



Welcome

Thank you for choosing Coco Blooms Training.

This operational manual focusses on the chocolate bouquet products – what you need, where to get them from and then how to make your bouquets to the same Coco Blooms design style and quality.

The chocolate bouquet business is fun to be in with ample opportunities to retail and promote your bouquets, but it is the quality of the product that make people choose to buy from you. They will be looking for a gift that they are proud to give and therefore your chocolate bouquet has to compete alongside traditional alternative gifts such as flowers. Therefore it is important to focus on getting the finished look right – always.

Remember we started our designs ourselves trying and testing various methods and we laugh now at our first bouquets as to be honest.. they weren't very good! But through perseverance we improved the designs that everyone who now sees them simply raves about!

So, always remember that everything we learn seems uncomfortable at the beginning and often difficult. Like driving a car or cooking a complex recipe, it takes time and lots of practice and this applies to making your bouquets too. Yes, it will take longer to start with and the design won't be quite right, but just stick with it.

Once you have the learned the core methods described in this manual, you will then have the confidence to experiment and be creative with new styles, containers, colours and chocolate!

The craft business is manual work and there is no doubt the paper wrapping can seem a chore at times, so any help you can find from family, friends or even co-workers we would encourage you to accept.

Good luck and remember we are here to help – just call us or email to info@cocoblooms.co.uk

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Partners, The Coco Blooms Partnership



Coco Blooms Partnership

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Part 1 Different chocolate bouquet styles

There are many different type of chocolate bouquets to suit most budgets and occasions.

Some bouquets are rather small and aimed at children and so use more sweets than chocolates, while others use a mixture of chocolate bars and sweets. Premium style bouquets compete alongside bouquets of flowers and hence use more luxury chocolates like Lindor Lindt or Ferrero Rocher.

Some examples;



Children would love this bouquet of sweets all wrapped up in a standard floral living vase box.



Chocolate bar bouquets both using the same size and style living vase box



A couple of examples of different styles for luxury bouquets. Two are tying the stems into a hand held bouquet style, while the other uses a standard living vase box.

Final decorations can be suited to meet the budget and/or occasion, but once the basic style of how to make a bouquet has been understood it is easier to experiment with different ideas and styles.



A Ferrero bouquet in a new baby boy theme complete with teddy bear.

SEASONAL TYPES

Special bouquets for seasonal events are always appreciated by customers as they will be looking for bouquets with the right colours and styles to suit the event, whether it is Easter, Valentine, Mothers day or Christmas.

Once your core range design style has been mastered, you will find it relatively easy to make seasonal bouquets to boost sales and meet customer demand.



Valentine is one of the major annual event for people buying flowers and chocolates, so make variations to the standards design using deep reds, blacks and hearts.

WORLD'S BEST MUM

Mothers Day is without doubt the biggest opportunity to sell bouquets with high demand for chocolate bouquets. By making the right designs and blending the most appropriate colours sales will be virtually guaranteed.



CHRISTMAS



Everyone loves chocolate at Christmas, therefore it presents another excellent opportunity to design a selection of Christmas specials that will either be bought as gifts or for the home as a decoration. There are also opportunities to make smaller chocolate bouquets aimed at children which is priced correctly would have an excellent chance of selling well.

EASTER



Easter wouldn't be Easter of course without chocolate, so by making bouquets that use an Easter Egg as it's focal point are attractive to potential customers.

Summary

So alongside the normal celebratory events like birthdays, anniversaries, get well soon, new baby the main events in the calendar present excellent opportunities to refresh your range with new specially themed bouquets. This will ensure your bouquets are current and meeting what people are out shopping for.

Simply by adding the right colours to the normal design method, bouquets can suddenly be themed for valentine, mothers day or Christmas quite easily. With the addition of a final touch such as a little stick on snowman or Santa at Christmas, you suddenly have a wonderful gift option – totally unique and hand-crafted!

You can also choose interesting containers rather than living vase boxes, that enable you to create more interesting themed bouquets. For example look at pots and tins but you can also use watering cans, glass ceramic shoes, handbags etc. Be creative and look for new ideas that might appeal – this will help greatly in enhancing your core range and keep it fresh and up to date.

