

# BUSINESS BASICS BUNDLE

Everything You Need to Look Professional  
and Protect Yourself from Day One

Congratulations on taking this important step in your cake business!

This Business Basics Bundle gives you the essential documents and systems you need to operate professionally and legally from day one. Whether you're just starting out or have been baking for a while, these templates will save you time, protect your business, and make you look like the professional you are. Here's what's included and how to use each document effectively.

What's Included in This Bundle

- **Order Form Template** – A professional order form to capture all the essential details from your customers.
- **Terms and Conditions Template** – Legally protect your business with clear terms that set expectations and reduce disputes.
- **Deposit System Guide** – Learn exactly how to implement a deposit system that protects your time and filters serious customers.
- **Legal Requirements Checklist for Ireland** – A complete checklist to ensure you're compliant with Irish food safety, tax, and business regulations.

# 1. Order Form Template

## What It Is

A ready to use order form that captures all the important details you need from your customers, their contact information, event details, cake specifications, dietary requirements, and agreement to your terms.

## Why You Need It

- Prevents miscommunication and forgotten details
- Gives you a clear record of what was agreed
- Makes you look professional
- Creates a paper trail in case of disputes

## How to Use It

1. Customize the template: Replace [YOUR BUSINESS NAME] and [Your Contact Details] with your actual business information.

2. Adjust the options: Update cake sizes, flavours, and dietary options to match what you offer.

3. Send to customers: Email or print the form for customers to fill out when placing an order.

1. Get it signed: Always have the customer sign the order form to confirm they've read and agreed to your terms.

2. Keep copies: Store completed order forms for your records (at least 6 years for tax purposes).

Pro Tip: Include a copy of your Terms and Conditions with every order form so customers know exactly what they're agreeing to.

## 2. Terms and Conditions Template

### What It Is

A comprehensive set of terms and conditions that clearly outline your policies on deposits, cancellations, liability, allergens, complaints, and more. These legally protect your business and set clear expectations with customers.

### Why You Need It

- Protects you from disputes and liability claims
- Sets clear boundaries and expectations
- Reduces misunderstandings
- Shows you're a professional business

### How to Use It

1. Customize the template: Replace placeholders with your business name, address, and contact details.
2. Review and adjust: Read through each section and adjust policies to suit your business (e.g., deposit percentage, cancellation timelines).
3. Add payment methods: Include the payment methods you accept (bank transfer, Revolut, card, etc.).
4. Share with customers: Provide a copy with every order form, post on your website, or include a link in booking emails.
5. Update the date: Add the current date to the "Last Updated" field at the bottom of the document.
6. Get acknowledgement: Have customers confirm they've read and agreed to your T&Cs when they place an order.

**Pro Tip:** Don't be afraid to enforce your T&Cs. They're there to protect you, not to be ignored.

## **3. Deposit System Guide**

### **What It Is**

A comprehensive guide that explains exactly how to implement a deposit system in your cake business. It covers why deposits matter, how much to charge, when to take them, how to communicate your policy, and how to handle common objections.

### **Why You Need It**

- Protects your time and money
- Filters serious customers from timewasters
- Reduces cancellations and no shows
- Improves your cash flow

### **How to Use It**

1. Read the entire guide: Understand the reasoning behind taking deposits and how they protect your business.
  2. Decide on your deposit amount: 50% is standard, but choose what works for your business.
  3. Set up payment methods: Make it easy for customers to pay deposits (bank transfer, Revolut, Stripe, etc.).
  4. Practice your scripts: The guide includes word for word scripts for discussing deposits with customers. Practice these until they feel natural.
  5. Update your materials: Add deposit information to your order form, website, social media bio, and anywhere else you communicate with customers.
  6. Be consistent: Require deposits for EVERY order. No exceptions (unless you consciously decide to waive it for a specific reason).
- Pro Tip: Taking deposits from day one establishes you as a professional. Don't wait until you're "established enough" – start as you mean to go on.

