cello pieces to wire/bamboo skewers using floral tape, I often use a dry towel to wipe my hands to get rid of the sticky residue on my fingers from the floral tape. This helps to prevent smearing the cello with greasy sticky residue from the floral tape.

19. Using a glass container and foil of different colors, you can make a container in any color you desire.
   a) Take a glass container and a piece of foil in a color you like (I prefer to use foil, not cellophane because you cannot see through the foil).
b) Using a glue stick put several spots of glue around the glass. Then wrap the glass in the foil. Use the glue stick to attach the edges of the foil to each other.

c) Fold the foil, extending above the top edge of the glass, inside the glass as shown in the picture. Now you have a vase in your desired color.
TIPS TO MAKE MORE MONEY IN THIS BUSINESS

1. Your main task is to find many customers so you can sell several bouquets a day.
If you sell on the Internet, the most important thing to help your success is the popularity of your site (increase traffic to your site). You can also attract customers through advertising, exchanging links, etc. There are many books and e-books on how to increase traffic to your site.

2. I would recommend that you find out what types of bouquets are most popular with your target consumers and become very efficient making these particular bouquets.

3. Try to use well-known and popular candy and candy bars, this way your customers will know how the bouquets will taste before they buy them.

4. Find your style, your unique selling point, something that will make your site and your bouquets stand out. For example, only on your site can people find and buy unique and beautiful bouquets in a hat.

5. Do some work every time you watch TV, wisely use your time. Involve your kids; they could be a great help (like wrapping bamboo skewers with floral tape).

6. Vary the products you offer:

   • Sell customized candy wrappers. If you sell online, offer your customers not only a physical version of your custom candy wrappers (that you ship) but also a digital version (they can purchase wrappers, download them on their computers, print them and then glue to candy bars). I talk about how to make custom candy wrappers in the “Happy Birthday” Candy Bouquet further on in this book.

   • Sell cookie bouquets.

7. In addition to selling candy bouquets you may want to consider expanding your business by offering gift baskets as well.

Offering both candy bouquets and gift baskets may be beneficial to your business. You can target specific customer groups, for example, diabetics and people who are concerned about their blood sugar level. You can develop a dozen sugar-free candy bouquets and gift baskets with sugar–free treats for this group.

There are different options for adding gift baskets to your candy bouquet business:
1) Make your own baskets. You will need some start up capital and the skills necessary to assemble beautiful gift baskets. You will make your own baskets and set up your own prices.
2) Use wholesale drop shippers.
What is a drop shipper? A drop shipper is a company that will fill the orders for you and ship the baskets directly to your customers. You don’t do the packaging or shipping. You are responsible for marketing your business, collecting the money, and paying the drop shipper. Or you can buy baskets in bulk from a wholesale drop shipper and resell them yourself.

Drop shippers allow you to start making money right away without putting any money upfront. Every time you sell, drop shippers are making money and you keep a piece of the profit. So if you lack capital to start your own business, then using drop shippers is a great solution.

Your profits will be lower than if you make the baskets yourself. But it is a fast and easy way to start your business. As you market the gift baskets from a drop shipping company, you will learn how to make gift baskets, what baskets are the most popular, and you will develop a list of buying customers, which is very important. Then you can start making your own gift baskets offering them to your customers who have already bought baskets from you in the past.

When looking for a good drop shipper, read their policies carefully. Find out what is required to get started with them and find out how long they have been in business. Your goal is to find a free and reliable drop shipper. Find a drop shipper that does not charge enrollment fees. When choosing a drop shipper, look for one that carries a wide range of baskets, and possibly other products, like candy, gifts, etc.

There are several ways to search for a good drop shipping company:
1) Through search on google.com or yahoo.com
2) Contact some gift baskets companies that do not openly say that they offer drop shipments. Some of them may be willing to work with you.
3) Look in specialty magazines. Many business magazines talk about reliable drop shippers.

Just be cautious and thoroughly research the company before you choose to sell for them:
• Make sure you see photos of baskets to resell.
• Request references and see what other resellers have to say about the company.
• Carefully read and understand the contract between you and the drop shipper.

You can find a lot of useful information at Wholesale Forum at http://www.wholesale4um.com.

Resources on Gift Basket Business
1) http://giftbasketbusiness.com
   This site provides you with a lot of ideas and information on how to start or grow your gift basket business as well as how to create beautiful designs.
   The NSGA is a directory and resource center for gift basket supply businesses including wholesalers, retailers, gourmet food suppliers, information on starting a gift basket business, how to make gift baskets, trade shows, and more.
   Since 1990 Gift Basket Review magazine has been the leading authority on gift basket business information and creative gift basket how-to’s in the gift basket industry.
5) Rave Reviews Magazine – http://ravereviewsmagazine.com
   The only print magazine for the Gift Basket Industry.
6) Gift Basket Exchange Message Board –
   http://www.gbexchange.net/board/messages/board-topics.html
7) U.S. Department of Commerce-Minority Business Development Agency -
   http://www.mbda.gov
14 Candy Bouquet Projects

“IT’S A BOY” CANDY ARRANGEMENT

Materials used: a blue box or pail, Dubble Bubble Gum, blue silk asters (you can use Gerbera Daisies instead), floral foam for silk arranging, stem wire (16 or 18 ga) or bamboo skewers, floral tape, blue cellophane, blue furry yarn (blue plastic grass or blue shredded paper can also be used), blue and yellow curling ribbons, a metal floral pin frog, scissors, and wire cutters.

Step 1.

a) Choose a blue cardstock box or pail. You can find blue paper boxes at a local Wal-Mart store, at a “99 Cent” store, a “Party” store, or a local craft store. Fold and glue the flaps inside the box or just cut them off. You can also remove the cord.

b) These cardstock boxes are not usually very stable; they are pretty light. To stabilize the box, you need to add weight to the bottom of the box. You can use a metal floral pin frog, which is pretty heavy, or you can put some modeling clay, or sand in a zip-lock bag in the bottom of the box, etc.

In this case I used a metal floral pin frog, which you can secure to the bottom of the container, using hot glue or floral adhesive clay.

Note: To save money, instead of a metal pin frog, use sand in a zip-lock bag.

Step 2. Cut the floral foam to the proper size to fit in the box.
If you use a floral pin frog, push the floral foam down onto the pin frog.

If you put sand in the bottom of the box, before putting the floral foam on top of it, sandwich a piece of cardboard between the sand and the foam (when you begin to insert candy flower stems in the foam, they can poke holes in the bag of sand). To prevent the foam from popping out of the box, tape the foam down to the box with a piece of clear packing tape.

Step 3.

a) Prepare blue cellophane or tissue paper, a hand held pick machine with picks, and scissors. Cut the blue cellophane or tissue paper into pieces. It does not matter how straight the cellophane pieces are because when they are attached to the picks, nobody will notice.
See more about adding cellophane or tissue paper pieces to your candy arrangement in the section Basics of Arranging Candy Bouquets at the beginning of the book.

b) Put the cello pieces around the inside rim of the box. I used short cello pieces for the front of the bouquet and taller pieces in the back.

Step 4. Take two stalks of Blue Asters or Gerbera Daisies and divide them into separate flower stems. Cut them to the desired length and insert them in the middle of the box.

Step 5. Make some candy flowers.

a) Take stem wire (12, 14, or 16 gauge) or bamboo skewers, Dubble Bubble gum pieces, floral tape, scissors, and wire cutters.

b) Join 3 bubble gum pieces to each stem using floral tape.

For a review of making candy flowers go to “How to attach candies to sticks” in the section Basics of Arranging Candy Bouquets at the beginning of this book.

Make as many “bubble gum flowers” as you like.

c) Insert, for example, 5 - 7 bubble gum flowers to the right of the silk flowers and 5 - 7 bubble gum flowers to the left.

Step 6. Add some decorative elements.

a) Make a curly ribbon spray and a bow made of the “It’s a boy” ribbon.

See more about making ribbon sprays in the section “How to add curling ribbon to candy arrangements” at the beginning of the book.

b) Insert these decorative elements in your candy bouquet.

Enjoy your beautiful bouquet!

If you want to make an “It’s a girl” candy arrangement, follow the same steps as described above but use the following materials: A pink box or pail, starlight mint hard candies (white with red stripes on the edge with clear wrappers), pink silk Asters or Gerbera Daisies, floral foam, stem wire or bamboo skewers, floral tape, pink cellophane or tissue paper, white and pink curling ribbons, scissors, and wire cutters.
CHOCOLATE HEARTS CANDY BOUQUET

Materials used: A blue glass bud vase, Nestle® Crunch chocolate hearts, red foil wrappers, silk rose stems with leaves, polka dot and red cellophane, red bow, green plastic grass, floral foam, hot glue or double-sided tape, green floral tape, and tools.

Step 1. Take a blue glass bud vase (in this case the height is 7.5”) and fill it up with plastic decorative grass or shredded paper.

Step 2. Make several chocolate roses.

a) Prepare chocolates, silk rose stems with leaves, red foil wrappers, green floral tape, and tools.

You can use any chocolates you want; chocolate candies of different shapes will make roses of different shapes. I chose Nestle® Crunch chocolate hearts.

Where do you get silk-rose stems? I bought cheap silk-rose bushes at Wal-Mart, cut off the rose buds (you can use them later, in a different candy arrangement, for example, in a “Rocher Heart”), and used the remaining rose stems for this bouquet.
You can also buy artificial rose stems through the Internet, for example, at http://www.sugarcraft.com/catalog/candies/candyroses.htm. You can buy red foil wrappers in the “Cake Making Accessories” department of any craft store or on the Internet, for example, from http://bumperstickermaker.com/ or http://www.sugarcraft.com/index.html.

b) Take a piece of red foil and wrap a chocolate candy in it, gathering the foil at one end. Twist the foil forming a tail.

c) Attach the chocolate to a rose stem using green floral tape.
Make as many chocolate roses as you would like. I made 8 chocolate roses for this bouquet.


Step 3.

a) Cut a square of red cellophane and a square of polka-dot cellophane. I used 12” x 12” squares.

b) Cut floral foam to the proper size so that it fits snuggly into the vase.

Put the foam in the middle of cellophane squares and wrap the cellophane around the bottom and sides of the floral foam leaving the top open. Insert the foam in the vase as shown in the picture.

Note: If the foam is a little bit loose in the vase (if the foam comes out of the vase fairly easy), you can fix this problem by applying just a little bit of hot glue in 2 or 3 places on the cellophane near the top edge of the foam.

Step 4. Insert chocolate roses in the foam arranging them, as you like.

Step 5. Insert silk baby’s breath.
Step 6. Attach a red ribbon to the front of the vase using hot glue or double-sided tape.

Step 7. Optional. You can add additional decorative elements to the bouquet, if you want. It may be a lollipop in the shape of a heart, a decorative pick, for example, “I love you”, “Happy Birthday”, etc.

You are done! Congratulations! Time for a tea break. Try not to eat the chocolate roses from the bouquet you have just finished 😊.

You can create different bouquets using “these chocolate roses”. Here is one of them.
A WERTHER’S TOPIARY

Materials used: Werther’s hard candy, a flower pot, floral foam or plaster of Paris, green cellophane, moss, a branch or hardwood dowel, small faux yellow flowers, yellow and white glittering chenille wire, brown floral tape, floral pins, dressmaker’s pins, hot glue, and tools (scissors, wire cutters, and hot glue gun).
**Step 1.** To make this candy topiary you will need a flowerpot. It can be plastic, terracotta, or ceramic.

**Step 2.** Cut the floral foam to the proper size to fit in the pot. There are 2 methods for inserting the floral foam into the pot.

1) Cut a piece of green cellophane, and wrap it around the bottom and sides of the floral foam leaving the top open and put it in the container.

2) First, put the floral foam into the container. Second, put the cello pieces around the inside rim of the pot.

**Note:** Instead of floral foam you can use plaster of Paris, especially if the pot you use is not heavy.

How to use plaster of Paris: See “Step 3” before proceeding with the plaster method!
- Line the pot with two layers of aluminum foil. Loosely shape the foil to the inside of the pot, this allows room for the plaster to expand as it dries; the edge of foil should be about ¾” below the top of the pot.
- Mix the plaster of Paris, following the manufacture’s instructions. Pour the plaster into the container, filling to the edge of the foil. When the plaster has started to thicken, insert the topiary trunk, making sure it stands straight.

**Step 3.**

a) Prepare a trunk for your topiary. You can use a hardwood dowel as the trunk of your topiary. Decide how tall your topiary will be and cut the dowel accordingly.

b) Tape the dowel with brown floral tape.

**Step 4.** Insert the trunk of the topiary into the middle of the floral foam. You can add a little bit of hot glue or floral sticky clay to the end of the trunk before inserting it into the foam for more stability.

**Step 5.**

a) Prepare a 4” Styrofoam ball (it can be smaller or bigger depending on the size of your pot). For example with a 4” ball use a standard 6” rose clay pot.

b) Stick the ball on the trunk. The trunk should penetrate 1/2 to 3/4 of the diameter of the ball. Apply hot glue into the hole in the foam ball to secure the ball to the topiary trunk. Hold it for a few seconds to let the glue cool until the ball is secure.
**Step 6.** The next step is to decorate the foam ball with candies. There are two ways of covering the foam with candy.

1st method.
Glue the loose ends of the candy wrappers (“tails”) to the foam with hot glue (use a low-temp glue gun). Glue one candy and hold it for a few seconds to let the glue cool until the candy piece is secure. Glue the candies in concentric circles working your way towards the top. When you look at the arrangement, you should not see the white foam.

2nd method.
a) Prepare Werther’s Original hard candies (use those you like) and dressmaker’s pins.

b) Using a pin attach a candy to the ball.

c) Cover the foam ball completely with candies.

d) You can tie a ribbon around the dowel right beneath the Styrofoam ball, leaving the ribbon tails long enough to hang down.

**Note:** You may choose to cover the ball with the candy pieces first and then put it on the dowel. If this is the case, pierce the foam ball with the dowel before you begin to attach the candy pieces. When you are finished you should be able to easily slide the ball with all the candy pieces onto the dowel.

**Step 7.** Conceal the foam or plaster with moss securing it with floral pins or glue if you used plaster.

There are several types of moss:
- Sheer moss comes in dried sheets and is used for covering the floral foam in arrangements. It can also be used decoratively to cover a container or wreath base.
- Spanish moss is used to cover the foam in arrangements. It can be secured to the foam with floral pins.
- Reindeer moss has a spongy texture. It is added to a finished arrangement for visual interest.
- Excelsior is added to an arrangement for texture and for visual interest. These curled wood shavings are available bleached or unbleached.
Step 8. Insert small faux yellow flowers and white-and-yellow glittering chenille wire into the foam to decorate the base of the topiary. Take a chenille wire, place it along a pen or pencil, and wrap it around the pen/pencil. Carefully remove the pen/pencil and you will have a nice curly chenille wire.

Enjoy your beautiful candy topiary!
Here is another example of a candy topiary:

Step 1-5 are the same as in the previous topiary.

Step 6.

a) Cut green cellophane squares about 4 – 4.5”. Attach two cello pieces to a short piece of 16-gauge wire or a toothpick using floral tape.

First, take a cellophane square, pinch it in the middle and with your other hand loosely pull it up into a cone shape. Take a piece of stem wire or a toothpick, put the closed corner of the cello against the end of the wire/toothpick and wrap floral tape around them. Continue wrapping the tape down the wire/toothpick about 1”.

Then poke the wire/toothpick through the center of the second cello piece and bring the cellophane piece close to the first cello piece. Pull the cello up into a cone shape. Hold the cellophane with one hand and use your other hand to wrap floral tape around the cellophane and wire/toothpick several times (do not over wrap, or you will have a thick mass of tape in one place). Keep on wrapping tape down the wire/toothpick about 1”.

b) Insert green cello pieces into the bottom of the ball all the way around the trunk.

