VANILLAGOODS BAKING ACADEMY · COOKIES & BARS

Course workbook

French Macarons

Meringue, macaronage, feet, fillings

Advanced · 5 video lessons · 37 minutes of video · Notes, quizzes and a practice log



By the end you'll be able to

- Make macaron shells by the French and Italian methods
- Judge macaronage and resting correctly
- Fill, mature and store macarons

Inside

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Lesson videos by Joshua Weissman, Michelle's Macarons, Home Cooking Adventure, Sweet & Savory by Shinee and Homebody Eats, watched on YouTube from the course page.

This workbook belongs to _____

START HERE

How to use this workbook

This workbook goes with the free video course **French Macarons** on vanillagoods.com. Watch each lesson there, then use these pages to keep what you learned and to track what you have practised.

1

Watch

Open the lesson page and watch the creator's video. Jot quick notes on the lined space as you go.

2

Read and tick

Read the VanillaGoods notes, then tick each key point once you can explain it in your own words.

3

Check and practise

Answer the three questions, compare with the answer key on page 13, then log your bake.

Your lesson plan

	LESSON	VIDEO	WATCHED	QUIZ	PRACTISED
1	**Macaron basics: ingredients and tools** Video by Joshua Weissman	8 min	☐	☐	☐
2	**French method macarons** Video by Michelle's Macarons	10 min	☐	☐	☐
3	**Italian method macarons** Video by Home Cooking Adventure	6 min	☐	☐	☐
4	**Piping, resting and the feet** Video by Sweet & Savory by Shinee	7 min	☐	☐	☐
5	**Fillings and maturing** Video by Homebody Eats	6 min	☐	☐	☐

Tools you'll see

Kitchen scale · Almond flour · Macaron baking mat · Oven thermometer · Stand mixer · Sifter · Silicone spatula · Piping bags and tips · Candy and deep-fry thermometer · Saucepan · Half-sheet pan · Airtight storage containers · Double boiler · Offset spatula

Any brand works. The lessons show what each tool is for.

Keep track online too

On each lesson page, "Mark complete" saves your progress in your browser, with no account. Finish every lesson and the course page lets you print a free certificate of completion.

Macaron basics: ingredients and tools

Video by **Joshua Weissman**: *"A Simple Guide On How To Make Macarons"*

vanillagoods.com/pages/baking-lesson/french-macarons-1-macaron-basics-ingredients-and-tools

What goes into a macaron shell and the handful of tools that make the difference: a scale, fine almond flour, a round tip and an oven thermometer.

Key points

- [ ] Shells use four ingredients: almond flour, powdered sugar, egg whites and sugar
- [ ] Weigh everything in grams; cups are not accurate enough
- [ ] An oven thermometer matters more than any special pan

The ingredients

- Almond flour: superfine and blanched, not coarse almond meal
- Powdered sugar: sifted together with the almond flour
- Egg whites: at room temperature, with no trace of yolk
- Granulated or superfine sugar: whipped into the whites for the meringue
- Color: gel or powder only; liquid coloring adds water and weakens the batter

The tools

- A digital scale that reads to the gram
- A fine sieve for the almond flour and sugar
- A piping bag with a plain round tip about 1/2 inch (1 cm) wide
- A flat, heavy baking sheet with a silicone mat or parchment and a circle template
- An oven thermometer; most recipes bake between 285 and 325°F (140–160°C)

Before you start

Wipe the bowl and whisk with a little vinegar or lemon juice to remove any grease. Macarons are sensitive to small changes, so follow one tested recipe exactly for your first batches and change one thing at a time after that.

TOOLS IN THIS LESSON: Kitchen scale · Almond flour · Macaron baking mat · Oven thermometer

NOTES WHILE YOU WATCH

✓ Check yourself

Three quick questions from this lesson. Mark your answers, then compare with the answer key on page 13.

1 Which kind of food coloring suits macarons?

- (A) Liquid coloring
- (B) Gel or powder coloring
- (C) Any kind, in any amount

2 Why weigh macaron ingredients in grams?

- (A) Small differences in amounts change the result
- (B) Grams are faster to measure
- (C) Recipes are never written in cups

3 Which tool tells you the real temperature of your oven?

- (A) A timer
- (B) A candy thermometer
- (C) An oven thermometer

Practice log

Practice is where the lesson sticks. Note what you made and what you would do differently.