## 4. Legal Requirements Checklist for Ireland

### What It Is

A detailed checklist covering all the legal and regulatory requirements for running a cake business in Ireland. This includes food safety registration, tax obligations, insurance, labelling, allergen information, GDPR compliance, and more.

### Why You Need It

- Ensures you're operating legally
- Protects you from fines and penalties
- Gives you peace of mind
- Builds customer trust and confidence

### How to Use It

1. Work through the checklist: Go through each section and tick off items as you complete them.
  2. Prioritize food safety: Register your food business with your Local Authority BEFORE you start trading. This is your #1 legal obligation.
  3. Get your tax sorted: Register with Revenue as self-employed and keep proper records of all income and expenses.
  4. Get insurance: Public liability insurance is essential, even if not legally required.
  5. Use the resources: The checklist includes contact details for all relevant authorities. Don't hesitate to reach out if you have questions.
  6. Keep it handy: Review the checklist periodically to ensure you're staying compliant as regulations change.
- Pro Tip: Don't let the legal stuff overwhelm you. Take it one step at a time. Start with food safety registration and build from there.

## Your 7-Day Implementation Plan

Don't let these documents sit in a folder. Here's a simple plan to get everything set up in just one week:

### **Day 1:** Customize Your Order Form

- Replace all placeholders with your business details
- Update cake sizes, flavours, and options to match your offerings

### **Day 2:** Customize Your Terms and Conditions

- Add your business information
- Adjust policies to suit your business
- Update the "Last Updated" date

### **Day 3:** Set Up Your Deposit System

- Read the Deposit System Guide
- Decide on your deposit percentage
- Set up payment methods (bank account, Revolut, etc.)
- Practice your deposit scripts

### **Day 4:** Work Through the Legal Checklist (Part 1)

- Register your food business with your Local Authority
- Research food safety training courses

### **Day 5:** Work Through the Legal Checklist (Part 2)

- Register with Revenue if you haven't already
- Get quotes for public liability insurance

### **Day 6:** Update Your Marketing Materials

- Add deposit information to your social media bio/website
- Create a booking process that includes your order form and T&Cs
- Update any templates or automated messages

### **Day 7:** Test Your New System

- Walk through your booking process as if you were a customer
- Make sure all documents are easily accessible
- Practice your deposit conversation one more time

## **You're Ready!**

By implementing these documents and systems, you're setting your business up for success. You'll look professional, protect yourself legally, and establish clear boundaries with customers from the very start.

### ***Remember:***

- Professional businesses take deposits. Don't be afraid to require them.
- Your terms and conditions are there to protect you. Enforce them.
- Operating legally isn't optional. It's essential for your protection and reputation.
- You don't need to be perfect to start. You just need to start.

If you have questions or need support as you implement these systems, remember you're part of the Sugarcoated Cake School community. We're here to help you build a sustainable, profitable cake business that works for your life.

Protect your business. Set boundaries. Build with confidence.

- Lisa, Sugarcoated Cake School

# CAKE ORDER FORM

[YOUR BUSINESS NAME]

## Customer Information

Name:

Phone:

Email:

Event Date:

Collection Time:

## Cake Details

Cake Size:  6" (Serves 12-15)  8" (Serves 20-25)  10"  
(Serves 30-40)

Number of Tiers:  Single Tier  2 Tier  3 Tier  Other:

Cake Flavour:

Filling:

Colour Scheme:

Writing on Cake:

Design Details

Theme / Special Requests (please be specific):

## **Dietary Requirements**

- None  Gluten-Free  Dairy-Free  Egg-Free  Vegan  
 Nut-Free  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Pricing**

Total Price: €

Deposit Required (50%): €

Balance Due on Collection: €

## **Agreement**

I have read and agree to the Terms and Conditions provided. I understand that a 50% non-refundable deposit is required to secure this booking, and the balance is due on collection.

Customer Signature:

Date:

# TERMS AND CONDITIONS

## [YOUR BUSINESS NAME]

Please read these terms carefully before placing your order. By placing an order with [Your Business Name], you agree to be bound by these terms and conditions.