Step 7.

a) Prepare some chocolate candy. In this case, I used mini MilkyWay® (©Mars, Incorporated) pieces.

Note: Instead of chocolate candy you can use Tootsie rolls or lollipops.

Using hot glue, attach a piece of 16-gauge stem wire to the back of the mini MilkyWay® bar (you can glue it under the flap of the wrapper to hide the wire).

b) Attach two green cellophane squares to each “chocolate flower”.
c) Insert the “chocolate flowers” into the ball spacing them evenly throughout.

**Step 8.**
a) Prepare hard candy (I used berry flavored hard candy in this case; you can use any candy you want, for example, butterscotch and cinnamon discs, Jolly Rancher candy, etc.), 16 gauge wire (you need to cut it into pieces with wire cutters), green floral tape, and tools (scissors and wire cutters).

b) Using floral tape, attach 3 pieces of candy to each piece of wire. The candy pieces should be pretty close to each other. Make sure you wrap tape around the candy “tail” (loose end) and down the wire so the candy is really secure on the wire. **Note:** If the candy “tail” is too big, just trim it with scissors. Make as many “candy flowers”, as you want for your topiary, like this one.

c) Attach two pieces of green cellophane to each candy flower stem using green floral tape.

d) Tie a piece of curling ribbon of the corresponding color to each candy flower stem just beneath the top candy.

e) Insert candy flowers into the ball spacing them evenly throughout the arrangement. **Note:** Before inserting the candy flowers you may need to cut off some of the stem to make them shorter (use wire cutters).

**Step 9.**
a) Take silk daises. Cut the individual flowers off the stem. Using floral tape attach a flower to a piece of stem wire or a toothpick to prepare the flower for insertion into the foam ball.

b) Attach two pieces of green or polka dot cellophane to each daisy.

c) Insert the daisies into the topiary. They add a nice touch to the topiary.

**Step 10.** (Optional) If when you are looking at your topiary you still see some bare spots, prepare several green cello squares attached to wire/toothpicks. See Step 6-a for instructions how to do it.

Insert them in all the bare spots in your topiary to create a full looking arrangement.

**Step 11.** It’s time to decorate the base of the topiary.
If you make this topiary for a kid, put a small stuffed animal (for example, a small teddy bear toy) in the pot. Secure it to the floral foam by placing a piece of wire bent into a “V” shape over the toy’s legs.

Then insert some candy flowers, silk daisies, or maybe a butterfly to cover the floral foam.

Or without a stuffed animal
Note: This topiary can get pretty heavy. If this is the case, to make it stable you will need to use a thick dowel for the trunk or make the trunk shorter.

Your topiary is ready! I think this topiary is as beautiful as the topiary above.

“ROCHER HEART”

Materials used: A 12” heart-shaped container (I bought it in a Joann’s craft store), Ferrero Rocher chocolates, Styrofoam sheet, floral adhesive clay or hot glue, silk greenery, small silk pinkish white flowers, rose buds, golden paper, glue dots, pins, satin red ribbon, and tools.
**Step 1.** Find a container in a shape of a heart. It may be a glass heart-shaped bowl, a heart-shaped basket, a heart-shaped stepping stone mold (like in this arrangement), a heart-shaped chocolate box left after St. Valentine’s Day, etc.

**Step 2.** Buy a Styrofoam sheet of the appropriate size. Trace the contour of your heart-shaped container on it, and then cut the foam heart out.

**Note:** Instead of using a Styrofoam sheet you would buy in a craft store, you can use white polystyrene insulation foam you can buy in Lowe’s or other similar home improvement stores. It’s cheaper.

**Step 3.** Wedge the foam heart tightly into the container to prevent the foam from shifting. You can also secure the Styrofoam to the container using floral adhesive clay or hot glue (use a low temp glue gun).

**Note:** The thickness of the foam should be half the depth of the container. If this is not the case, you will need to split the foam. That is what I had to do, as my container was pretty shallow.

**Step 4.** Take small silk pinkish white flowers or just white flowers and some greenery.

**Step 5.** Divide stalks of these flowers into separate short flower stems and insert them along the edges of the container. When inserting small flowers it may be difficult to push them into the foam. To solve that, just use a piece of thick wire to make a hole in the foam before putting the small flower in.

**Step 6.**

a) Prepare the red rose buds. The quantity depends upon the size of your container. I used 16 rose buds for my 12” heart-shaped container. I bought sheer rose bushes in Wal-Mart (about $1 for a bush) and cut the rose buds off.

**Note:** After cutting off the roses, I saved the stems with leaves. They can be used in other candy arrangements with candies or chocolates in place of the flower buds.

b) Insert the rose buds into your arrangement in the form of a heart as shown in the picture. If the roses easily fall out of the foam, apply a little bit of hot glue or sticky clay to the end of the flower stems.

**Step 7.** The next step is to fill in the middle of the heart with the Rocher candy.

a) After inserting all of the flowers I needed to build up the center of the arrangement with a heart-shaped piece of foam to raise the chocolates to the level of the flowers.
You can secure the heart-shaped piece of foam using floral adhesive clay or hot glue (use a low temp glue gun).

b) Optional. Before putting the chocolates into the arrangement, you can cut a heart of the desired size from yellow or golden paper and glue it to the center of the arrangement.

c) Attach the Rocher chocolates to the heart-shaped center of the arrangement with glue dots or dressmaker’s pins. I used 18 Rocher chocolates for my arrangement. **Note:** Instead of Rocher chocolates you can use any sweets that look nice in the arrangement.

**Step 8.** The last step is to attach some beautiful ribbon to the side of the container. It should be non-transparent, for example, red satin ribbon.

![Heart-shaped candy arrangement](image)

**Step 9.** Congratulations on your beautiful heart-shaped candy arrangement! It would be a great gift for St. Valentine’s Day or Mother’s Day.
“CANDY BLAST”

Materials used: A glass vase, Lindt assorted chocolate truffles, Guylian chocolates, stem wire (16 ga), green floral tape, floral foam, marbles, silk foliage, white wired ribbon, and tools.

Step 1. Prepare a container for this bouquet. I used a glass vase as shown in the picture.

Step 2.

a) Cut the floral foam so it can be placed into the center of the vase with space between the foam and the vase. Secure the foam to the bottom of the vase using hot glue or floral adhesive clay. Or you can glue an anchor pin to the bottom of the vase first, and then push the foam onto its prongs.

b-1) Fill the surrounding area with glass marbles, potpourri, or other desired material.

b-2) Instead of marbles you can use candy, for example, mint Life Savers. There are two advantages to doing this:
• The recipient receives more candy.
• If you ship your candy bouquet via mail, the shipping cost is reduced because the candies are lighter than the marbles.

**Step 3.**

a) Prepare any chocolates, candies, toffees you would like to use for this bouquet, stem wire (16 or 18 ga), green floral tape, and tools.
I used Lindt assorted chocolate truffles and Guylian chocolates that I bought in Wal-Mart.

b) Wire and tape all these chocolates, candies, toffees.
I used 11 Lindt chocolates and 10 Guylian chocolates.

**Step 4.** Prepare a silk foliage branch. Cut off individual stems. You can extend the foliage stems with stem wire and floral tape as necessary. Alternately, you can use individual silk leaves and wire and tape them to a stem wire.

**Step 5.**

a) Insert the “Lindt chocolate flowers” in the middle of the vase.

b) Insert the silk leaves around the outside and in the middle.

c) Insert the “Guylian chocolate flowers” around the outside, bending the stems outward.

**Step 6.** Make several bows out of the ribbon. I used white narrow wired-ribbon. It is better to use wired ribbon because it is easier to shape. You can use strictly white ribbon, or ribbon of different colors, for example, red, yellow, blue, etc. To make these bows you can use just stem wire (white or green), or use chenille wire in addition to the stem wire (as you can see in the picture, I used glittering white chenille wire stems).

**Step 7.** Put your bows around the outside edge and in the middle of the bouquet, bending the stems as necessary.
“CHOCOLATE ROSEBUDS”

**Materials used:** A Gold Mint Julep Cup, HERSHEY'S® Kisses® (there is no affiliation between Hershey Foods Corporation, its divisions or subsidiaries, and Lana Glass and this book) of any flavor, silk greenery, red satin ribbon, red, green, and polka dot cellophane, stem wire (12, 14, or 16 gauge) or bamboo skewers, green floral tape, glue dots, green decorative plastic grass, floral foam, floral pins, and tools.

**Step 1.** Take a gold vase. I used a gold plastic mint julep cup (7.5” tall) that I bought from the website [http://www.afloral.com](http://www.afloral.com).

**Note:** If the vase is light (like in my case) add some weight to the bottom of the vase. You can put some candy, (in this case you can put in more HERSHEY'S® Kisses®, just don’t forget to tell the recipient about this) small polished stones, marbles, or sand in a zip-lock bag to stabilize the vase.

**Step 2.** Cut the Styrofoam to the proper size so it fits snugly in the vase.
There are two methods of putting the foam into the vase.

**Method one:**
a) First, put the foam into the vase. It should sit firmly.

b) Prepare green cellophane, floral picks, and scissors. Cut the green cellophane into pieces. Attach cello pieces to the floral picks. See more about adding cellophane or tissue paper pieces to your candy arrangement in the section Basics of Arranging Candy Bouquets at the beginning of the book. Insert the pieces of green cello into the foam covering the outside of the foam.

**Method two:**
Cut a square piece of green cellophane (you can use two cellophane pieces to achieve a fuller appearance). Wrap it around the bottom and sides of the floral foam leaving the top open and put it in the vase, it should fit snugly.

In this case I managed to find a foam half ball of the same diameter as my vase’s mouth.

**Note:** If the foam is a little bit loose in the vase (if the foam comes out of the vase fairly easy), you can fix this problem by applying just a little bit of hot glue in 2 or 3 places on the cellophane near the top edge of the foam.

**Step 3.** Cover the foam with green plastic grass or green furry yarn securing it with floral pins.

**Step 4.** Insert silk greenery in the vase.

**Step 5.** Make some chocolate rosebuds.

There are two ways of making chocolate rosebuds.

**1st method.**
a) Take Hershey’s® kisses of any flavor, red cellophane or red floral foil (you cannot see through it), stem wire (16 or 18 ga) or bamboo skewers, polka dot cellophane, red curling ribbon, glue dots, green floral tape, and tools.

b) To make a rosebud, attach two kisses bottom-to-bottom using glue dots.
Then wrap them with a square of red cellophane or red floral foil (I used 5” x 5” squares) creating a rosebud shape. Gather the cellophane at one of the tips of the kiss.

If necessary, cut the extra cellophane off with scissors. Before twisting the cellophane closed, slip in a stem wire (but do not poke it into the candy itself) or bamboo skewer; apply green floral tape tightly over the loose end of the cellophane continuing a little bit down the stem wire.

c) Cut a square piece of polka dot cellophane.
Carefully poke the rose stem through the center of a cellophane piece. Or fold the cellophane square in half and fold it in half again across the first fold and cut the tip off of the corner. You will end up with a small hole in the center of your unfolded cellophane piece.

Pull the cellophane into a cone shape beneath the rosebud and tie it with a piece of red curling ribbon. To prevent the cellophane from sliding down on the stick, use a glue dot. Fluff the cellophane out.

d) To give a bouquet a fuller appearance, add another piece of cello to the rosebud stem. Take a cellophane piece and poke the rose stem through its center. Shape the cello into a cone. Using a piece of floral tape secure the cello piece to the stem wire about 1 1/2 or 2” down from the 1st cello piece.

Wrap tape about 2” down the stem wire.

The rosebud is ready. Make as many rosebuds as you would like.

2nd method.
Instead of Hershey’s® kisses, you can use Reese’s® peanut butter cups (Mfd. By ©the Hershey Company)

a) To make a rosebud, attach two Reese’s® cups top-to-top (wider parts) using glue dots. Then wrap them with a square of red cellophane or red floral foil (I used 5.5” x 5.5” squares) creating a rosebud shape. Gather the cellophane at one end. If necessary, cut the extra cellophane off with scissors. Before twisting the cellophane closed, slip in a bamboo skewer; apply green floral tape tightly over the loose end of the cellophane continuing a little bit down the skewer.

b) About 2-4 inches down the skewer, take a rose leaf and place it against the skewer. Wrap green floral tape around the skewer and the leaf. About 2 inches below the first rose leave attach the second leaf to the skewer with floral tape. Pull the rose leaves away from the skewer and bend them, as you like, to achieve a desired look.
Step 6. Insert the chocolate rosebuds in the vase, arranging them, as you like.

Step 7. Optional.

a) You can insert silk Baby’s Breath flowers or more green cellophane pieces attached to picks (see more about adding cellophane or tissue paper pieces to your candy arrangement in the section Basics of Arranging Candy Bouquets at the beginning of the book) if you want to create a bouquet with a fuller appearance.

b) You can also add a ribbon spray to the bouquet. There is more about making a ribbon spray at the beginning of the book.

Step 8. Make a bow out of red ribbon (it may be satin ribbon, organza ribbon, etc.) and attach it to the front of the vase using hot glue or double-sided tape.

Note: You can use a gold or a silver vase. You can make rosebuds in different colors using pink, yellow, or blue cellophane or floral foil. You can add other decorative elements to the bouquet, for example decorative picks “I love you,” “Thank you”, “To the best mom”, “Happy Birthday”, etc. I added a cute little bear to my bouquet as you can see in the next picture.
Congratulations! You did a wonderful job! This rosebud bouquet is a beautiful gift for anybody!

Here is an example of a Chocolate Rose Bouquet made out of Reese’s® cups.
Materials used: Easter container, floral foam, cellophane in Easter colors, an Easter balloon, curling ribbon, an anchor pin, hot glue, wooden floral picks or steel picks (the Pick machine), a stuffed rabbit, bamboo skewers, clear packing tape, plastic egg with candy inside, chocolate bunnies, Reese’s® peanut butter cups, Starburst fun size pieces, and tools.

**Step 1.** Prepare the Easter theme container (basket, pail, etc.) and floral foam.

**Step 2.** Put the foam in the container.

**1st method.**

a) Attach an anchor pin to the bottom of the container using hot glue.

**Note:** If your container is big, you can use two anchor pins to secure the foam better.
b) Using your container as a guide, cut the floral foam to the proper size and press it firmly onto the prongs of the anchor pin. You may need to insert extra pieces of foam to fill in any empty spaces.

**Note:** Sometimes you need to use 2 blocks of foam. To hold them together, insert a piece of stem wire or bamboo skewer through both of them.

*2nd method.*

**a)** Fill two-thirds of the container with crumpled newspaper, leaving the top third empty.

**b)** Take a sheet of foam. It can be a Styrofoam sheet or a sheet of white polystyrene insulation foam that you can buy, really cheap, in Lowe’s or other home improvement stores.

**c)** Using the container as a guide cut a circle of the same diameter and put this foam disc in the container.

**d)** To prevent the foam disc from popping out of the container, tape the foam down to the container with a piece of clear packing tape.

**Step 3.** Cover the foam with pieces of cellophane.

**a)** For this candy arrangement I have decided to use cellophane in four Easter colors: green, blue, pink, and yellow, which go well with the colors of my container.

Decide for yourself what colors of cellophane you will use in your candy bouquet (the cellophane pieces should match the colors of your container). Cut cellophane into pieces. I cut the cello into 7.5” x 7.5” pieces.

**Note:** Do not worry how straight you cut your pieces. When you attach them to the picks, creating a cone shape, any unevenness won’t be noticeable.