Some examples::

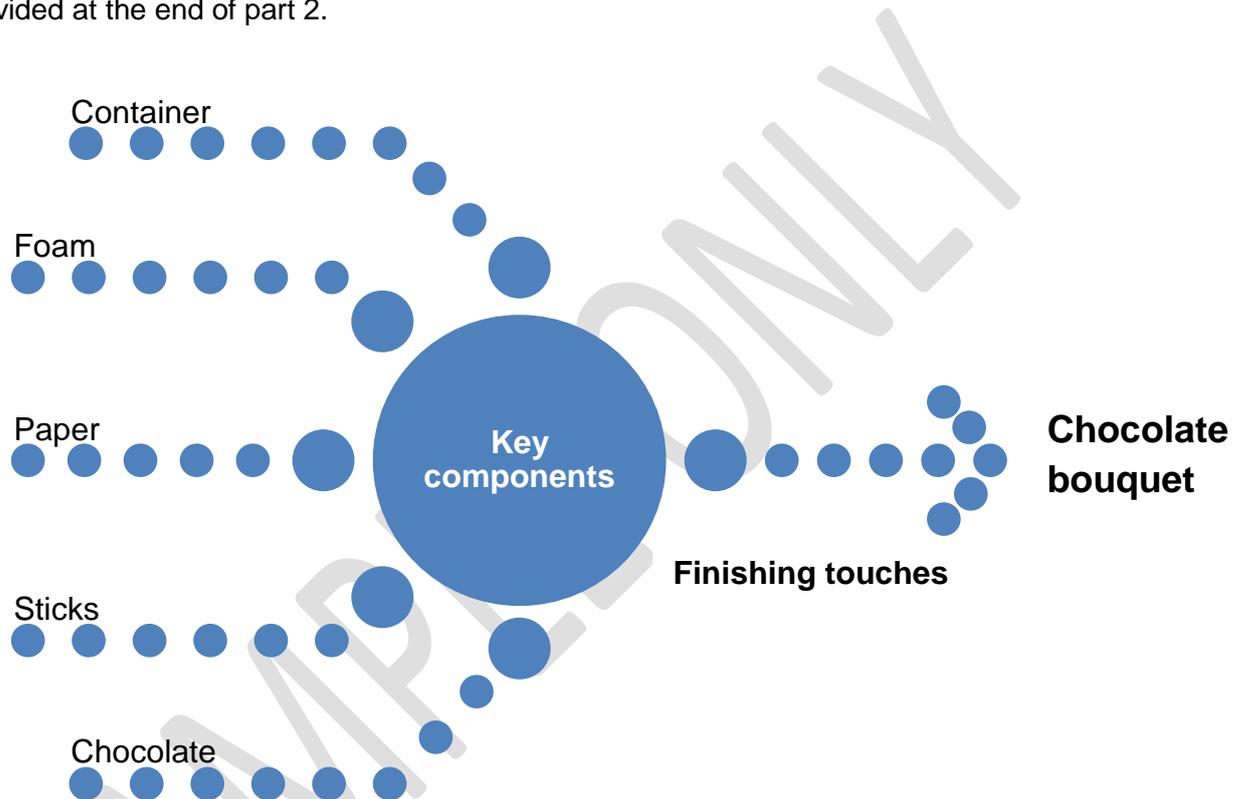


Part 2 The tools and the components you need

All prices include VAT

As shown in Part 1 there are many types of bouquet styles and with a bit of creativity, there are also many other ways to make interesting themed bouquets simply by choosing different containers, chocolates/sweets and finishing touches.

In this section we have included the key components you need to make Ferrero/Lindor and chocolate bouquet bouquets in the Coco Blooms style. By using different colour paper, boxes and final touches you will be able to make a range of bouquets. A supplier list is provided at the end of part 2.



Your stock inventory will always need to focus on the key components and ensure you have sufficient stocks to meet your sales and respond to last minute orders. However, we only recommend you stock sufficient to meet your needs over 3 – 4 weeks or so ahead and not to overstock and tie profit up. The exception to this is foam and sticks which need to be ordered in bulk.

For most of your floral stock we suggest the nationwide wholesaler xxxxx

It's best to visit your nearest branch to stock up but you can order many items online from their website. xxxxx will be your main source of products as the range is excellent and changes of course per season. It's important to open a business account asap so you can start to browse and choose your immediate stock.

Containers

Apart from the chocolate the container is the most important component. You should ensure you never run low in stock on a range of container options.

The most common container to make chocolate bouquets (and flower bouquets incidentally) is a folding cardboard vase, which is known as a **Living Vase**. They are perfect to work with and can be used for 90% or so of your chocolate bouquet designs because they are cheap, light, sturdy, come in a range of colours and are very versatile.



They are sold flat packed and are widely stocked by florist wholesalers (both retail and online)



Cost

Typically from a wholesaler they cost about 55p.

Most florist wholesalers sell different containers like, vases, buckets and even bags which by using a floral foam (Oasis) can normally be used as an alternative container for your bouquets. This would enable you to, if you wished, widen your range which is particularly appealing if you were were to retail in shopping centres.

As most floral living vase boxes are a standard design you can but from other sources than xxxxx if you wish, they are certainly widely sold online but choose a reputable floral wholesaler rather than one offs from eBay. It's best to double check sizes to make sure the foam will fit in perfectly.