### **1. Booking and Deposits**

1. All cake orders require a completed order form and a 50% non-refundable deposit to secure your booking.
2. Your order is not confirmed until the deposit has been received.
3. The remaining balance is due on or before the collection date. Cakes will not be released until payment is received in full.
4. Accepted payment methods: Cash, Bank Transfer, or [add your payment methods].

### **2. Cancellations and Changes**

5. All deposits are non-refundable. If you need to cancel your order, the deposit will not be returned.
6. Minor changes to your order may be possible up to 7 days before your collection date, subject to availability and may incur additional charges.
7. Changes requested within 7 days of collection cannot be guaranteed and may not be possible.
8. If you need to change your collection date, please give as much notice as possible. Date changes are subject to availability.

### **3. Collection and Delivery**

9. All cakes are collection only unless delivery has been specifically arranged and paid for in advance.

10. You must collect your cake at the agreed time. If you are running late, please contact us as soon as possible.

11. It is your responsibility to transport the cake safely. We are not responsible for any damage that occurs after collection.

12. Please inspect your cake at collection. Once you leave the premises, we cannot accept responsibility for damage.

13. If delivery has been arranged, the cake will be delivered at the agreed time. Delays due to traffic or unforeseen circumstances are beyond our control.

### **4. Cake Design and Colours**

14. While we will do our best to match inspiration images, every cake is handmade and unique. Slight variations in colour, design, and finish are to be expected.

15. Colours may vary slightly from screen to actual product due to different monitor settings and the nature of food colouring.

16. Edible images and printed designs cannot be guaranteed to exactly match digital files due to colour variation in edible printing.

17. We reserve the right to make small design adjustments to ensure structural integrity and food safety.

## **5. Allergens and Dietary Requirements**

18. All cakes are made in a kitchen that handles nuts, gluten, dairy, eggs, and other allergens.

19. While we take precautions, we cannot guarantee that any product is 100% free from allergens due to the risk of cross-contamination.

20. If you have severe allergies, please consider whether our products are suitable for you.

21. For specific dietary requirements, please discuss these with us at the time of ordering.

## **6. Storage and Consumption**

22. Cakes should be stored in a cool, dry place away from direct sunlight and heat sources.

23. Cakes containing fresh cream or dairy must be refrigerated and consumed within 2 days of collection.

24. Buttercream cakes can be kept at room temperature for up to 3 days or refrigerated for longer storage.

25. Some decorations are not edible (e.g., wires, foam, non-edible toppers). Please remove these before serving

## **7. Complaints and Issues**

26. If you have any concerns about your order, please contact us immediately upon collection.

27. We will not be held responsible for any damage caused after the cake has left our premises.

28. Any complaints must be made within 24 hours of collection, with photographic evidence where applicable.

29. Our liability is limited to the cost of the cake. We are not responsible for any consequential losses.

## **8. Copyright and Photography**

30. All cake designs remain the copyright of [Your Business Name] unless they are exact replications of customer-supplied designs.

31. We reserve the right to photograph and use images of our work for marketing and promotional purposes on social media, our website, and in print unless you specifically request otherwise.

32. If you do not wish for your cake to be photographed or shared, please inform us in writing at the time of booking.

## **9. Weather and Circumstances Beyond Our Control**

33. In extreme weather conditions (e.g., very hot weather), cake decoration may be affected. We will do our best to ensure your cake is delivered in perfect condition, but some melting or softening may occur.

34. We cannot be held responsible for issues caused by extreme heat, humidity, or other weather conditions beyond our control

35. In the unlikely event that we are unable to complete your order due to illness, equipment failure, or other unforeseen circumstances, we will provide a full refund. This is the extent of our liability.

## **10. General**

36. These terms and conditions may be updated from time to time. The version in effect at the time of your order will apply.

37. These terms are governed by the laws of Ireland.

38. By placing an order, you confirm that you have read, understood, and agree to these terms and conditions.

# DEPOSIT SYSTEM GUIDE

## How to Protect Your Business and Manage Cash Flow

Taking deposits is one of the smartest business decisions you can make. This guide will show you exactly how to implement a deposit system that protects your time, secures your income, and filters for serious customers.