**b)** Attach cello pieces to wooden floral picks or steel picks (using the Pick machine). Fluff the cellophane out.

See more about **adding cellophane or tissue paper pieces to your candy arrangement** in the section **Basics of Arranging Candy Bouquets** at the beginning of the book.

**c)** Insert the pieces of cellophane into the foam, alternating colors.
First, cover the outside of the foam. Then, insert several pieces in the middle. (I inserted just a couple of cello pieces, as I put a toy bunny and big egg in the middle of the arrangement).

**Step 4.** Add an Easter balloon to the arrangement.
I decided to use an Easter balloon in this candy arrangement. The balloon will be the tallest object in the arrangement. I put it in the back. To achieve a finished look from the back of the bouquet, you need to attach additional pieces of cellophane to the candy flower stems and other objects (the balloon in this case) that are placed at the back of the arrangement. I attached 3 cello pieces to the balloon stick.

a) Take a piece of cellophane and carefully poke the balloon stick through the center of a cellophane piece. Or fold the cellophane square in half and fold it in half again across the first fold and cut the tip off of the corner. You will end up with a small hole in the center of your unfolded cellophane piece.

b) Pull the cellophane into a cone shape and secure it to the stick with a piece of white floral tape. Fluff the cellophane out.

c) Put the curling ribbon where the floral tape is.

d) Attach the second piece of cellophane the same way 1.5”- 2” below the first one. Attach the third piece of cellophane 1.5” - 2” down the stick from the second cello piece.

Now the balloon is ready to be placed into the arrangement.

e) Insert the balloon in the back of the container.

**Note:** I built this bouquet starting from the back. But actually, it does not matter. You can start making your bouquet in front and work your way to the back.

**Step 5.** Add a stuffed animal to your bouquet. I chose a cute pink stuffed rabbit for this candy bouquet.

a) Attach a piece of bamboo skewer/stem wire/lollipop stick to the back of the toy using hot glue. You can also fix a piece of 16-gauge wire bent into a V-shape to the back of the toy in several places using thread and needle.

b) Insert the stick attached to the toy into the foam, just in front of the balloon.

**Step 6.** Add a plastic egg with candy inside.
a) Attach a piece of bamboo skewer/lollipop stick to the back of the plastic egg using hot glue. Apply clear packing tape over it.

b) Insert the egg into the arrangement next to the toy rabbit as though the bunny is holding it.

**Step 7.** Add chocolate bunnies to the bouquet.

a) Prepare chocolate bunnies, bamboo skewers/lollipop sticks/thick stem wire (12 or 14 gauge), hot glue, clear packing tape, cello pieces of corresponding colors, curling ribbon, and tools (scissors and wire cutters).

b) Using hot glue, attach a piece of bamboo skewer/lollipop stick/thick stem wire to the back of the chocolate bunny. Apply a piece of clear tape over the glued area for better attachment strength.

**Note:** You can wrap bamboo skewers with green floral tape before attaching them to the candy pieces.

c) One chocolate bunny will go in front of the arrangement. Cut its stick to the desired length with wire cutters.

Two other chocolate bunnies will go in the back of the bouquet on each side of the balloon. To each stick attached to the candy bunnies attach two or three pieces of cellophane using floral tape (see more about how to do it in step 4). Put the curling ribbon where the floral tape is.

d) Insert the chocolate bunnies in the arrangement.

**Step 8.**

a) Prepare Reese’s® peanut butter cups (Easter edition), bamboo skewers or thick stem wire, glue gun, and wire cutters.

b) Using hot glue, attaching a piece of stem wire or bamboo skewer to the candy piece. Unfortunately, the foil wrap on the top of Reese’s® cups easily opens. So there are two ways to attach a stick to the Reese’s® cup.

1. Attach a small piece of bamboo skewer to the top of the Reese’s® cup using hot glue. Then apply a piece of clear packing tape over it while the glue is still warm for better adhesion.

2. First, apply a small piece of packing tape over the foil wrap. Then glue a piece of bamboo skewer on top of it.
Note: I used thin bamboo skewers for small pieces of candy (there are thin and thick bamboo skewers). You can glue 2 peanut butter cups instead of one on one bamboo skewer. First, you glue a piece of bamboo skewer to the top of one of the Reese’s peanut butter cup. Then you glue the wide part of another peanut butter cup on top of it.

c) Insert peanut butter cups around the outer edge of the arrangement.

Step 9. Add additional pieces of Easter candy to fill in bare spaces.
I used Starburst fun size pieces (Easter edition).

a) Using hot glue, attach a piece of bamboo skewer or stem wire to the back of the candy piece. If you want to hide the stick, glue it under the wrapper flap (if it exists) on the back of the candy piece. Then glue the loose flap to the candy wrapper.

Note: All candy pieces should face the same way.

b) Attach 2 pieces of cellophane to tall sticks using floral tape. This way we kind of camouflage the sticks to achieve fuller nicer looking candy bouquet. Tie curling ribbon where the floral tape is.

c) Arrange Starburst candy pieces in the bouquet.

Step 10. You can add a curling ribbon spray to the bouquet (see how to do it in the section “How to add curling ribbon to the arrangements” at the beginning of the book). Or you can place pieces of curly ribbon here and there.

Front view
We are finally done! Congratulations!

**Note:** You can use any Easter container and Easter candy you like. Use this arrangement as a template, upon which you can create other wonderful candy arrangements.

**“BLUE AND SILVER”**

**Materials used:** A galvanized bucket, candy bars, blue cellophane, silver foil, floral foam, floral pins, stem wire (16 ga), bamboo skewers, green floral tape, clear packing tape, and tools.
Step 1. Take a galvanized decorative bucket (or something similar) and floral foam.

Step 2. Cut the floral foam to the proper size and put it in the bucket. It should fit firmly. For more security, you can glue an anchor pin to the bottom of the bucket using hot glue, glue dots, double-sided tape, or sticky floral clay. And then press the foam onto the prongs of the anchor pin. You may need to insert extra pieces of foam to fill in any empty spaces.

Note: To better secure the foam, instead of using an anchor pin you can tape the foam down to the bucket with pieces of clear packing tape.

Step 3. Cover the foam with the cellophane and/or foil.

a) Prepare cellophane and/or foil, a hand held pick machine with picks or floral pins, and scissors. I used blue cellophane and silver floral foil because the color scheme of my bouquet is blue and silver.

b) Take a roll of blue cellophane and cut 3 or more strips of the cellophane (the width of strips can vary; I usually cut 5-7” wide strips). Then cut the cellophane strips into three or four pieces. It does not matter how straight the cellophane pieces are because when they are attached to the picks, nobody will notice. Cut silver foil pieces as well.

c) Use the Hand Held Pick Machine with picks. See more about adding cellophane or tissue paper pieces to your candy arrangement in the section Basics of Arranging Candy Bouquets at the beginning of the book.

d) Insert your cellophane pieces into the foam, alternating the blue color with silver. If the cellophane pieces are wobbly, add a little bit of hot glue or floral sticky clay to the ends of the pick before inserting it into the foam.

First, add pieces of cellophane and foil to the perimeter of the bucket. Then fill in the middle.

When you look at your candy bouquet, you should not see the floral foam. But do not put too many cellophane pieces; you need space for inserting your candy flowers.

Note: When you expand your candy bouquet business and have a lot of orders and more money to invest in your business, you can buy a Floral Pick Machine. Pick Machines allow automatic attachment of metal picks to stems of fresh, dried, artificial flowers, cellophane, and etc. The machine is expensive (about $150) but saves
valuable time. A cheaper alternative is to purchase a manual Floral Pick Machine (these cost about $30 at your local craft stores). Metal picks, from 1.25” to 4”, are serrated to aid in anchoring the flower stem, and are sold in stacks. The metal edges are sharp and care should be taken to prevent injury when working with them.

Here is one of the sites, which sell the picks and machines http://www.afloral.com/Wedding?search=pick+machine

You can also buy it at Michael’s Craft Store with the 40% off coupon that you can find in practically every Sunday’s newspaper.

**Step 4.** Prepare the candy bars, bubble gum package packages, and etc. that you want to use in your candy bouquet. The candy bars and other items should have wrappers that will go well with the color scheme of this arrangement.

**Step 5.** Attach prepared candy bars to the stem wire (12, 14, or 16 ga) or bamboo skewers. I used 12 gauge wire in this case (I bought a bundle of suspended-ceiling hanger wire in 12 gauge (6 feet long, 50 pieces) for about $ 9.00 in Lowe’s).

For a review of making candy flowers go to “How to attach large pieces of candy” in the section Basics of Arranging Candy Bouquets at the beginning of this book.

The length of the sticks is different because we will arrange the candy bars in three rows. Using wire cutters cut the sticks to the desired length.

**Note:** For more professional look, you can glue a bamboo skewer/stem wire under the flap of the candy bar wrapper to hide the skewer/stem wire.

**Step 6.**

a) Arrange the candy bars in the first row. The first row is the shortest one.

b) Insert candy bars in the second row, forming a fan type pattern.

c) To hide the bamboo skewers/stem wire (if they are showing) and to achieve a fuller nicer look of the bouquet from the back, add cello or foil pieces to the candy bars that will form the 3rd row.

Carefully poke the candy piece stick through the center of a piece of cello/foil.

Pull the cello into a cone shape. Using a piece of floral tape secure the cello piece to the bamboo skewer/wire. Wrap tape about 1.5 – 2” down the stick.

Place the candy bars into the third row, which is the tallest.
Note: If the candy sticks are kind of loose in the foam, you can apply hot glue or floral sticky clay to the end of the stick and then insert it in the foam.

Step 7.
a) Prepare a bow and a curly ribbon spray. See more about making ribbon sprays in the section “How to add curling ribbon to candy arrangements” at the beginning of the book.

b) Attach the bow to the bucket and insert the ribbon spray into the bouquet.
“FALL COLLECTION”
(A three-sided candy arrangement)

Materials used: A basket, autumn colored tissue paper, mini candy bars, floral foam, bamboo skewers, an anchor pin, floral pins, brown floral tape, curling ribbon, silk maple leaves, and tools.

Step 1. Prepare a basket and floral foam.

Step 2.

a) Take an anchor pin and attach it to the bottom of the basket using hot glue or double-sided tape.

b) Cut a piece of floral foam to the proper size and press it firmly onto the prongs of the anchor pin. The foam extends a little bit above the basket so you can easily position “candy flowers” near the rim.

Step 3. Cover the foam with pieces of tissue paper using floral pins.

a) Prepare the autumn colored tissue paper or cellophane (yellow, red, orange, etc.). Cut tissue paper/cellophane into pieces (the size of the pieces depends on the size of the arrangement and your vision of the arrangement).

b) Using the Hand Held Pick Machine attach pieces of tissue paper/cellophane to picks. You can also attach cello pieces to floral picks. See more about adding cellophane or tissue paper pieces to your candy arrangement in the section Basics of Arranging Candy Bouquets at the beginning of the book.

b) Insert the pieces of tissue paper into the foam alternating colors. Cover the outside of the foam first, and then fill in the middle.

Step 4.

a) Prepare candies or chocolates that you are going to use in this arrangement (I used mini candy bars from “Mini Mix”), bamboo skewers, green or brown floral tape, glue gun with glue sticks, clear packing tape, curling ribbon, and tools.

b) Wrap bamboo skewers with brown or green floral tape. Put some hot glue (use a low temperature glue gun) on the bamboo skewer and attach it to the back of the candy bar, and then apply clear packing tape over the glued area for better attachment
strength. You can omit using the packing tape, because we use mini candy bars and the hot glue may be enough to stabilize them on the bamboo sticks.

Review the section “How to Attach Candies to wire, bamboo skewers, and other sticks” at the beginning of the book.

Note: All of the candy bars are facing the same way.

c) Attach a piece of tissue paper to all but the shortest candy flower stems using floral tape. Put the curling ribbon where the floral tape is.

Step 5.
a) This is a three-sided candy arrangement. Take three “Twix flowers” and insert them in the basket, placing one “candy flower” in the center in the back and one “candy flower” on each side to establish height and width.

We start inserting candy pieces in the back to prevent the arrangement from tipping over; you can also put small polished stones in the basket on the opposite side of the direction the arrangement tips. Using wire cutters adjust the length of candy sticks, as desired.

b) Continue inserting “Twix flowers” creating a triangular design.

c) Insert other “candy flowers” into the arrangement spacing them evenly throughout the triangular form.

Note: If some candy sticks are loose in the foam, you can apply hot glue or floral sticky clay to the end of the stick and then insert it in the foam.

Step 6. Add some branches with silk autumn maple leaves in the back of the arrangement, behind the candy bars. The arrangement should appear balanced on three sides. Maple leaves fill in bare areas and make the candy bouquet more interesting and finished.

Step 7. If you want, you can wrap this candy bouquet. It is advisable to do so, if you ship it to a customer.

Front View
“HAPPY BIRTHDAY CANDY BOUQUET”

Materials used: 6 standard chocolate bars of your choice for the base, various chocolate candy bars (MilkyWay®, Snickers®, Twix®, and others), a package of Skittles bubble gum, red and yellow cellophane, floral foam, green floral tape, double-sided tape or hot glue, clear packing tape, bamboo skewers, curling ribbons, floral pins, and tools.

Step 1. This candy bouquet is made up of a variety of candy bars. The base of this arrangement is made up of regular size Twix® bars (you can use any chocolate bars you would like for the base).

Let’s make a “chocolate vase.” There are several methods of assembling a “chocolate vase”.

The first method.
a) Take 6 regular size Twix® chocolate bars. You can use these chocolate bars as they are.

b) Using wide packing tape, attach the long edges on the back of candy bars creating a sheet.

c) Attach the two free edges to each other forming a box or a cylinder.

Fold the top flaps down inside and secure them with scotch tape or dabs of hot glue.
Fold the bottom flaps down under, securing the corners with dabs of hot glue or glue dots.

d) Your “chocolate vase” is not stable. To fix it, cut a cardboard rectangle or square (if you use 8 candy bars) of the appropriate dimensions and attach it to the bottom, using hot glue, double-sided tape, or memory zips.

Note: the cardboard piece should not extend beyond the candy bars.
The second method.
a-1) Take 6 regular size Twix® chocolate bars.

a-2) I decided to customize this candy bouquet, make it more fun and original. So before making a vase out of the Hershey’s bars I wrapped them in customized candy wrappers.

First, I made “Happy Birthday” candy wrappers.

Then, I applied the custom wrappers around the bars, gluing three sides with a good glue stick.
Note: with the glue stick, run it across the border of the entire wrapper at least 2 times and press firmly.

There are several tools you can use to make custom candy wrappers.

1) You can use any software that allows you to set up a custom label template (for example, Desktop Publishing software). Just set up the labels for the size of your wrapper, and use the text tools and clipart to create candy wrappers in the style that suites your project.

Important note: Never take off the original manufacturer's sealed candy wrapper; wrap the new label around the old one. See the Hershey’s Policies on how to do it at the beginning of the book.

2) Special candy Wrapper software. There are several versions/creators of this type of software. Here are two of them.

- Candy Wrapper Software Program “Wrapcandy” is fun and easy to use. It comes with over 300 fully customizable Templates. You can use them over and over, and even add your own pictures. These templates are perfect for beginners, and experts alike.
  For an even more personalized touch, you can use your own Pictures. Add pictures of your children, family or just about anything else you can think of. “Wrapcandy” is a Stand Alone Program and does not require the use of a separate graphics program. ReadMore…

- “The Dapper Wrapper” Software. This program is easy to use. No special software needed. You can use MS Word or any graphics editor.
  Download and unzip the template sets from the Members Only web site.
  Open the template (.jpg format) in any graphics editor or DTP or word processor. Add your text and pictures. LearnMore…

b-1) Using hot glue (low temp glue gun) and/or clear packing tape (use wide packing tape not narrow scotch tape for better adhesion) attach the long edges on the back of two Hershey’s bars.