WHAT I MADE	DATE AND HOW IT WENT
	☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

WHAT WENT WELL

WHAT I'D CHANGE NEXT TIME

French method macarons

Video by **Michelle's Macarons**: *"Easy French Macaron Recipe | Beginner Step by Step Guide (FOOLPROOF)"*
vanillagoods.com/pages/baking-lesson/french-macarons-2-french-method-macarons

The French method, step by step: a stiff meringue, careful folding to a lava-like batter, piping, resting and a gentle bake.

Key points

- [ ] Whip the meringue to stiff, glossy peaks
- [ ] Fold until the batter flows like lava and makes a figure 8
- [ ] Rest the piped shells until the surface is dry to the touch

The meringue

In the French method, sugar is whipped into raw egg whites. Start on medium speed, add the sugar gradually once the whites are foamy, and whip until the peak stands straight up and the meringue gathers inside the whisk. A weak meringue is the most common cause of flat or hollow shells.

Folding (macaronage)

- Add the sifted almond flour and powdered sugar to the meringue
- Fold and press the batter against the side of the bowl to knock out some air
- Test often: lift the spatula and let the batter fall
- It is ready when it flows in a thick ribbon and you can draw a figure 8 without the ribbon breaking
- The ribbon should sink back into the batter in about 10–20 seconds

Pipe, rest, bake

Pipe even rounds, then rap the tray firmly on the counter several times and pop any bubbles with a toothpick. Rest the shells 20–60 minutes, until they are dull and no longer sticky to a light touch. Bake at about 300°F (150°C) for 15–18 minutes. Cool on the tray before peeling them off.

TOOLS IN THIS LESSON: Stand mixer | Sifter | Silicone spatula | Piping bags and tips

NOTES WHILE YOU WATCH

✓ Check yourself

Three quick questions from this lesson. Mark your answers, then compare with the answer key on page 13.

1 How do you know the batter is folded enough?

- (A) It is stiff and holds a peak
- (B) It runs like water
- (C) It flows like lava and makes a figure 8 without breaking

2 What is the most common cause of flat or hollow shells?

- (A) A weak meringue
- (B) Too much almond flour
- (C) Baking on parchment

3 When are piped shells ready to bake?

- (A) As soon as they are piped
- (B) When the surface is dull and dry to a light touch
- (C) After a night in the fridge

Practice log

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WHAT I MADE	DATE AND HOW IT WENT
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WHAT WENT WELL

WHAT I'D CHANGE NEXT TIME

Italian method macarons

Video by **Home Cooking Adventure**: *"Raspberry Macarons - Italian Meringue Method"*

vanillagoods.com/pages/baking-lesson/french-macarons-3-italian-method-macarons

The method many pastry shops use: a hot sugar syrup makes a very stable meringue, giving smoother, more consistent shells.

Key points

- [ ] Cook the sugar syrup to 244–248°F (118–120°C)
- [ ] Mix the almond flour and powdered sugar with unwhipped whites into a paste
- [ ] The meringue is more stable and more forgiving of humidity

How it differs

The Italian method divides the egg whites in two. Half is stirred, unwhipped, into the almond flour and powdered sugar to make a thick paste. The other half is whipped while a hot sugar syrup is poured in, which cooks and stabilizes the meringue.

Step by step

- Mix the almond flour, powdered sugar and half the egg whites into a paste
- Cook sugar and water to 244–248°F (118–120°C)
- Start whipping the remaining whites when the syrup reaches about 230°F (110°C)
- Pour the syrup down the side of the bowl in a thin stream with the mixer running
- Whip until glossy and just warm, then fold the meringue into the paste in three additions

Watch for

Pour the syrup between the whisk and the bowl; if it hits the whisk, it spins onto the sides and hardens. This method takes a thermometer and more steps, but the batter is easier to judge and the shells come out smooth and full. Hot syrup causes serious burns, so keep the pan handle turned in and work without distractions.

TOOLS IN THIS LESSON: Candy and deep-fry thermometer · Stand mixer · Saucepan · Kitchen scale

NOTES WHILE YOU WATCH

✓ Check yourself

Three quick questions from this lesson. Mark your answers, then compare with the answer key on page 13.

1 What temperature should the sugar syrup reach?

- (A) 244–248°F (118–120°C)
- (B) 160°F (71°C)
- (C) 350°F (177°C)

2 What happens to the half of the whites that is not whipped?

- (A) It is thrown away
- (B) It is mixed with the almond flour and powdered sugar into a paste
- (C) It is added at the very end

3 Where should the syrup be poured?

- (A) Directly onto the whisk
- (B) Into the center of the foam, all at once
- (C) Down the side of the bowl, in a thin stream

Practice log

Practice is where the lesson sticks. Note what you made and what you would do differently.