### Why Deposits Matter

Deposits aren't just about money – they're about protecting your business. Here's what a deposit system does for you:

- **Filters serious customers** – People who pay a deposit are committed. It dramatically reduces last-minute cancellations and no-shows.
- **Protects your time** – Your time spent planning, shopping, and baking has value. A deposit compensates you if someone cancels.
- **Improves cash flow** – Getting money upfront helps you purchase ingredients without using your own funds.
- **Secures your booking calendar** – When someone pays a deposit, that date is locked in. No more people asking to "think about it" while blocking your calendar.
- **Makes you look professional** – Established businesses take deposits. It signals that you're a proper business, not a hobby baker.

## How Much to Charge as a Deposit

The standard deposit across the cake industry is 50%. This is enough to:

- Cover your ingredient costs
- Compensate you for time spent if they cancel
- Show the customer is serious about the booking

Example: If a cake costs €100, require a €50 deposit to secure the booking. The remaining €50 is due on collection.

## When to Take the Deposit

Take the deposit BEFORE you start any work. This means:

- Before you purchase ingredients
- Before you block out the date in your calendar
- Before you create any design mockups
- Before you turn away other potential customers for that date

**Remember.** The booking is NOT confirmed until you receive the deposit. Make this crystal clear to customers.

How to Communicate Your Deposit Policy

Be confident and matter of fact about deposits. Here are scripts you can use:

**Script 1:** During Initial Enquiry

"Thanks for your enquiry! Your cake would be €X. To secure your booking, I require a 50% deposit of €X, with the remaining balance due on collection. Once I receive the deposit, your date is locked in."

**Script 2:** When Someone Asks to Book

"Perfect! To confirm your booking for [date], I'll need a 50% deposit of €X. I can send you my payment details now. Once the deposit is received, your date is secured and I won't take any other bookings for that day."

## Accepting Deposit Payments

Make it easy for customers to pay. Recommended payment methods for Irish cake businesses:

### Bank Transfer

- Free to receive
- Instant confirmation
- Professional
- Provide your IBAN, account name, and reference (customer name + date)

### Revolut

- Quick and easy for both parties
- Instant transfer
- Share your Revolut tag or link

### Stripe / Square/Sumup (If Accepting Card Payments)

- Fees apply (around 1.4% + 25c per transaction)
- Convenient for customers who prefer cards
- Send payment link via email or text

**Tip:** Always avoid cash deposits if possible – bank transfers create a clear paper trail for both you and your customer.

## Your Deposit Refund Policy

Be clear from the start: deposits are non-refundable. This is standard practice and protects your business.

Include this in your terms and conditions and communicate it when taking the deposit:

"All deposits are non-refundable. If you need to cancel your order, the deposit will not be returned as it covers my time, planning, and ingredient costs, as well as the lost opportunity to take other bookings for that date."

## When to Make Exceptions

While your policy should be non-refundable, you might consider offering flexibility in exceptional circumstances:

- Serious illness or bereavement
- Extreme circumstances beyond their control
- If you can easily rebook the date with another customer

Use your judgment. These should be rare exceptions, not the rule.

## Quick Reference: Your Deposit Policy

Standard Deposit – 50% of total cake price

When Due – Before booking is confirmed

Balance Due – On or before collection date

Refund Policy – Non-refundable

Payment Methods – Bank transfer, Revolut, [add your methods]

## Common Questions About Deposits

*"What if someone says they don't have the money right now?"*

Your response: "I completely understand. The deposit secures your date, so when you're ready to proceed, just let me know and we can get you booked in!"

Don't hold the date without a deposit. If they're serious, they'll find the money.

*"Can I hold the date for them for a few days?"*

Only if you're comfortable potentially losing other bookings. A safer approach: "I can pencil you in for 48 hours, but after that I'll need to open the date back up if I don't receive the deposit."