Then attach two more candy bars together as described previously.

Measure across the short edges of the two candy bars and transfer that measurement to a piece of cardboard.
Then measure the short edge of a single candy bar and transfer that dimension perpendicularly to the first measurement onto the cardboard. It should form a 90-degree angle.

b-2) Use these two measurements to complete a rectangle. Increase the outer dimensions of this rectangle by half an inch. Cut out the rectangle. Observe the picture below. Cut along the orange solid lines. Crease or bend along the purple dash lines to form a shallow box.

b-3) Glue the short side of a double candy bar to a long tab. Take the other double candy bar and attach the bottom of it to the other long tab in a similar manner.

Note: Check to make sure that all candy bars are facing the proper direction so that when you fold the tabs up, the bars are pointing the proper direction.

b-4) With the single bars do the same thing that you did with the double bars, only on the short tabs.

c-1) Turn the whole thing over and attach 4 corners to each other, one at a time, using hot glue and putting packing tape over it. Press the corners of the candy bars to each other firmly to eliminate any gapping between them. Your “chocolate vase” is ready!

If you would like a bigger chocolate vase, use 8 candy bars instead of 6 (two candy bars on each side).

c-2) If the white cardboard is slightly visible at the corners, glue a narrow ribbon of the appropriate color around the bottom of the vase. See the picture below.

The third method.
The second method uses four big chocolate bars (3.5 oz each or bigger).

Take the first two candy bars, using a little bit of hot glue, glue dots, or memory zips, attach the long edge of the second candy bar to the back of the first candy bar as shown in the picture. For more security, attach pieces of clear packing tape to the inside corners of the two candy bars. As you can see, the long edge of the second bar is not showing because it is attached to the back of the first candy bar.
Take another candy bar (the third bar) and attach its long edge to the back of the first candy bar as shown in the picture. As you can see, the long edge of the third bar is not showing because it is attached to the back of the first candy bar.

Take the fourth candy bar and attach it to the long edges of the second and third candy bars.
Some people like this type of chocolate vase as they say it looks neater without the long edges of bars exposed.

**Step 2.** Insert floral foam into the “vase”.

a) For better stability, you can attach an anchor pin to the bottom of the vase using hot glue or double-sided tape.

b) Cut a piece of floral foam to the proper size and press it firmly onto the prongs of the anchor pin. You can wrap the foam in cellophane leaving the top open before inserting the foam into the vase.

**Step 3.** Cover the foam with pieces of cellophane.

a) Take red and yellow cellophane (you can use any color; the main thing here is that the color of the cellophane should be in harmony with the color scheme of the bouquet). Cut the cellophane into pieces.
Step 4.

a) Take different chocolate bars and bubble gum packages (Milky Way®, Twix®, Butterfinger®, Almond Joy®, etc.), bamboo skewers or 12-14 gauge wire, floral tape, hot glue, and packing tape.

b) Take a whole bamboo skewer and a part of a skewer (its length depend on the length of the candy bar). Attach them together by wrapping them with floral tape. I like to use a wooden skewer plus a part of another skewer instead of two whole skewers for two reasons:
1) I use fewer skewers, that is, I use skewers more economically.
2) When we insert the candy bar into the foam, the hole from one skewer is smaller than from two skewers, and in the event that we have to rearrange the candy bars, it will not tear up the foam as much.

Note: For candy bars (in comparison with candy), I prefer to use thick bamboo skewers (there are thick and thin bamboo skewers) or 12-14 gauge wire (thick strong wire) you can buy in Lowe’s or similar home improvement stores.

Put glue generously on the taped stick where the candy bar will be attached. Attach the stick with glue under the flap on the back of the candy bar so that its tip is very close to the top of the candy bar but not showing. This way the bar is more secure on the stick. Then glue the loose part of the flap to the candy wrapper. Now the stick is hidden under the flap. You can also apply the clear packing tape over it.

c) Insert the chocolate candy bars in the foam spacing them evenly.

Step 5.

a) Take curling ribbons of several colors (gold, red, and white in this case) that will match the colors of the candy arrangement, and red or yellow chenille wire.

b) Take a piece of chenille wire and tightly wrap it around the middle of the curling ribbons. Curl ribbons by pulling them over the edge of the scissors. Because chenille wire is very flexible, you will need to attach a piece of stem wire or bamboo skewer to the end of the chenille wire to be able to insert the wired curling ribbons in the foam.
c) Put these curling ribbons in the middle of the arrangement.

Step 6. (Optional)
You can attach a red bow (you can make it yourself or buy a ready made bow) to the front of your candy bouquet and/or add a Happy Birthday balloon. You can also wrap the bouquet in clear cellophane (this is recommended if you ship the bouquet). Congratulations! You have just made a wonderful birthday candy bouquet!

“THANK YOU CANDY BOUQUET”

Materials used: a Thank you gift box, floral foam, cellophane of different colors, various fun size candy bars, bamboo skewers, green floral tape, curling ribbon of different colors, a hand held pick machine with picks or wooden floral picks with wire, hot glue, and tools (wire cutters to cut bamboo skewers and wire, and scissors).

Step 1. a) Prepare a “Thank you” gift box. I bought the box you see in the picture on the site http://www.nashvillewraps.com.
b) These cardstock boxes are not usually very stable; they are pretty light. To stabilize the box, you may need to add weight to the bottom of the box. For example, you can put some rocks or sand in a zip-lock bag and put it in the bottom of the box.

**Step 2.** Cut the floral foam to the proper size to fit snugly in the box. You may need to put in additional pieces of foam.

If you put sand or rocks in the bottom of the box, before putting the floral foam on top of it, sandwich a piece of cardboard between the sand and the foam (when you begin to insert candy flower stems in the foam, they can poke holes in the bag of sand).

To prevent the foam from popping out of the box, tape the foam down to the box with a piece of clear packing tape. I recommend that you only extend the packing tape down the sides of the box about 3/8” so the recipient will not see the tape.

You can tape the foam down to the box with small pieces of packing tape on both sides instead of using a piece of packing tape across the top.

**Step 3.** Cover the foam with pieces of cellophane.

a) Take cellophane of different colors (I used blue and yellow cellophane for this arrangement because it goes well with the colors of the box). Take a roll of cellophane and cut several strips of the cellophane (the width of strips can vary; I usually cut 6” - 8” wide strips).

Then cut the cellophane into pieces. It does not matter how straight the cellophane pieces are because when they are attached to the picks, any unevenness won’t be noticeable.

b) Using the Hand Held Pick Machine attach cello pieces to picks. You can also attach cello pieces to wooden floral picks with wire. See more about adding cellophane pieces to your candy arrangement in the section **Basics of Arranging Candy Bouquets** at the beginning of this book.

c) First, insert the cello pieces around the perimeter of the foam. Then insert several cello pieces in the middle.

**Step 4.** Let’s make some candy flowers.

a) Prepare the candy bars (I used various fun size candy bars) that you are going to use in this arrangement, bamboo skewers, green floral tape, glue gun with glue sticks, clear packing tape, cello pieces of different colors, and scissors.
b) Wrap bamboo skewers with green floral tape. Put hot glue (use a low temperature glue gun) on the bamboo skewer and attach it to the back of the candy bar; you can apply clear packing tape over the glued area for better attachment strength.

If you want to hide the stick, glue it under the wrapper flap (if there is a flap on the back of the candy bar). Then glue the loose flap to the candy wrapper.

**Note:** To maintain consistency, all candy bars should face the same direction.

c) Some candy flowers are taller than others and you will need long sticks to make them. Take two bamboo skewers; lay them side-by-side as shown in the picture, and wrap them together using floral tape. This way you can make sticks of any length you need.

d) Attach a piece or several pieces of cellophane to each candy flower stem using floral tape.

d-1) Take a piece of cellophane and carefully poke the stick through the center of a cellophane piece. Alternatively, fold the cellophane square in half and fold it in half again across the first fold and cut the tip off of the corner. You will end up with a small hole in the center of your unfolded cellophane piece.

d-2) Pull the cellophane into a cone shape and secure it to the stick with a piece of green floral tape. Fluff the cellophane out.

**Note:** Use a hair clip to hold the cello in place on the stem while applying floral tape.

d-3) The taller the candy flower, the more cello pieces you will need to attach to its stick.

I recommend wrapping 3-4 cello square pieces about 1”-1 ½” apart under the candy bar of the tallest candy flower sticks. Thus, you can create a tall and full looking bouquet.

**Step 5.** Insert candy bar flowers into the arrangement.

a) Arrange the candy bars in the first row. The first row is the shortest one.

b) Insert candy bars in the second row, forming a fan type pattern.

c) Put candy bars into the third row.
d) Insert candy bars in the fourth row. You can stop here.

e) Or put candy bars into the fifth row, which is the tallest.

**Step 6.**
a) Prepare a curling ribbon spray. See how to make a ribbon spray in the section “How to add curling ribbon to the arrangements” at the beginning of the book.

b) Insert the ribbon spray in the bouquet separating the strands.

You chocolate bouquet is ready! Well done!

**Front View**
Variation of this bouquet.

1. In addition to using fun size candy bars, make some candy flowers out of hard candy, for example, Jolly Ranchers.

Attach 1-3 cello pieces to the candy flower sticks.

Arrange these candy flowers into the bouquet.

2. Take a “Thank You” balloon and attach 2-4 cello pieces to its stick using floral tape. Insert the balloon at the back of the arrangement.

3. Place some silk flowers into the bouquet. I used silk daisies in this arrangement. If you need to extend the length of a flower stem, you can do this by placing a piece of
bamboo skewer next to the flower stem and then secure them together with floral tape. Alternatively, you can use a wooden floral pick with wire.

Put the silk flowers into the bouquet.

**Important Note**
To prevent the bouquet from appearing to lean backwards and to prevent the bouquet from tipping over, you may want to put the balloon or the other tallest objects of the bouquet further forward in the arrangement. Then insert several candy flowers behind the tallest objects facing outward from the back of the bouquet.
“GHIRARDELLI CANDY BOUQUET”

Materials used: a flowerpot, floral foam, green cellophane, polka dot cellophane, Ghirardelli® chocolate squares, Brach’s® coffee toffees (I bought these in Walgreens), green floral tape, two Twix® bars, two Starburst® packs, 16 or 18 gauge stem wire and bamboo skewers, green curling ribbon, a hand held pick machine with picks, hot glue (low temp gun), glue dots, and tools (scissors, pliers, and wire cutters).

Step 1. Take a flowerpot. It can be any flowerpot you like. Cut the floral foam to the proper size and put it in the pot; it should fit firmly. Or you just can put the block of floral foam on top of the flowerpot and press the foam down into the pot until it hits the bottom; remove any excess foam.

Note: To hold the floral foam in place, glue an anchor pin to the bottom of the flowerpot using hot glue or sticky floral clay. And then press the foam onto the prongs of the anchor pin.

If your flowerpot is light, instead of a plastic anchor pin use a metal floral pin frog to stabilize the pot and hold the floral foam in place.

To save money, instead of a metal pin frog use sand in a zip-lock bag. To prevent the foam from popping out of the pot, tape the foam down to the pot with a piece of clear packing tape.

Step 2.

a) Prepare green cellophane, a hand held pick machine with picks or floral picks, and scissors.

b) Cut the green cellophane into pieces. It does not matter if the cellophane pieces are cut evenly; when they are attached to picks, nobody will notice. I used short cello pieces for the front of the bouquet and taller pieces in the back.

Insert cello pieces in the foam. Partially cover the foam with cello pieces (first, put in cello pieces around the rim of the flowerpot and then some pieces in the middle).

Step 3. Prepare Ghirardelli® chocolate squares for inserting into the bouquet.

a) Take the Ghirardelli chocolate squares in a variety of flavors, stem wire (16 or 18 ga) and bamboo skewers, packing tape, green floral tape, hot glue, wire cutters, and scissors.

b) We will put these chocolate squares in four tiers. Decide how tall you want your arrangement to be and cut the stem wire and bamboo skewers accordingly.
I used stem wire on the chocolate squares for the first two tiers. Bend the stem wire into a “V” shape and attach the bottom of the “V” to your chocolate square, using a piece of clear packing tape. We do this to prevent the chocolate piece from rotating on the wire.

c) I used bamboo skewers for the chocolate squares for the 3\textsuperscript{rd} and 4\textsuperscript{th} tiers. (You can use only bamboo skewers for all chocolate pieces. I used wire and skewers in this bouquet to show you that there are different methods for securing the chocolate pieces)
Take a thick bamboo skewer (there are thin and thick bamboo skewers) and wrap floral tape around it. Then attach the taped stick to the back of the chocolate square using hot glue. To hide the stick, glue it under the wrapper flap on the back of the candy bar.

Attach a piece of green cellophane to the Ghirardelli squares in the 3\textsuperscript{rd} and 4\textsuperscript{th} tier (in the back of the arrangement) to hide the sticks and give the bouquet a nicer fuller look. You can also tie a piece of curling ribbon around the candy flower stem.

d) Insert the Ghirardelli squares into the pot.

\textbf{Note:} All candy bars should face the same way.

\textbf{Step 4.}

a) Take 2 Twix\textsuperscript{®} bars, 2 Starburst\textsuperscript{®} packs, bamboo skewers, green floral tape, hot glue, clear packing tape, and tools (scissors and wire cutters).

b) Take one bamboo skewer and a part of a skewer or 2 whole skewers and attach them together by wrapping with floral tape (See more about attaching candy bars to wire and bamboo skewers in the section Basics of Arranging Candy Bouquets at the beginning of the book). Then attach the taped stick to the back of the candy pieces using hot glue. To hide the stick, glue it under the wrapper flap on the back of the candy bar. Apply packing tape over it.

\textbf{Note:} Instead of bamboo skewers you can use 12 or 14 gauge wire (thick strong wire) you can buy in Lowe’s or similar home improvement stores (it’s pretty cheap).

c) Insert the candy pieces into the pot between the 3\textsuperscript{rd} and 4\textsuperscript{th} tiers.

\textbf{Step 5.} Make some candy flowers from the Brach’s\textsuperscript{®} coffee toffees (the quantity of candy flowers depends on how big your pot is).
a) Take the Brach’s® coffee toffees, stem wire (16 or 18 ga) or bamboo skewers, and green floral tape.

b) Join 3 coffee toffees of the same color to each stem using floral tape. Place the wire alongside the loose part of the candy wrapper, then put stem wrap tape around them. To make the candy stand straight upward, tightly build up the tape at the base of the candy.

After you join the candy on the top, you join two more candies further down the wire. Twirl the stem while stretching and pulling the tape in a downward angle. The tape should be tightly wrapped without buckles or gaps along the stem. Smooth out the wrap tape for a more polished look.

c) Add a decorative element to all of these coffee toffees flowers. Cut some square pieces of polka dot cellophane, equal in quantity to your candy flowers. In my case I used 7” x 7” pieces. Carefullypoke the candy flower stem through the center of a cellophane piece. Pull up the cellophane into a cone a little beneath the coffee toffees and tie it with a piece of curling ribbon. Fluff the cellophane out.

Step 6.
Insert the coffee toffee flowers into the pot spacing them evenly throughout the arrangement.

Note: You may choose not to put Twix bars and Starburst pieces into the arrangement. Remember, this bouquet is just an example. Create your own variation of this bouquet.

Congratulations on your beautiful Ghirardelli bouquet!
“CANDY BOUQUET IN A POPCORN BOX”

Materials used: a popcorn box, a variety of mini candy bars and hard candy, cellophane of different colors, floral foam, bamboo skewers or 16 gauge stem wire, a low-temperature glue gun with glue sticks, rocks, floral picks or the hand held pick machine with picks, and tools (scissors and wire cutters).