WHAT I MADE	DATE AND HOW IT WENT
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WHAT WENT WELL

WHAT I'D CHANGE NEXT TIME

Piping, resting and the feet

Video by **Sweet & Savory by Shinee**: *"PIPE your macarons correctly to get FULL SHELLS - Master Your Macarons Series, Part 2"*

vanillagoods.com/pages/baking-lesson/french-macarons-4-piping-resting-and-the-feet

How to pipe even shells, why they rest before baking, where the ruffled feet come from, and how to read a tray that went wrong.

Key points

- [ ] Hold the bag straight up and squeeze without moving it
- [ ] Rest until a skin forms; the skin pushes the rise out the bottom
- [ ] Feet are the ruffled edge that forms when steam lifts the shell

Piping

- Hold the bag straight up, with the tip about 1/2 inch (1 cm) above the mat
- Squeeze from the top without moving until the batter fills the template circle
- Stop squeezing, then flick the tip away in a small circle
- Rap the tray firmly on the counter several times to release air
- Pop any remaining bubbles with a toothpick

Why rest

As the piped shells sit, the surface dries into a thin skin. In the oven the batter cannot expand through that skin, so the steam lifts the whole shell and escapes at the base, forming the ruffled feet. Resting takes 20–60 minutes, longer on humid days; the shells are ready when a light touch leaves no batter on your finger.

Reading the tray

- Cracked tops: no skin yet, trapped air bubbles or an oven that is too hot
- No feet: batter too wet or folded too far
- Hollow shells: meringue whipped too far, oven too hot, or underbaked
- Lopsided shells: bag held at an angle, a warped tray or uneven oven heat
- Sticking to the mat: underbaked; bake a minute or two longer and cool completely

TOOLS IN THIS LESSON: Piping bags and tips · Macaron baking mat · Half-sheet pan · Oven thermometer

NOTES WHILE YOU WATCH

✓ Check yourself

Three quick questions from this lesson. Mark your answers, then compare with the answer key on page 13.

1 How should the piping bag be held?

- (A) At a 45-degree angle
- (B) Straight up, just above the mat
- (C) Flat against the tray

2 What forms the feet on a macaron?

- (A) Baking powder in the batter
- (B) Extra sugar on the tray
- (C) Steam lifting the shell and escaping at the base

3 Cracked tops usually point to what?

- (A) No skin, trapped air or an oven that is too hot
- (B) Too much resting
- (C) Too little sugar

Practice log

Practice is where the lesson sticks. Note what you made and what you would do differently.

WHAT I MADE	DATE AND HOW IT WENT
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WHAT WENT WELL

WHAT I'D CHANGE NEXT TIME

Fillings and maturing

Video by **Homebody Eats**: *"4 Simple Ganache Macaron Filling Recipes Using ONE Technique - Homebody Eats"*

vanillagoods.com/pages/baking-lesson/french-macarons-5-fillings-and-maturing

Buttercream, ganache and jam fillings for macarons, and why a day in the fridge turns good shells into great macarons.

Key points

- [ ] Pipe a mound of filling about two-thirds the width of the shell
- [ ] Use a ring of buttercream to hold wet fillings like jam or curd
- [ ] Mature filled macarons in the fridge for 24 hours

Choosing a filling

- Buttercream: stable, easy to flavor and color
- Ganache: rich and firm once set; use a thick, pipeable ganache
- Jam or curd: bright flavor, but wet; pipe a buttercream ring and put the jam in the center
- Match shells in pairs by size before you fill
- Pipe onto the flat side and sandwich with a gentle twist until the filling reaches the edge

Why maturing matters

Freshly filled macarons are crisp and a little dry. During 24 hours in an airtight container in the fridge, moisture from the filling moves into the shell. The inside turns soft and chewy while the outside stays delicately crisp, and the flavors blend.

Serving and storing

Take macarons out of the fridge 20–30 minutes before serving so the filling softens. They keep about 5 days refrigerated and freeze well in an airtight container; thaw them in the fridge so no moisture forms on the shells.

TOOLS IN THIS LESSON Piping bags and tips · Airtight storage containers · Double boiler · Offset spatula

NOTES WHILE YOU WATCH

✓ Check yourself

Three quick questions from this lesson. Mark your answers, then compare with the answer key on page 13.

1 What does maturing do to a macaron?

- (A) Moisture from the filling softens the inside of the shell
- (B) It makes the shell harder
- (C) It changes the color

2 How do you use a wet filling like jam?

- (A) Spread it thickly to the edge
- (B) Soak the shells in it
- (C) Pipe a ring of buttercream and put the jam in the center

3 When should macarons come out of the fridge before serving?

- (A) Right at serving time
- (B) About 20–30 minutes ahead
- (C) The day before

Practice log

Practice is where the lesson sticks. Note what you made and what you would do differently.

