

A super-tasty trick to try.

# THE LAB

Seven pages of things to make and do

**WARNING!**  
Ask a grown-up for help when using a knife and when removing the hot trays from the oven.

Kitchen chemistry

# Bake an illusion cake

Put the "sponge" into sponge cake with this eye-catching recipe.

## What you need

- 135g softened butter
- 120g sugar, plus 2tbsp for foam
- Zest (grated peel) of two lemons
- ¼tsp vanilla extract
- Three eggs
- 140g plain flour
- Pinch of salt
- ½tsp baking powder
- 3tbsp lemon juice, plus ½tsp for foam
- Green and yellow food colouring
- 1tbsp apricot jam
- One egg white
- Wooden spoon
- Three mixing bowls
- Two 20cm square cake tins
- Butter knife
- Whisk

## Instructions

- 1** Mix the butter and sugar in one bowl until smooth, then stir in the zest and vanilla extract. Add the eggs one at a time, mixing well.
- 2** Pour in the flour, salt, baking powder and lemon juice and give it a rough stir. Don't worry if the mixture looks curdled.
- 3** Pour about a third of the batter into a new bowl and stir in the green colouring. Mix the yellow colouring into the first bowl and stir until even.
- 4** Pour each mixture into a greased, lined cake tin and spread out evenly. Bake at 160°C. The green sponge will need 10–12 minutes, and the yellow will take around five minutes longer.
- 5** Take the cakes out of the tins and leave to cool. Shave off the top of the green layer with a knife to give it a rough look.
- 6** Spread jam on the yellow sponge, top with the green layer and cut into sponge-sized oblongs.
- 7** Just before serving, whisk the egg white with the leftover lemon juice and sugar in a clean bowl until soapy-looking bubbles form. Spoon a little over each dish sponge and serve.



Mix in the eggs one at a time.

## How does it work?

The simplest illusions are the best. This little trick works by simply replicating the colour, shape and texture of a familiar object – in this case, a dish sponge. As its name suggests, a sponge cake has a similar structure to a sponge you would use to clean the dishes, and the vibrant colours make this bake look all the more realistic.

To add the soapy bubbles, you need to whisk egg whites. They bubble up because the whisking motion traps in air, giving them a light and frothy texture.

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