Step 1. Prepare a popcorn box. It can be a paper, paperboard, or plastic popcorn box.
Step 2. These types of boxes are not very stable; they are pretty light. To stabilize the box, you need to add weight to the bottom of the box. I used small stones for this purpose. I put the rocks/stones in a small Ziploc bag and then put them in the bottom of the box.

Note: The taller the bouquet, the more weight you will need to add to the bottom of the box.

Step 3. Using your popcorn box as a guide cut the floral foam to the proper size. I used two pieces of foam to fill up the box (put the 1st piece of foam in the box, and then place the 2nd piece of foam on top of the 1st piece).

I used dried floral foam, which is kind of “dusty”. When you rearrange candy flowers in your bouquet, the dried floral foam leaves “dust…” on the cellophane you use in your bouquet. To avoid this, I wrapped the floral foam in a piece of clear plastic wrap (fixing the plastic wrap on the back of the foam block with a small piece of scotch tape) before putting the foam into the box.

Note: To prevent the foam from popping out of the box, tape the foam down to the box with small pieces of clear packing tape in the front and back.

Step 4. Cover the foam with pieces of cellophane.
   a) Take cellophane of different colors (I used red, pink, yellow, and green cellophane for this arrangement). Take a roll of cellophane and cut several strips of the cellophane (the width of the strips can vary; I usually cut 6” – 7” wide strips). Then cut the cellophane into pieces. It does not matter how straight the cellophane pieces are because when they are attached to the picks, any unevenness won’t be noticeable.

   b) Using the Hand Held Pick Machine attach the cello pieces to the picks. You can also attach cello pieces to wooden floral picks with wire. See more about adding cellophane pieces to your candy arrangement in the section Basics of Arranging Candy Bouquets at the beginning of this book.

   c) Insert the cello pieces around the perimeter of the foam.

Step 5. It’s time to make candy flowers. I used hard candy and candy bars for this arrangement.
   a) Prepare hard candy (I used red and white-striped starlight mints, cinnamon discs, and butterscotch candy). Attach three pieces of the same type of candy to a bamboo skewer or 16-gauge stem wire using green floral tape. Attach 1-3 pieces of cello to each candy flower stem. Make as many candy flowers, as you want for your bouquet.
b) Prepare fun size candy bars (I used a variety of them). Using hot glue (a low-temp glue gun), attach a bamboo skewer to the back of the bar.

If you want to hide the stick, glue it under the wrapper flap (if there is a flap on the back of the candy bar). Then glue the loose flap to the candy wrapper.

**Note:** To maintain consistency, all candy bars should face the same direction.

**Step 6.** Insert candy flowers into your bouquet.

a) Arrange the candy flowers in the first tier. The first tier is the shortest one. I used wire cutters to make the candy flower stems shorter. This is the only tier where the candy flowers don’t have to have cello pieces attached to them.

b) Arrange the candy flowers in the second tier, forming a fan type pattern.

c) Insert the candy flowers into the third tier.
The center part of this row is a pretty big box of candy. To stabilize it, I attached two bamboo skewers parallel to each other to the back of the candy box using hot glue, and then applied a piece of clear packing tape over them.

d) Arrange the candy flowers into the fourth tier.

e) Insert the candy flowers into the fifth tier.
The taller the candy flower the more cello pieces should be attached to its stick.

**Note:** You may choose to only make a 4-tier bouquet. It’s all up to you.

**Step 7.** To make our candy bouquet more festive, we need to add decorative elements.

a) Prepare a curling ribbon spray. See how to make a ribbon spray in the section “How to add curling ribbon to the arrangements” at the beginning of the book. Insert it into the 4th or 5th tier of your arrangement.

b) Prepare a Happy Birthday Balloon, attach several pieces of cello to its stick using white floral tape. Insert the balloon just behind the central candy piece of the last tier. You may want to consider putting the balloon off center in the arrangement.
c) You may also want to add a beautiful bow to the front of the bouquet.

**Step 8.** Make the back of the bouquet look good too.

a) This is how my bouquet looks from the back.
b) To make it looks good, we need to insert several candy flowers facing outward from the back of the bouquet.
Back view of the bouquet

Enjoy your beautiful candy bouquet!

You can create many variations of this bouquet. You can use movie type candy bars and boxes, even add packs of popcorn. Don’t be afraid to experiment!

“CANDY CAKE”

Materials used: Styrofoam discs of different diameters, aluminum foil, silver foil doily (12 inch diameter), 3 Musketeers® mini bars (©Mars Incorporated) and BabyRuth® mini bars (Nestle), cinnamon discs, a tootsie pop sucker in blue or red wrappers, silver, red, and white curling ribbon, and a low temp hot glue gun.

Step 1. I decided to make a two-tier candy cake. I prepared one large Styrofoam disc 7-7/8 in x 1-15/16 in and two smaller discs 5-7/8 in x 1-3/16 in. First, I glued the two smaller Styrofoam discs to each other using hot glue.
**Step 2.** Then I wrapped the big disc and the two smaller discs, which were glued together, in aluminum foil. I covered the Styrofoam discs in foil so that you will not see the green foam between the candy pieces after they are attached to the discs.

**Step 3.** Take the big Styrofoam disc. Apply hot glue (use a low-temperature gun) to the back of a 3 Musketeers® mini bar and attach it to the outer edge of the disc. The end of a candy bar should be lined up with the bottom of the Styrofoam disc. Hold it for a few seconds to make sure the glue cools and the bar is secure. Cover the perimeter of the disc with candy.

**Note:** You may want to lay out your design before you begin, so that you know how many candy pieces are needed for each layer.

**Step 4.** Apply hot glue to the bottom of the smaller Styrofoam disc and glue it to the large disc, positioning the smaller disc in the center of the larger disc. Hold down for a few seconds to make sure the glue cools and the smaller disc is securely attached to the larger disc.

You may want to glue the smaller disc to the larger disc first and after that start attaching candy pieces to the larger disc.

**Note:** If you want to separate the layers on your cake use spacers in between the layers, for example, wood thread spools can be used.

**Step 5.** Apply hot glue (use a low-temperature gun) on the back of a BabyRuth® mini bar and attach it to the perimeter of the second tier disc. The end of a candy bar should be lined up with the bottom of the disc. I used 16 BabyRuth® mini bars.

**Step 6.** Decorate the space between the 1st and the 2nd layer with cinnamon discs. Squeeze a dot of hot glue to the back of a cinnamon disc and attach it on the top of the 1st layer. Continue gluing candy pieces all around.

**Step 7.** Decorate the top of your candy cake with 3 Musketeers® mini bars and cinnamon discs, alternating the candy.

**Step 8.** You should have a small empty circle in the middle of the top of the cake. This is a good place to insert a Tootsie pop sucker.

Tie pieces of silver, red, and white curling ribbon around the Tootsie pop and curl them with a pair of scissors. Insert the pop in the middle of the top of the cake.
Step 9. Put your candy cake on a silver foil doily. Beautiful!

The same concepts apply if you are building a 2-layer or a 10-layer candy cake. Don’t be afraid to experiment! I wish you many beautiful candy cakes!

**“CHRISTMAS CANDY ARRANGEMENT IN A BASKET”**

**Material used:** Christmas basket, miniature Christmas KitKat® candy bars and BabyRuth® and Butterfinger® candy bars, colored cellophane (red, green, and polka dot), curling ribbon (red, green, and white), floral foam, floral picks, green floral tape, bamboo skewers, a wide Christmas themed ribbon, 16 gauge stem wire, a glue gun with glue sticks, and tools (scissors and wire cutters).

**Step 1.** Prepare the Christmas basket and floral foam. If you use a basket with a cloth liner, then you need to wrap the floral foam in plastic wrap to keep the basket clean. Cut the floral foam to the appropriate size. Sometimes you need to use additional wedges of foam; if so use floral pins to keep the foam pieces together. Wrap the floral foam in clear plastic wrap securing it with pieces of scotch tape.
Step 2. Insert the floral foam into the basket. It should sit firmly in the basket.

Step 3. Take the cellophane in different colors. Cut several strips of the cellophane (the width of strips can vary; I usually cut 6” - 8” wide strips) from each roll. Then cut the cellophane strips into square pieces.Attach some cello pieces to floral picks. You can also use the Hand Held Pick Machine to attach cello pieces to picks. See more about adding cellophane pieces to your candy arrangement in the section Basics of Candy Arranging at the beginning of this book. Insert the cello pieces around the perimeter of the foam.

Step 4. After choosing the basket, choose candy pieces that go well with the color scheme of the basket. You can use regular candy or holiday theme candy. In this case Christmas mini KitKat®, BabyRuth®, and Butterfinger® candy bars were used.

Step 5. Make candy flowers using the KitKat® candy bars.

a) To make one candy flower, take 3 KitKat® candy pieces and 3 pieces of 16 gauge stem wire. Secure each candy piece to a piece of wire using hot glue. Gather these three stems in your hand and tape them together with green floral tape.

b) Bend the two outside candy pieces away from the center stem.

c) Attach some cello pieces to each candy flower stem with green floral tape. The taller the candy flower, the more cello pieces you need to attach to it. Tie curling ribbon to the candy flower. Using scissors curl the ribbon.

d) Insert the KitKat® flower clusters into the arrangement. To make flower stems shorter, cut them with the wire cutters. In this case, 5 candy flowers were inserted: one in the center (it’s the tallest object in the candy bouquet) and one in each corner angled so that the center flower and two flowers in the corners form a triangle.

Step 6. Make some candy flowers out of BabyRuth® and Butterfinger® miniatures. If you need to make some flower stems longer, attach a piece of bamboo skewer to the stem with floral tape.

Step 7. Arrange the candy flowers in the basket the way you like it. Leave a little bit space in the center of the front of the bouquet for a bow.
**Step 8.** Make a bow using of a holiday theme ribbon, secure it to a piece of stem wire or bamboo skewer using hot glue, and insert the bow in the center front of the arrangement. You can use a store-bought bow. The bow makes the bouquet more festive.

**Variations of the bouquet**

1. You can use some big pieces in your arrangement, for example, a giant holiday lollipop or candy/cookie tin.
2. You can add some silk holiday flowers to add interest to your Christmas bouquet.
How To Make Impressive Earnings With Candy Bouquets and Gift baskets

Finding the "perfect gift" for a special occasion is, for many people, an exercise in frustration. Going from store to store only to find high prices or poor quality merchandise can take most of the pleasure out of gift giving. Too often we settle for a gift that isn't what we want to give, simply to be done with the whole process. Wouldn’t it be great to have a selection of creative gifts to suit any occasion?

Gift giving isn't just a seasonal concern - there's always an occasion. Today, many people are taking the matter into their own hands by creating affordable, unique gift ideas. These people have discovered the exciting new business of candy flower arrangements and customized gift baskets.

This business is rapidly expanding, allowing the entrepreneur to have fun, be creative, and make livable profits. The business of making candy bouquets and gift baskets requires a small initial investment as a home-based endeavor and can grow into a multi-employee operation. For the enterprising and creative person it is a great way to start a small business with an unlimited market.

Starting a candy bouquet and/or gift basket business, as a home-based operation is an ideal way to begin since a lot of equipment is not necessary and there's no rent to pay for office space. The biggest expense might be a car for delivery of the products. Utilizing existing shelving and garage space for storage also helps this home-based business cut down on expenses.

Profit depends on individual initiative and efficient marketing. Once a handsome "home-generated" profit is realized, an expansion to a larger candy bouquets and/or gift basket service could mean a sizable yearly income.

BUSINESS OVERVIEW

In order to begin a profitable venture in the candy flower arrangement and/or gift basket business the individual entrepreneur must be well prepared. If the business is to be, at least initially, home-based, several basic steps need to be taken.

1) Find the appropriate inventory at affordable prices.
2) Create candy arrangements and/or gift baskets that are not only marketable, but also more pleasing and affordable than those of the competition.
3) Develop an efficient system of delivery as well as selling retail for customer pickup.
4) Price candy bouquets and/or gift baskets for the highest profit.
5) Promote the business at minimal expense.

These initial steps are not all that difficult. They will require time, a small monetary investment, and even a little experimentation. Once you develop your system for making candy bouquets and/or gift baskets, you can begin to be more creative, making specialized "theme" baskets and candy arrangements.

Many people getting into the business of gift basket making have some experience at creating these delightful gifts. As a hobby, these people have made baskets for relatives and friends as gifts for special occasions. The person who has no practical experience, and who is not "naturally artistic" might do well to hire a creative friend or relative as a partner in this business venture.

Operating a candy bouquet and/or gift basket service is most often an endeavor undertaken by people who relish the creativity involved in making these beautiful gifts. If you plan to establish a one-person, home-based candy bouquet and/or gift basket service, you'll need the discipline necessary to perform a professional service. In some instances, usually during the holidays, you can plan on a six-day-a-week, 10 to 12 hour a day job. If you know where to find the customers, and you're willing to put in some long hours, the pay-off can be quite rewarding.

**KNOW YOURSELF AND THE MARKET**

Before starting a candy bouquet and/or gift basket business, do a thorough analysis.

1) **Know yourself.**
Why do you want to start a business? What necessary skills do you have (for example, you are computer savvy, you have customer service experience, you took accounting classes, etc.)? If you lack some skills and knowledge, it is not an insurmountable obstacle, you still can start and run a successful business, you just need to learn new things on your trip down the road. Take an honest look at your strengths and weaknesses. This will allow you to be a successful business owner, using your strong points to the fullest and compensating for your weak areas.

2) **Know your market.**
Who will buy your candy bouquets and/or gift baskets? Identifying your target market is crucial for any small or home-based business. If you do not know who your target market is, you will waste your time and money. If you try to sell to the entire world, you will sell very little. You need to research and identify your target market, choose a niche, and then develop a plan to serve it. The better you can focus your marketing efforts, the more money you will make.
The easy way to define your market is to picture your ideal customer. Think about your friends, family, colleagues, people you meet regularly (your dentist, your hair dresser, your vet, etc.) who you believe are potential customers and fill out a simple matrix (their age, gender, marital status, education level, employment status, income level, location, hobbies, interests, etc.) On many of these questions you can give sure answers while some answers will be your best guess. This exercise can take awhile but at the end you will have a profile of your ideal customer. Now you are ready to develop a plan for how to target your prospects.

**Note:** Nationwide research shows that the most frequent gift basket buyers are women between the ages of 26-60 and corporate customers.

**There are several primary gift basket markets:**

1) **Individual Buyers.**
   The average individual gift-giver is a woman. Women are more likely to have seen, sent or receive gift baskets/candy bouquets.

   Besides women, individual buyers are professionals with private practices (dentists, accountants, veterinarians, insurance agents, real estate agents, and others), men, and teenagers.

   Gift basket buyers usually have moderate to upper level incomes, so you need to find out where these prospects usually shop.

2) **Business Customers.**
   Corporate clients can bring you many orders. Businesses buy year round, not just during the holidays. They buy gift baskets for birthdays, promotions, retirements, new employees, employee anniversaries, and other occasions.

   **Note:** I would recommend that you target candy bouquets to individual customers and gift baskets to business customers. This way you can realize better profit margins because corporate clients usually order several items at once, and gift baskets require much less time to be assemble than candy bouquets.

3) **Institutions.**
   Educational institutions and hospitals may be interested in purchasing your candy bouquets/gift baskets because they often thank their customers and sponsors.

   No matter which market you target, remember that every one of your customers wants to know what advantages or rewards your gift baskets can bring them in their personal and professional lives. It is true with every customer; they do not care about your
profits but if you show them how your products can benefit them, they will be interested.