WHAT I MADE	DATE AND HOW IT WENT
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WHAT WENT WELL

WHAT I'D CHANGE NEXT TIME

ANSWER KEY

Check your answers

One correct answer per question. If you missed one, the note explains why, and the lesson page has the full notes and the video.

1. Macaron basics: ingredients and tools

1 **B** Gel and powder add color without water; liquid coloring thins and weakens the batter.
2 **A** Macarons depend on exact ratios, and cups vary too much with how they are filled.
3 **C** Most ovens run hotter or cooler than the dial, and macarons need an accurate low temperature.

2. French method macarons

1 **C** The ribbon should hold a figure 8 and sink back into the batter in about 10–20 seconds.
2 **A** The meringue is the structure of the shell, so whip it to stiff, glossy peaks.
3 **B** Resting forms a skin; shells that are still sticky tend to crack in the oven.

3. Italian method macarons

1 **A** The syrup is cooked to 244–248°F so it cooks the whites and makes a stable meringue.
2 **B** The unwhipped whites bind the dry ingredients into a paste that the meringue is folded into.
3 **C** Syrup that hits the whisk spins onto the bowl and hardens instead of mixing into the whites.

4. Piping, resting and the feet

1 **B** A vertical bag makes round, even shells; an angled bag makes lopsided ones.
2 **C** The dried skin stops the batter expanding upward, so steam lifts the shell and ruffles out at the bottom.
3 **A** Shells crack when steam breaks through a surface that has not dried, or when the oven is too hot.

5. Fillings and maturing

1 **A** Over about 24 hours the shell absorbs moisture from the filling and turns chewy inside.
2 **C** The buttercream ring keeps the wet filling away from the edges so the shells do not go soggy.
3 **B** A short rest at room temperature softens the filling and brings out the flavor.

KEEP THIS PAGE

Key points from every lesson

The whole course at a glance. Pin it inside a cupboard door.

1. Macaron basics: ingredients and tools

- Shells use four ingredients: almond flour, powdered sugar, egg whites and sugar
- Weigh everything in grams; cups are not accurate enough
- An oven thermometer matters more than any special pan

2. French method macarons

- Whip the meringue to stiff, glossy peaks
- Fold until the batter flows like lava and makes a figure 8
- Rest the piped shells until the surface is dry to the touch

3. Italian method macarons

- Cook the sugar syrup to 244–248°F (118–120°C)
- Mix the almond flour and powdered sugar with unwhipped whites into a paste
- The meringue is more stable and more forgiving of humidity

4. Piping, resting and the feet

- Hold the bag straight up and squeeze without moving it
- Rest until a skin forms; the skin pushes the rise out the bottom
- Feet are the ruffled edge that forms when steam lifts the shell

5. Fillings and maturing

- Pipe a mound of filling about two-thirds the width of the shell
- Use a ring of buttercream to hold wet fillings like jam or curd
- Mature filled macarons in the fridge for 24 hours

WHAT I WANT TO REMEMBER

WHEN YOU'VE FINISHED

Three things to do next

1

Mark each lesson complete

The "Mark complete" button on every lesson page saves your progress in your browser. No account, nothing to sign up for.

2

Print your certificate

Once all 5 lessons are marked complete, the course page prints a free certificate of completion with your name on it. It records what you finished; it is not an accredited qualification.

3

Bake it

Practice with VanillaGoods recipes that use what this course teaches.

vanillagoods.com/pages/recipes?q=macarons

NEXT ON THE LEARNING PATH

Pastry & Croissant School

Advanced · Laminated dough, shaping, proofing

vanillagoods.com/pages/baking-course/croissant-school

Free guide for this course: “Macaron troubleshooting chart”, Hollow, cracked, no feet or lopsided: the cause and the fix for each. Get it from the course page.

Baking with real vanilla? VanillaGoods keeps Madagascar, Uganda and Tahiti vanilla in stock, along with coffee and tea, at vanillagoods.com.

NOTES FOR MY NEXT BAKE

The lesson videos are by independent creators (Joshua Weissman, Michelle's Macarons, Home Cooking Adventure, Sweet & Savory by Shinee and Homebody Eats) and play in YouTube's own player on the lesson pages; this workbook links to them and copies nothing. Notes, key points, questions and this workbook are written by VanillaGoods for home bakers.

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