Sample of other potential container ideas, although these would require the Oasis style foam to be cut to fit

Foam



The vast majority of bouquets will require foam to enable the 'stems' to be stuck into it. Hand held bouquets are tied together and don't use foam.

We have our foam blocks made to order by a specialist foam company. They are not only the right size but also the right grade and density for using our skewers without risk of breaking and fall out.

You too can use them the foam blocks perfectly fit the living vase boxes and you can order minimum of 50 blocks at a time via us (the company will only deal directly through us). They cost about x each plus delivery and the service is fast and reliable. Pay Coco Blooms by PayPal and they deliver direct to you.

Alternatively you can use Oasis Foam but it's messy.

Oasis Foam (alternative)



A typical box of oasis floral foam.

Note that florists use **two different types** – one for dry mounting and one for wet (it absorbs water). When you do need to use Oasis floral foam (to cut and shape into other containers) always buy the dry version. You do not need to use wet foam and also the dry version is cheaper.

Base cellophane paper

For most bouquets you will always use base paper which folds into your container and then your foam block is pushed down on top of it. The base paper we suggest you use is cellophane. When pushed into the bottom of the box it then spills over the sides to give a professional bouquet look.

A sample piece of cellophane is shown here and they are supplied in rolls (typically 80cm x 100cm) Sometimes rolls are larger and hence cost more but we suggest buying the smaller rolls to start with (unless special offers on larger rolls are attractive) to ensure you are not holding unnecessary levels of stock. The cellophane though lasts quite a while.

When buying cellophane, buy patterned rather than plain as the finished bouquet looks much nicer and avoid cheap coloured cellophane such as all red or all blue as they really give a cheap appearance. Look out for special offers and ensure that at valentine and Christmas you buy a roll or two of themes cellophane – for example with hearts or snowmen as part of the pattern.



There are many different types of cellophane paper and you will need to stock different colours and patterns to match the bouquet you are making

‘Flower’ stem wrapping paper

The other paper you will need to make your bouquet is paper to create your ‘stems’ with the chocolate on. This paper needs to be quality as it is very visual and is what gives your bouquet the great Coco Blooms style. Don’t compromise on quality and never use cellophane to wrap stems – ever!

The paper you will need as part of your inventory will cover all the main colours of your range, so typically pink/purple/cream/brown/blue/lilac/gold and burgundy.

The paper is quite thick and has a luxurious feel to it. Rolls are typically sold in 60cm x sizes.

SECTION B - STEP-BY-STEP HOW TO GUIDE

PART 1 Preparation to make your bouquet

Before you begin to make your bouquet, it’s important you find a comfortable area for you to work. The stem wrapping and glueing are labour intensive and so ensure you find a space at home where can sit and stand comfortably. You will probably need some entertainment too so make sure you have some music or the radio/tv on or enjoy the peace...

You will need plenty of flat clear space to lay and cut paper and also you need to store the things you need near by. A large table or work surface is perfect.

It’s a good idea to unpack your Ferrero/Lindt chocolates and put them into a large plastic sealed container so you have them at hand. Chocolate bars can stay in their packs until you need to wrap them.

So, ensure you have a clear work surface and a comfortable working environment. If you have a family, ensure they know this is your work time and that you need to focus on making your bouquets.

STEP 5 Making the stems – cutting the paper

To make the ‘stems’ you will need to cut strips of paper and then cut and fold these to make the pieces. This can be a bit fiddly and time consuming I am afraid.

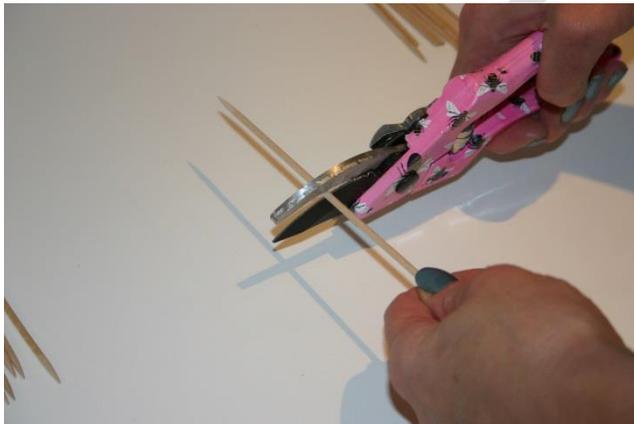
The ‘stems’ are used for two purposes:

1. To hold the chocolate and 2. To fill in spaces



NOW WE WILL PREPARE THE STICKS

STEP 8



Take x sticks and cut each into three equal lengths to give you x small stick pieces



These are the type of chocolates for this bouquet that we will be wrapping and gluing.

STEP 39

Now, choose which way your bouquet will face as we are going to insert chocolate stems in the front.

Take 2 Lindt stems and position them as shown where marked here.