To succeed in the candy bouquet and gift basket business you need to specialize, at least in the beginning. You can specialize in baskets/candy bouquets for certain occasions or a particular clientele. You might choose to target individual customers or business customers. Or you might choose to specialize in candy bouquets/gift baskets for the new baby market, happy birthdays, get-well gifts, the romantic market and so on.

When you are just starting out, it is a good idea to specialize in a few occasions so that you keep your costs down and do not get overwhelmed. You can add different options as you go along.

If there are candy bouquets/gift baskets creators in your area, find out what kind of products they sell. Use this as a guide for your business plan.

After you have identified your market, decide on your standard candy bouquets/gift baskets offerings. Most gift basket businesses offer a combination of standard and custom baskets.

Consider offering candy bouquets/gift baskets in a wide range of sizes and prices. You want to attract customers across all income levels.

According to a survey of gift basket companies by “Gift Basket Review Magazine”, the top five best selling gift baskets occasions are:
1. New baby
2. Birthdays
3. Thank you
4. Get well/Thinking of you
5. Sympathy

The top three holidays are Christmas, Valentine’s Day and Mother’s Day.

Other occasions for giving candy bouquets and gift baskets:
Anniversaries
Appreciation
Apology
Best wishes
Congratulations
Easter
Honeymoon
Happy New Year
I’m sorry
New Home
Retirement
Wedding
Welcome
Custom candy bouquets for special occasions

Looking at all these occasions, you might think that you need to make a wide range of candy bouquets and/or gift baskets. But this is not necessary. You can make several standard candy bouquets/gift baskets and vary them by using themed containers and special accents (for example, different picks such as Thank you, Happy Birthday, Congratulations, and others; themed balloons, and bows).

**BUSINESS PLAN**

To be successful in business you need to create a business plan.

1) You can consult a business plan book. There are many books on this subject, which can help you write a business plan.
2) You can find useful information and advice on how to write a business plan on some websites:
   - The SBA outlines the entire business planning process with their Small Business Planner at [http://www.sba.gov/smallbusinessplanner/plan/writeabusinessplan/index.html](http://www.sba.gov/smallbusinessplanner/plan/writeabusinessplan/index.html)
   - SCORE has Business Plan Templates for a start-up and an established business at [http://www.score.org/template_gallery.html](http://www.score.org/template_gallery.html)

More business plan templates:
   - [http://bplans.com](http://bplans.com)
   - [http://businessplans.org](http://businessplans.org)

3) You can hire a consultant. There are several companies that offer their services on writing business plans for you. For example, [http://www.masterplans.com](http://www.masterplans.com)
4) You can use business plan writing software. For example, [http://www.paloalto.com](http://www.paloalto.com)

**LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

1) One of the first things a new business owner has to consider is the proper legal form under which the business will operate. The business can either operate as a sole
proprietorship, partnership, limited partnership, or as a corporation. Whatever the legal form of your candy bouquet and/or gift basket service, you will need to be aware of all the legalities involved. If your business is a sole proprietorship type of operation, you will not have many legal forms to worry about. The only legal papers required for a sole proprietorship are a business license and a business-name filing with the county clerk's office.

2) Choosing a good business name is very important. The name of your business should reflect the business itself and be memorable and easy to say. For example, Helen’s Candy Bouquets, Candy Bouquets to Remember and so on. Do not make your business name too long or hard to remember, you do not want your happy customers to have any problems remembering your business name when referring other people to you.

When you think you have found a good name for your business, it is a good idea to make sure that you do not infringe any trademarks. You can call the PTO (Patent and Trademark Office) or search the PTO database at [http://www.uspto.gov](http://www.uspto.gov)

If you budget allows and you think you will be in this business for a long time, you may think about applying for a trademark.

3) After you have chosen a business name, you need to register it with the city, county, or state. The method of doing this will vary from state to state, but in many states, you simply pay a small registration fee at the county clerk's office. Some states may require placing a business-name advertisement in a local newspaper.

To find out the proper procedure for your area, contact your bank and find out if it requires a business name registry or certificate in order to start a business account. If it does, the bank personnel can tell you where to obtain one. Filing a business-name notice can cost anywhere from $10 to $100.

4) Selling candy bouquets can expose you to liability for reselling foods that may harm a customer. Each state has its own laws regarding food resale. You need to contact your state authorities to see what type of food license you will need. A general rule is to use only wrapped candy and never touch it except for the outside wrapping.

Using alcohol items in your candy bouquets/gift baskets may be illegal without a liquor license.

Before you start your business, make sure that all of the proper paperwork has been filled out and licenses applied for.
5) The next step is to find an accountant who specializes in small business. He/She will help you to choose the right accounting software for your business and will help you with keeping your records accurate and in compliance with IRS laws.

It is recommended that you also learn bookkeeping basics, so you can maintain the sales and expense records of your business. You can take a bookkeeping class at a local college and/or read some books on this topic. The books “QuickBooks 2007 for Dummies” by Stephen L. Nelson and “Bookkeeping for Dummies” by Lita Epstein will explain to you in plain English how to manage your business accounting. I personally find them very useful and easy to understand.

When you are planning to start your own business there are two great websites I highly recommend:

1) http://www.sba.gov/
They provide a lot of free valuable information on all aspects of starting a business.

At http://www.sba.gov/localresources/ you can find counseling, training and business development specialists providing free and low-cost services in your area.


At http://www.sba.gov/aboutsba/sbaprograms/onlinewbc/index.html you will find programs and services that assist women in achieving their dreams by helping them start and run successful businesses.

2) http://www.score.org/
SCORE offers free and confidential advice to small business owners through face-to-face counseling (you can easily find a Score office near you), online counseling, online workshops and more.

I also found the Free States Guide to starting and operating a business at http://www.roninsoft.com/sitemap1.htm very helpful. The Guide explains what licenses and other legal documents you may need to start a business and where to obtain them.
LOCATION OF YOUR BUSINESS

Candy Bouquet/Gift Basket Businesses are pretty flexible as where to locate your operation. You can set up your business at home, sell in a retail store, or at a flea market. Regardless of your location, you can sell face to face, on the Internet, or use a combination of these methods.

If your goal is a large company with several employees and big income, you will need a retail location. If you want to create a small business, then you can successfully work from home.

If you decide to work from home, inventory can be stored in existing storage spaces within your home and garage. You may have to add some shelves for proper storage, but these can easily be constructed with very little expense.

Most homes already have some of the equipment needed for business use - a phone, a computer, and a printer. If your phone isn't equipped with an answering machine, you should get one since orders may come in while you are out making deliveries. However, you may want to invest in some sort of file cabinet, cash box, and a fax machine.

Some pieces of equipment – a floral pick machine, ribbon imprinting machine, and a shrink-wrap machine – will add a touch of professionalism to your operation. These machines are not cheap, and they are not necessary when you first begin.

You'll also need adequate record keeping equipment as well as stationery, envelopes, business cards, sales slips, invoices, containers, labels and other miscellaneous items. Most of these items can be purchased at local office-supply stores. Again, don't go overboard. Buy only what you need.

If you operate your business from home, call the local zoning department to check if you can legally set up your business at home.

If you have many out of state orders or if you want to attract customers in other states, you may want to think about installing a toll-free number. All long distance carriers offer toll-free service. For example, Vonage Broadband Phone Service – http://vonage.com. Vonage is a new phone service that uses your broadband Internet connection. You can choose from several plans but the best is the Vonage Premium Unlimited Plan. With this plan you can make unlimited calls anywhere in the United States and Canada for the low price of $24.99 a month. You can add an 800 or toll free number to your line for an additional $4.99 per month. There is also Vonage's Small Business Premium Unlimited Plan for $49.99 a month, which includes voice
mail (that is accessible through the Internet), fax line, caller ID, call-waiting, call-forwarding, 3-way calling, unlimited long distance to the US and Canada, and free in-network calling.

You can also rent a space or office in your community. Specialty shops are good locations for a candy bouquet and/or gift basket business because you will be providing a "special" service. Renting or subleasing space in an existing shop can be beneficial to both parties involved. You will be getting adequate workspace for your business while paying a percentage of the owner's monthly rent.

Instead of renting a space in specialty shops, you can choose to sell on consignment through these shops. A consignment is an agreement between you and a shop owner who agrees to display and sell your candy bouquets/gift baskets for a percentage of the sale. The consignment percentage varies from 10 to 30% depending on your region.

Another way to get started in the candy bouquet and/or gift basket servicing is to rent a flea market stall (also called a “park and swap” in some parts of the country) once a week (this may be as far as you really want to go). For example, in the Phoenix, Arizona metro area you can rent a booth at Mesa Market Place Swap Meet for $30/day (Friday, Saturday, or Sunday) or as low as $295.00 per 4-week period, plus associated tax. This is the average price for a 10' X 30' space. Not that expensive, in my opinion. To sell your candy bouquets/gift baskets at the market, you have to obtain the following licenses:

- An Arizona Sales & Use Tax License ($12.00 per year)
- A City of Mesa Sales Tax License ($50.00 per year)
- A food License ($95.00 per year). It is the same license they grant to Gift Basket Business Owners. I don't know about your state. You will need to check with your state authorities to see what type of license(s) you will need.

If you want to sell your candy bouquets and/or gift baskets at a flea market, I would advise you to find the best flea markets in your area through [http://google.com](http://google.com); usually they have websites where you can find all the necessary information you need to start.

You can sell your candy bouquets/gift baskets through your website. I will talk about this in detail later.

Once you have decided where you will start your business, you will need to begin making "business" like decisions. After all, you will be the boss. You will have to decide how much time you are going to invest in the business. You can plan your
hourly workweek by determining how many candy bouquets and/or baskets you are willing to make. This is an individual matter. It depends on how much time you have and how much profit you wish to make.

A very important concept, a new candy bouquet and/or gift basket business owner should realize is that starting slow, with a small inventory is the most prudent and safest way to begin. It is a good idea to keep your day job when you start your business. It may take one or two years for a new business to become established. After that amount of time and experience, the owner should be able to determine what sells best as well as monthly sales and inventory turnover. With this information, the owner can decide how much inventory to carry. If the business is to be profitable, it is essential to have the proper amount of inventory without an excessive outlay of cash.

**INVENTORY**

To create candy bouquets you will need:
1) Different types of candy (hard candy, candy bars, lollipops, chocolates, etc.)
2) Various containers, vases, baskets
3) Floral foam
4) Bamboo skewers
5) Stem wire of different gauges
6) Clear and colored cellophane
7) Colored foil
8) Tissue paper of different colors
9) Floral tape (green, white, brown)
10) Floral pins and picks
11) Ribbons and Bows
12) Curling Ribbon
13) Silk flowers and Foliage
14) Balloons
15) Various picks (“Happy Birthday”, “Thank you”, etc.)
16) Tools (a glue gun, wire cutters, hand held pick machine, scissors)
17) Other enhancements and miscellaneous items.

You can buy these necessary items at warehouse clubs (especially candy, you do not need to pay shipping cost, and you can buy chocolates all year round without being concerned that it will melt), on internet sites, at gift basket and gift trade shows (to attend you need to have business identification with you), at manufacturers, at local floral suppliers (you can find them in the Yellow Pages), at retailers (if you show your business license copy, the retail stores will sell products to you tax-free), etc.
ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION

One of the most important keys to the success of any business is marketing. Your business' survival and success hinge on how effectively you penetrate the marketplace. In order to make potential customers aware of a new business, advertising and promotion are essential.

There are many effective methods of getting the word out about your business. What works best often depends on the location of the business and the amount of money you have available to spend on advertising.

There are many ways you can advertise and promote your business.

1. Radio
In smaller markets, word of mouth advertising, combined with the local radio stations can be very effective at reaching new customers.

2. Networking and word of mouth.
Whenever possible, attend various networking events where you can meet new people, for example, a chamber of commerce event.

Ask your friends and family to spread the word about your candy bouquets and/or gift baskets. You can ask some of them to host candy bouquet/gift basket parties where you can present your products. Offer the host a free candy bouquet/gift basket for help.

Visit [http://www.womma.org](http://www.womma.org) (the Word of Mouth Association website) for marketing ideas.

3. Yellow Pages.
Another highly effective form of advertising is the yellow pages. Regardless of budget, an ad in the yellow pages of your local phone directory is a smart investment. You can start with a bold name and a two-line listing. If possible, get the largest display advertisement you can afford. Many local customers scan the yellow pages when looking for a special service. So an attractive yellow page ad is one of the best ways to advertise a business.

4. Direct Mail.
It is a great form of advertising. You can send postcards, flyers, newsletters, brochures, and catalogue featuring your products to potential customers. Take photos of your most beautiful candy bouquets/gift baskets and feature them in your marketing materials together with short and appealing descriptions of the products.
Postcards are inexpensive and cost-effective way to raise awareness about your business and your products. To increase your response rate consider incorporating an incentive (for example, a coupon or discount offer) with a postcard.

You can design and print postcards yourself at home or order them online, for example at the Modern Postcard Company (http://www.modernpostcard.com) or Iprint.com (http://www.iprint.com).

5. Internet.
Developing your company website is a cost-effective way to advertise and promote your business. Your website can be just an advertisement for your products with your contact information (your telephone number, email, or your retail store address). On the other hand, your website can be an online store, where visitors can purchase your arrangements online.


7. Donations.
It is a good way to get your company out there. You can donate your candy bouquet/gift basket to school and church organizations for use in their fundraising campaigns.

Be selective when choosing groups and events to donate your candy bouquets/gift baskets. Do not go overboard, return on donations (i.e. following sales) may be less than you expected.

8. Free Publicity.
Many new businesses take advantage of free publicity generated in local newspapers. Prepare a press release about your business and send it to local newspapers. Most of them are happy to give write-ups to new local businesses.

You should also furnish the newspaper with any information you have about contest promotions or charitable endeavors. Anything about your business the local newspaper can use as "fill" in their paper, they usually will accept. This is a highly effective way of getting publicity for your business and catching the attention of potential customers.

Conclusion. Start by evaluating how and where your competitors advertise. What's working for them? Take their best ideas; then design your own winning layout, positioning yourself as having the best offer.
To get the most out of your ads, test them by the following criteria:

• What is the quantity of leads or prospects that the ad generates? Compare this amount in terms of a unit cost of advertising (dollars in advertising per leads generated).
• How many of these leads convert into sales? Different advertising media - due to the audiences they target - will vary in the numbers of actual closes. Continually check the response from your ads, make changes or run a new ad if necessary.

**Additional Ways to Advertise and Promote Your Business**

1. **Successful Marketing Requires Follow-up Marketing.**

Experts say that the average sale takes about seven contacts before it is closed. If you are contacting your sales leads only once (i.e. by mail, phone, or e-mail), you are wasting your hard earned marketing dollars. Think about following up several times with your sales leads before moving on.

As an example, visitors to your website are more than likely pre-qualified target customers. However, if they do not buy or do anything, they are likely to never return. Offer to let people join your guest list, or register for a prize contest. By doing so, you capture information about visitors so you can contact them again. This is a form of follow-up strategy.

If you get a lead from a classified ad, save that lead’s email address. Follow-up on your lead by e-mail (or by mail if you only have their mailing address) in about one week, to remind them about your offer and to ask them if they have any questions. Testing will determine how many times you should follow-up.

The more contacts you make, the more sales you will close. The beauty about follow-up marketing is the dramatic reduction in costs. You have no advertising lead cost because you already generated the lead.

2. **Do not overlook the sales-generating potential of basic business printed materials:**

• Letterhead and Stationary: Use high quality paper. Consider including your mission statement and a brief listing of services. Incorporate all your contact numbers and addresses.
• Business Cards: When meeting a potential client, the business card is your first introduction. Put a headline on it that defines your mission. Fill the blank space on the back of the card with the top three benefits your business has to offer.
• Invoices, Statements & Miscellaneous Correspondence: In all correspondence you have with a client, even sending a bill, use these as opportunities to market your
business. As an example, an invoice to a client might contain a special discount only for previous customers.

3. Make some flyers (less formal and shorter than a brochure) and post them on utility poles (check your local regulations regarding this tactic) and community bulletin boards.

4. Always carry several of your business cards/flyers/brochures with you and give them to everyone you come in contact with.

5. Reward customers with referral certificates (they refer a friend and in return they get some % off their next order or a small gift). This builds long-term client relations and encourages future referrals.

6. Help your customers find occasions to send a candy bouquet/gift basket. There are so many holidays besides Christmas, Valentine’s Day, Easter, and Mother’s Day. For example, almost every profession has “its celebration day”.

7. Once a week or once a month dedicate the whole day to making cold calls. Take necessary business promotion materials with you (business cards, postcards, flyers, brochures) and visit as many businesses in your area as you can.

During these cold calls you will know which companies are more likely to buy from you. They can get your small sample bouquets/baskets.

8. You can send postcards to a whole list of your customers every month. If there is a holiday during that month, the postcard features gift ideas for that holiday. If there is no holiday, the card can feature your new products, birthday bouquets/baskets, etc.

9. You can rent a table at local business trade shows and craft fairs. Candy samples can attract more visitors.

10. Drop off fridge magnets and flyers/brochures to all the major businesses in your area.

11. Include a postcard or flyer featuring an upcoming event in your candy bouquets/gift baskets. For example, with each Valentine’s bouquet/basket include a flyer with your Easter/Mother’s Day products.

12. Offer frequent buyer rewards program.

13. Consider using promotional decals and magnetic signs on your personal vehicle. It is a good idea to discuss liability issues regarding this with your attorney.

14. The telephone is an often-overlooked tool for home-based marketing success. You can qualify prospects, generate interest in your business, and even close sales - all with the touch of a few buttons. Imagine how much time and money you can save when you use the telephone to your advantage.

If a prospect calls you first, the chance of closing the sale greatly increases. So how do you get the phone ringing?

- Create an incentive, such as offering a benefit for making a call.
- Have a toll-free number. This can increase your response rate by 30-70%.
  However, if you're dealing exclusively with local clients, a toll-free number is not necessary.
- Use telephone numbers that are easy to remember.
- Find ways to get people to hold-on to your telephone number (magnetic business-cards, memo pads, business cards, pens, etc.).

**DEVELOPING LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUR CLIENTS**

To turn customers into repeat customers you need to offer amazing candy bouquets/gift baskets and provide excellent customer service. You will have many opportunities to communicate with your customers, take advantage of each contact to demonstrate your superior service.

There are many ways to make your customers feel special to your company.

1. One of the most effective and inexpensive ways is sending postcards. **Thank you cards.** You can send handwritten thank you notes.

**Birthday cards.** When a client makes his/her first purchase with you, ask them about their birthday (it can be just month, not an exact date). Then send them a birthday card each year in the beginning of the appropriate month.

2. Send small gifts to special customers who order many items regularly. It can be something like a candy jar filled with hard candy with your company name on it.

3. Send postcards with new products, discount offer, etc. every couple of months.

4. Send holiday cards if your budget allows.
5. On a regular basis run a contest on your website or your mailed newsletter/flyer where the winner gets a free candy bouquet/gift basket.

To provide excellent customer service:
• Deliver your product in a timely manner, always beating the deadline.
• Solve your customer's problems.
• Seek out questions and provide intelligent answers.
• Maintain regular contact with the customer.
• Follow up. After you have delivered a product and service and have been paid, follow-up with a call to ensure everything is still OK. Often a disgruntled customer does not have the nerve to talk with you about their dissatisfaction. Follow-up calls facilitate constructive dialog to smooth over any problems.
• Long-term perspective. Work to establish a long-term relationship with customers.
• Act immediately on complaints. Jump on any sign of dissatisfaction by your clients. This requires "active listening" and the ability to read between the lines, because most people have difficulties confronting someone when they are dissatisfied.
• Personalize your service. Treat the customer as if they are family.

CATCHING CLIENTS WITH THE WEB

The Internet has become a big part of our lives. More and more people join the Web community every day. Many companies have realized the business potential of the Internet and established their Web presence. You need to decide if you want to use the Internet to advertise, promote, and market your business.

1) First off you will need to obtain a domain name for your Web site. A domain name is the URL address that people type in the browser address bar to locate a site, for example, http://EdibleCraftsOnline.com

Your domain name should be pretty short, relevant to your products, company name, and easy to remember. Take time to come up with a good domain name. There are several free tools that can help you to find a domain name. Here are some of them:
• NameBoy (http://www.nameboy.com) is one of the best. You enter a primary and a secondary word to work with, select the type of site you have, and whether or not you want to turn on the hyphenation and rhyming features. NameBoy will generate domain names based on the keywords you enter.
• DomainFellow.com (http://www.domainfellow.com) lets you start with a keyword and then adds popular prefixes or suffixes to that word. For each
combination you can see which domains are available and which have been taken.

- **The Domain Name Generator** ([http://www.domain-generator.net](http://www.domain-generator.net)) can generate random names or can combine up to 5 keywords and check availability of each resulting domain.

I purchased my domain name at [GoDaddy](http://godaddy.com). I like the quality of their service and low prices they offer.

There are many domain name registration companies. Perform a search on any one of the popular search engines for domain name registration and you will get a list of companies who register domain names.

It’s advisable to buy several similar-sounding domain names. For example, a main domain name might be LanaCandyGifts.com and other domains would be LonaCandyGifts.com, LawnaCandyGifts.com (misspellings), CandyGifts.com, etc. This way potential customers who misspell your domain names will still end up on your website and competitive sites will not be able to use domain names similar to yours to draw customers away from your site.

Your primary domain name should be “hosted” while others may be parked at no additional cost and pointed to the main domain name. Most Web Hosting companies offer this service free of charge.

2) **The next step is to find a Web hosting company.** A Web hosting company provides you with space on their server so that you will have your online store on the Internet.

Take your time when you are looking for a Web hosting company. Compare their prices and the features they offer such as:

- Technical support (it should be available 24/7).
- Compatibility with your selected shopping cart. You do not want to invest in expensive shopping cart software just to find out that your hosting company does not support it.
- Web hosting space. You will need a minimum of 10 GB Web space for your site.
- Email accounts.
- Web site upload. Many Web hosting companies use FTP (file transfer protocol) for uploading your Web site pages to their server; and usually it is free.
- Find out what software and scripts a Web Host offers.

Here are some reliable Web hosting companies:
Here are several sites where you can review and compare various Web hosting companies:
www.findmyhosting.com
www.findmyhost.com
www.ratemyhost.com

3) **The third step is to design your website.** You have two options:

- Design the site yourself using a professional Web design tool such as Microsoft FrontPage or Macromedia Dreamweaver. It may take some time to get acquainted with the software but in the end it’s worth it. You can ask your friends and family if they can help you with creating your site.

  Some Web hosting companies offer Web design tools for a low price. For example, GoDaddy.com offers “Web Site Tonight” for a low price (hosting and email are included at no extra charge). They claim that with “Web Site Tonight” (more than 800 easy to use templates) you can build your own site even if you have no technical skills.

- You can hire a Web design company to make a professional looking site for you. There are many companies that provide quality Web design services for a reasonable price. For example, eGiftBaskets.com (http://egiftbaskets.com) designs and builds online gift basket businesses for individuals who want to start their own online gift basket business.

Some hosting companies also offer web design services. Before designing your website, it’s a good idea to find several top sites that are your direct competitors (selling gift baskets and/or candy bouquets) and take time to research and analyze them. Create a table in Excel or Word with several columns, for example, something like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the site</th>
<th>URL</th>
<th>What you like about the site (layout, navigation, etc.)</th>
<th>Weaknesses of the site’s design and product presentation</th>
<th>Main sections of the site</th>
<th>How they promote and advertise their products</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Print out several copies of this table and start analyzing the sites of your competitors.

**Note:** even if you love something on the other sites, do not copy their content and pictures to your site because this is plagiarism.

**There are several important things you need to keep in mind when building and maintaining your website:**

1) The home page should instantly tell visitors what the site is about and what products you are selling. Put one or several photos of your candy bouquets/gift baskets (but not so many that it takes forever to load the page).

2) Site navigation should be simple and easy to use.

**Note:** include a link back to the home page on all pages of your website, so visitors can always find their way back home.

3) Update your site on a regular basis. For example, change the pictures of the candy bouquets/gift baskets on the home page accordingly to the coming holidays.

4) Make your site colorful but do not create a very busy site with a lot of flashing, blinking text or images that draw visitors’ attention away from your site and products you offer. Also remember to have contrast between your text and the background.

5) Photos of your candy bouquets/gift baskets should be sharp and large. You can create “thumbnail” images of your products on the page (so the page loads quickly); if a visitor wants to see a big picture he/she just clicks on a thumbnail image and will be redirected to a large photo. Each picture should be accompanied with a description and price.

6) The ordering process on your site should be as simple as possible. You can:
   - Just provide a phone number so the customer can call and place an order.
   - Or have a secure order page (a page with the padlock icon and “https” prefix) so customers can buy your products with their credit cards.
When a customer is ready to buy your product, he/she will need to be redirected to a secure Web server where you collect his/her personal and payment information using a secure encryption method. One of the first things you need to implement to run your online shop is your digital certificate or SSL certificate (secure socket layer server certificate). A digital certificate is going to ensure that nobody except you, your customer, and the bank receives your customer’s financial and personal information.

You can get SSL certificate through your Web hosting company. Or you can buy a digital certificate directly from the providers (for example, www.godaddy.com, www.geotrust.com, www.thawte.com) this may be cheaper. In this case, your Web hosting company needs to generate a key (a piece of code) for your license from the Web server software. You will need it to submit your SSL application with any service provider. After your SSL certificate is issued, you will be given a piece of code that you must provide to your Web hosting company.

Never operate a website where you collect personal data or financial information without offering a secure and encrypted connection.

The next thing you must install to operate your online store is a shopping cart. A shopping cart is a program that keeps track of items a visitor chooses to buy from your store until he/she proceeds to the “checkout” as well as tracking financial data and customer information, which is then passed to the credit card merchant gateway. All credit card companies charge a percentage of the sale as an overhead fee for using their credit processing services.

In many cases, you can buy a shopping cart through your Web hosting company. If you buy a shopping cart from another source, make sure that a program is compatible with your hosting company and inquire about technical support.

If you need a basic cart, PayPal (www.paypal.com) is a FREE alternative to buying a shopping cart or a SSL certificate. PayPal integrates basic shopping cart functions within your website. When the transaction is complete, the money is automatically deposited into your PayPal account. Shoppers are not required to join PayPal to complete a transaction. Using a free PayPal shopping cart you do not need to pay monthly fees or setup costs. You are charged only a small percentage of each sale total. So if you are on a tight budget, PayPal is a great free shopping cart solution.

4) The forth step is to promote your website.
Now that you have a nice website and beautiful candy bouquets and/or gift baskets, you have only just begun. It is time to let everyone who surfs the Internet know about your website. The most common way to achieve more sales is to rank well on search engines or through pay per click advertising (for example, Google Adwords -
Here are some important things you need to know to market your online business successfully.

- **Search engines.**
  It is very important to rank high on the popular search engines. For example, when an individual is looking for a “unique gift” at google.com, your site should be at least in the top 20 search results, preferably in the top 10.

You need to submit a home page of your site to major search engines:

You actually do not need to submit to other search services because they draw their results from one of the main search engines mentioned above.

After you submit your site, it may take weeks or even months for the search engines to send their spiders to crawl your site. So do not panic, just be patient and while waiting work on getting quality links back to your site. I will talk more about this later.

**Note:** If you want to check your rankings in top search engines, go to [http://www.mikes-marketing-tools.com/ranking-reports](http://www.mikes-marketing-tools.com/ranking-reports)

- **SEO – Search Engine Optimization.**
  SEO allows you to make sure that potential customers can easily find your web store. To successfully optimize your website for search engines, you need to follow several steps:
  1) **Choose the right keywords that are going to bring you the most traffic (visitors) to your website.**
     This subject is discussed in detail in “Affiliate Masters Course”, section 3 (pages 36-56). You can access the book at [http://ediblecraftsonline.com/affmasters.pdf](http://ediblecraftsonline.com/affmasters.pdf)

You will need to have a different list of keywords and key phrases for each web page. There is a great keyword research tool – Wordtracker ([www.wordtracker.com](http://www.wordtracker.com)). Using this tool you can find the most searched for keywords with the least amount of competition. It is not free, although there is a 7-day free trial.

You can also analyze the top ranked sites in your area of expertise (for example, candy bouquets gift shops), which are your direct competitors, for keywords and key phrases. To view their key phrases, in Internet Explorer, click on “VIEW” in toolbar and then “SOURCE” to view the source HTML code of a web page. Somewhere in
the beginning of the page you will find <meta name=”keywords” content=”…….”>
Thus, you can add some new keywords to your site.

2) **Use the right title tags and other meta tags.**
Meta tags are inserted into the “head” section of each page on your website. To view meta tags, you must view a web page in HTML mode. For example, this is the “head” of my home page.

```
<HEAD>
<title>Edible Crafts for Kids and Adults – fun food craft projects for the whole family!</title>
<meta name="keywords" content="edible crafts, edible craft, crafts for kids, food crafts, food craft, play with food, edible arrangements, candy craft, candy crafts, candy bouquet, candy bouquets, edible kid crafts, kids arts and crafts, kid crafts, edible fruit arrangements, making candy bouquet, make your own candy bouquet, making gifts, homemade gifts">
<meta name="description" content="FREE amazing edible crafts for people of any age with pictures and step-by-step instructions! Learn how to make your own candy bouquets, unique edible fruit and vegetable arrangements, as well as find many easy edible kid crafts.">
<meta http-equiv="Content-Type" content="text/html; charset=iso-8859-1">
<meta http-equiv="Content-Language" content="en-us">
<meta name="Author" content="Incredible Edible Crafts - Lana Glass">
<meta name="distribution" content="GLOBAL">
<META NAME="copyright" CONTENT="Incredible Edible Crafts">
<META NAME="revisit-after" CONTENT="27 days">
<META NAME="robots" CONTENT="INDEX, FOLLOW">
<meta name="home_url" content="http://www.ediblecraftsonline.com">

</HEAD>
```

As you can see meta tags are between <HEAD> </HEAD> tags. Text placed between title tags (<TITLE> … </TITLE>) is displayed across the top of the browser window. The title tag is very important regarding search engine rankings.

The description tag and keyword tag are not as important as the title tag but it is still highly recommended that you include these tags on each web page of your site.

3) **Optimization of the content of your web pages.**
- Make sure that you have at least 200 words of text on each page or close to it.
• Make sure that the web page content includes important keywords and key phrases that you came up with while researching.

Use key phrases many times throughout the page, placing them close to the top of the page. Place keywords between head tags (<H1> … </H1> or <H2> … </H2>) in the first two paragraphs of your page. Place keywords in bold type (<B> … </B>) at least once on each page.

• The keywords and key phrases you use on your web page should also be included in various tags such as meta tags, title tag, ALT tags, and head tags.

• Add extra pages to your website on a regular basis. The more pages you have, the more pages search engines will index that result in more visitors to your website. **Note:** There is a lot of free information on how to improve your search engines rankings. Just use [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) to search for “SEO”, “How to SEO”, etc. For example, [http://websitehelpers.com/seo/](http://websitehelpers.com/seo/) and [http://affordable-seo-expert.com/2008/01](http://affordable-seo-expert.com/2008/01).

If search engine optimization seems like a challenge to you, it is a good idea to hire a search engine optimization company. When looking for the SEO company on the Internet:
a) Do a search engine check on each company to see what their rankings are in the major search engines. If the company does not rank high in search engines, it will not help your business to rank high either.
b) Ask the company for customer references that you can check out on your own.
c) You should be able to communicate with the SEO company 24/7.
If your budget allows, hiring a SEO company may be beneficial for you.

**Build Incoming Links.**
Incoming links to your site are considered very important when search engines generate results relevant to a search.
Section 7.2 (p.141) of “Affiliate Masters Course” explains in detail how to establish quality incoming links to your website. You can get the book at [http://ediblecraftsonline.com/affmasters.pdf](http://ediblecraftsonline.com/affmasters.pdf)

1) Get incoming links from the major directories and second tier directories.

Major directories

a) The Open Directory – [http://www.dmoz.org](http://www.dmoz.org)
Submitting your site to this directory is FREE. DMOZ is considered one of the most important directories to submit to, so if you have not submitted your site there yet – do it now.
b) Yahoo – [http://www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com)
It’s a paid directory (about $300 a year). If your budget allows it, it is worth submitting to Yahoo directory. In the long run it will improve your SEO.

Second tier directories (some of them are free, some of them require a fee)

It is highly recommended that you have your business listed in a variety of business directories so that more Web visitors will notice you and it also gives you a link back to your site that will increase your link popularity. An Internet search will provide you with many directories where you can register your site.

Here are some of them:

b) For Gift Baskets Directory – http://www.forgiftbaskets.com
   Advertise your candy bouquet and/or gift basket business with a listing on this directory.
c) Online Gift Basket Directory - http://www.giftbasketnetwork.com
d) Gimpsy – http://gimpsy.com
e) Skaffe.com – http://www.skaffe.com
f) JoeAnt – http://www.joeant.com
g) Yellow Pages – http://www.yellowpages.com
h) Best of the Web - http://botw.org/
i) Seven Seek – http://sevenseek.com
j) GoGuides – http://www.goguides.org

2) Ask your website visitors and clients which sites are their favorite. Then, if possible, exchange links with those sites or similar sites.

3) Exchange links with suppliers.

4) Find non-competing sites (for example, sites on beauty, health, parenting, etc.) with a PR (page ranking) of 3 or higher and exchange links with them.
Page rank is a function of Google that measures the quality of a website on a scale of 0 to 10. The higher the Page Rank the more important Google considers a site.
To know a site’s page ranking, download the Google toolbar that will show you the page rank of each site you visit – http://toolbar.google.com/T4/index.html

The more incoming links you have, the easier it will be to gain a higher search engine placement. When creating your links, use not just the URL of your site but rather anchor text that includes your main keywords and key phrases. For example, <a href=http://ediblecraftsonline.com>Incredible Edible Crafts</a>, where Incredible Edible Crafts is an anchor text.
5) Analyze the top ranking competing websites regarding their incoming links. For example, go to http://checkyourlinkpopularity.com or http://linkpopularity.com and type in the URL of sites of your competitors to see who is linking to them. Try to obtain incoming links from the same or similar relevant sites.

6) Obtain as many one-way links (links to your site, while you do not link back to those sites) as possible from websites with a page ranking of 3 and more.

   a) One way to get these links is to write articles about something related to your website and submit it to article directories. Here are some good article directories where I submit my articles:
      - http://ezinearticles.com
      - http://www.ideamarketers.com/
      - http://www.buzzle.com/
      - http://www.articlecity.com
      - http://www.articlesbase.com
      - http://searchwarp.com/
      - http://www.articlealley.com
      - http://www.goarticles.com/
      - http://ehow.com

   For example, you can write an article about “unique gifts” or “how to make a beautiful gift basket”.
   Before submitting your article, read the submission rules for each article directory because they differ. All article directories listed above allow you to create a one-way link back to your site in the about the author section or even within the article.

   b) Another way to get one-way incoming links to your website is to post comments on forums and blogs with an anchor text link to your website.

Additional Website Optimization Tools and Resources

1) http://groups.yahoo.com/search?query=SEO+techniques
   Sign up for a SEO Techniques Class on Yahoo Groups. It is free of charge. The class provides structured search engine optimization training to help small business owners learn how to make their site more visible in the search engines, greatly increasing the traffic to their sites.

2) http://www.seofaststart.com/download
   It is a great e-book that provides step-by-step instructions for search engine optimization that can be downloaded for free.

3) http://www.websiteoptimization.com/services/analyze
This free website will calculate your page size, composition and download time and then offer advice on how to improve page load time.

4) https://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal
This free keyword tool gives you ideas for new keywords based upon your target keyword phrase.

5) http://www.sitesolutions.com/analysis.asp?F=Form
This site analyzes how effectively you use your meta tags.

6) http://htmlbasix.com/meta.shtml
Free site that automatically creates correct HTML meta tags that you can insert into your web pages.

7) http://digitalpoint.com/tools/suggestion
This keyword tool will show you the results of your query from both Wordtracker and Overture for determining which phrases are searched most often.

8) http://nichebot.com

Free information that covers everything from setting up a website to operating on eBay.

10) http://www.google.com/webmasters/
Google Webmaster Central. Help Google find, index and rank your site.

How to turn one-time visitors to your site into repeat customers

You have optimized your site for search engines and now have more and more people visiting your site every day. But there are so many sites on the Web that if you do not offer something interesting to your visitors, they will leave and probably never come back.

You need to give these visitors a reason to return to your site. Here are some suggestions.

1) Establish a monthly contest where the prize is one of your candy bouquets/gift baskets. Everyone loves a good contest where there is a chance to get something free. Online contests are a great way to keep people interested in your products and will bring them back to your website to see the contests’ results.

To participate, a visitor should provide you with his/her email address and name. It is a great way to build a list of subscribers to whom you can later send updates of your site, reviews of new products, etc.

2) Offer a subscription form for your electronic newsletter (e-newsletter or e-zine) on your site.
To get people interested in subscribing, give them something free for subscribing (for example, electronic books (e-books), discount coupons for your products, etc.) It is a good idea to subscribe to several gift related e-newsletters to see what other sites write in their newsletters.

To motivate visitors to give you their email addresses, you will need to tell them the value your newsletter will provide to them. It has to be more than sending out pictures of your new products. Offer your potential customers some interesting tips on gift giving, holiday recipes, and so on.

**If you offer an online newsletter, you will need an email auto-responder.**

An auto-responder is a software program that sends a prewritten reply to anyone who sends a message to the auto-responder’s email address. For example, a customer bought your candy bouquet; the auto-responder immediately sends him a personalized thank you message. Or you want to let your subscribers know about your new candy bouquets, a new contest on your site, etc. You write a message, and the auto-responder sends this message to each of your subscribers with personalization (their name, current date, etc.) on a date chosen by you.

You do not have to send a message to each person on your list manually. It saves you a lot of valuable time. The auto-responder is one of the most popular ways to automate your website. It allows you to communicate with your customers effectively and in a timely manner.

Marketing studies show that you need to be in touch with your potential customers up to seven times before they decide to buy your products. With an auto-responder working for you 24/7, correspondence with your customers becomes easy. You will be able to send any number of follow-up emails to your customers choosing the time of month/week/day that your messages are sent.

I use AWeber’s auto-responder [http://www.aweber.com](http://www.aweber.com) and I am happy with it. Here are some other auto-responders:

- Topica: [http://www.topica.com](http://www.topica.com)
- Constant Contact: [http://www.constantcontact.com](http://www.constantcontact.com)

3) Offer coupons for repeat customers.

4) Put a forum on your website.

Discussion forums are great marketing tools to attract new customers, to motivate people to come back to your site regularly.
More tips for Increasing Traffic to Your Website

1) Create a “New Products” page. So visitors can see what new products you have just released.

2) Ask your friends and family members to email their friends a link to your website. For example, your mom can send an email to all her friends saying “Valentine’s Day is coming up, my daughter has beautiful candy bouquets/gift baskets on her site, check them out!”

3) Every time you receive thank you emails from your customers, reply with a thank you message and kindly ask them to forward your website address to their friends.

4) Create a signature file and use it with all your email accounts. Signature files are like electronic business cards. They contain your business name and website URL. Signature files can be created in Microsoft Outlook or Outlook Express. Include a signature file with every one of your emails.

5) Include your website URL on business cards, letterhead, emails, flyers, brochures, etc.

6) Add a free search feature to your website. Site visitors love this tool. Do a search through http://google.com or http://yahoo.com on “free website search” and choose the one you like.

7) Register multiple domain names with search engines, redirecting them to your main website.

A well designed and optimized for search engines website with good content is one of the most cost-effective methods of advertising and promoting your business.

CONCLUSION

Operating a home-based candy bouquet and/or gift basket service can be a highly rewarding venture. Consider starting your business while still working at your day job. You need a year or two to establish yourself as a successful candy bouquet/gift basket professional with many clients. When profits from your business can pay your bills, cover your personal expenses, and allow retirement savings, then you can think about resigning from your job.

By following several key steps, an enterprising individual can turn creativity into profit.
1) Investment -- Unless you have unlimited capital, keep your initial cash outlay for equipment and inventory to a minimum.

2) Product -- Learn to design and arrange candy bouquets and/or gift baskets that will keep you far ahead of any competition. The irresistibility of your product is the key to your success.

3) Marketing -- Investigate, and then utilize the most effective means of advertising and promoting your business. Develop a realistic advertising budget that will allow you to reach every potential customer in your market.

4) Regulations -- Be well versed in, and adhere to, all rules and regulations pertaining to a small home-based business. The regulations vary from state to state and will most likely require some research or instruction from a professional consultant.

5) Bookkeeping -- Maintain permanent and accurate business operating records.

Since the market for candy bouquets and gift baskets is virtually unlimited, the business of making and selling this product is rapidly growing. Operating your own home-based candy bouquet and/or gift basket service is an ideal way to be creative, have fun, and realize substantial earnings. If you are interested in starting a small business that allows you to be creative and to make money, a home-operated candy bouquet and/or gift basket service is the perfect opportunity.
Suppliers List

I buy a lot of supplies offline (at dollar stores, Wal-Mart, etc.) because prices are low and I do not have to pay for shipping. However, I do buy some stuff online and I have listed these sites below.
I hope this information will be helpful to you. If you know of some other great resources, please e-mail me and I will update my Vendors List.

Candy and Chocolate

1) Costco, Sam’s Club, Wal-Mart, and Walgreens Drug Store – their candy prices are very good. You can buy chocolates and candies all year round, and you do not pay for shipping.

2) You can also check these sites

http://www.theworldofcandy.com
http://www.metrocandy.com/
http://www.candywarehouse.com/lollipops.html
http://lolliesgalore.com/
http://www.jellybelly.com/
http://www.blaircandy.com
http://diabeticfriendly.com/

Ribbon

1) Costco offers the best prices on ribbon. But they sell the ribbon only during certain periods, so you need to buy it when you see it.

2) C.O.D. Wholesale – after Costco they offer very good prices on ribbon
www.codwholesale.com

Various Themed Paper Gift Boxes

1) http://www.boxcoindustries.com - with over 60 theme designs, BoxCo® offers the perfect alternative to high cost containers.

2) http://www.cancreations.com

3) http://www.nashvillewraps.com - numerous boxes for every gift occasion.
Other supplies you will need to make candy bouquets

1) **Thrift stores or 99 Cent Stores** – here you can buy a lot of things cheap: baskets, mugs, cups, wire, etc.

2) **Cost Plus World Market** – they have a wide variety of glasses, vases, baskets, as well as gourmet chocolate for reasonable prices.

3) **IKEA** – if you have this store close buy, you will find variety of glass vases, glasses, and brandy snifters for a couple of dollars.

4) **Craft stores like Michaels and Joann.** You can buy themed or seasonal ribbon, containers, and others related items at discounted prices when you purchase them after the holidays (you can happily use them next year for the holiday).

5) **Floral Syndicate Supply** [www.fss.com](http://www.fss.com) – you can find many great things here for a very good price, here are some of them:

6) **C.O.D. Wholesale** – besides ribbon they offer many other things that you need to make your candy arrangement [www.codwholesale.com](http://www.codwholesale.com)
Good prices, no minimum orders.

Plastic anchor pins (the cheapest I have found)

Foam Anchors  $7.50/100

7) **Watson Trading Company** – [www.watsontradingcompany.com](http://www.watsontradingcompany.com)
They have a great range of baskets, no minimum orders, and great prices.

8) **Cello Depot** – [www.cellodepot.com](http://www.cellodepot.com)

This is the place to go to buy cellophane. You can buy rolls of cellophane as well as cut cellophane sheets here. It is cheaper to buy rolls of cellophane and then cut your own squares/pieces/sheets. Buying cello squares is a little bit more expensive but it is
very convenient. The decision to buy roll or cut cello depends on whether you are more interested in convenience or price.

9) http://bumperstickermaker.com/

Candy Wrapper Foil of different colors in pre-cut 6” x 7.5” -100 pieces - only for $ 4!

10) http://www.sugarcraft.com/index.html

There is a big variety of foil candy wrapper sheets and rolls.

11) http://www.afloral.com/

Gold and Silver Julep Cups – 4.25” or 7.5” or 10” tall – not for drinking.
Create a beautiful yet inexpensive look. Made of plastic.
Price: $ 1.59 – $ 2.99 - $ 4.29 respectively.

Gold and Silver Design Bowl – 6” or 8”.
Beautiful inexpensive revere bowl. Made of reusable plastic.
Price: $ 1.59 - $ 3.99 respectively.

12) Flowers Incorporate Balloons – http://www.burtonandburton.com
They have a lot of good stuff but you need to know that they are strictly business-to-business. They only sell to businesses with a valid State Tax Resale Number.

You can also check out the Gift Basket Review's Supplier's Guide at http://gbreview.com/supplierguide/. You will find over 150 supplier listings.

Will you become my affiliate?

If you like this eBook, join my affiliate program and earn 50% commission on every sale you make!

My affiliate program is absolutely FREE to join and allows you to make extra money referring people to my E-guide “How to make candy bouquets for fun and profit!”

If you have a website, a newsletter or an e-zine, you can start selling my eBook within minutes! Just let your visitors and/or subscribers know about my product and watch the money come in!

It's very easy to sign-up as an affiliate and does not require technical knowledge.

Step 1. Join the Affiliate Program at ClickBank.com
ClickBank is a global leader in the sale of digital goods online with more than 10,000 product publishers and over 100,000 registered affiliates. It is very popular among both publishers of digital products (eBooks, software, scripts, etc.) and affiliates. It has earned the reputation of the trusted retailer for digitally delivered products.

ClickBank is my Affiliate Program processor. They take care of your commission, payments, tracking and statistics, which you can check at any time after you sign up as an Affiliate.

Apply for your FREE ClickBank account at http://www.clickbank.com/promote_products.html and start receive checks from them every month.

Once you have successfully signed up, you will have your ClickBank ID - called a "nickname", which you will need for your Affiliate Link, and a password.
Step 2. Use your Affiliate link to start selling and earning money.
Enter your ClickBank username (nickname) into the link below and send the traffic through that link.

http://AFFILIATE.lana757.hop.clickbank.net

Replace AFFILIATE with YOUR ClickBank nickname and put it on your website.

You are done! Congratulations!
You don't have to worry about customer support, deliveries, or complaints. You just refer people to my sales page and after they purchase a copy of my guide "How to make candy bouquets for fun and profit” through your link you will get a 50% commission automatically.

Read more about my affiliate program at http://ediblecraftsonline.com/affiliates.htm

I look forward to our mutually beneficial relationship!

Lana Glass
http://EdibleCrafts.com