*"What if I'm just starting out? Should I still charge deposits?"*

YES. Starting as you mean to go on is critical. Taking deposits from day one establishes professional boundaries and protects your time. You'll be taken more seriously, and you'll avoid timewasters.

## **Action Steps: Implement Your Deposit System Today**

- Decide on your deposit amount (50% is standard).
- Set up your payment methods (bank details, Revolut, etc.).
- Add deposit information to your Terms and Conditions template.
- Update your Order Form template to include deposit details.
- Practice your scripts so you sound confident when discussing deposits.
- Update your social media bio or website to mention that deposits are required.
- Send payment details immediately after a customer agrees to book.

Remember: Deposits are not optional. They're a fundamental part of running a professional, sustainable cake business. Don't be afraid to require them, your business deserves to be protected.

Protect your business. Take deposits. Always.

# LEGAL REQUIREMENTS CHECKLIST

For Home-Based and Commercial Cake Businesses in Ireland

**⚠️ DISCLAIMER:** This guide provides general information only and should not be considered legal advice. Food safety regulations and business requirements can change. Always verify current requirements with the relevant authorities (FSAI, Revenue, your Local Authority) before starting your business. When in doubt, consult a professional.

This checklist covers the essential legal requirements for running a cake business in Ireland. Use it to ensure you're operating legally and protecting your business.

## 1. Food Safety Requirements

Food safety is your number one legal priority. Whether you're baking from home or a commercial kitchen, these requirements apply.

### Register Your Food Business

- Register your business with your Local Authority's Environmental Health Office BEFORE you start trading.
- This is FREE and legally required for ALL food businesses, including home-based.
- Find your Local Authority contact details at: [www.fsai.ie](http://www.fsai.ie) or contact your County Council.

### Food Safety Training

- Complete a food safety training course (e.g., Level 2 Food Hygiene or HACCP training).
- While not always legally required for small businesses, it's highly recommended and demonstrates professionalism.

## **Food Safety Management System**

- Implement a HACCP-based food safety management system (even a simple one).
- Keep records of: temperature checks, cleaning schedules, supplier details, traceability.
- Safe Food for Everyone ([safefoodforbusiness.ie](http://safefoodforbusiness.ie)) offers free HACCP resources.

## **Kitchen Requirements**

If baking from home:

- Your kitchen must meet basic hygiene standards (cleanable surfaces, hand washing facilities, pest control).
- An Environmental Health Officer (EHO) may inspect your premises. Be prepared for this.
- You cannot use your domestic kitchen if you have pets that access the kitchen area.

If using a commercial kitchen:

Ensure the kitchen is properly registered and meets all legal standards.

## **2. Business Registration and Tax**

### **Register with Revenue**

- Register as self-employed with Revenue (if operating as a sole trader).
- Apply for a tax registration number (Form TR1).
- Visit: [www.revenue.ie](http://www.revenue.ie) or contact your local Revenue office.

### **VAT Registration (if applicable)**

- You **MUST** register for VAT if your turnover exceeds €37,500 per year.
- You **MAY** voluntarily register for VAT below this threshold if it benefits your business.
- Most cakes are VAT-exempt (0% rate), but decorated celebration cakes may be subject to 13.5% VAT.

### **Keep Proper Records**

- Keep records of ALL income and expenses for at least 6 years.
- Issue receipts or invoices for all sales.
- File annual tax returns by the deadline (usually 31st October each year).
- Consider using accounting software (e.g., QuickBooks, Xero, or even a simple spreadsheet).

### **Business Name (if applicable)**

- If trading under a name other than your own (e.g., "Lisa's Cakes" instead of "Lisa Murphy"), you must register your business name with the Companies Registration Office (CRO).
- This costs around €20 and must be renewed every 3 years. Visit: [www.cro.ie](http://www.cro.ie)

### **3. Insurance**

Insurance is not always legally required, but it's ESSENTIAL for protecting your business.

#### **Public Liability Insurance**

- Get public liability insurance (minimum €2 million cover recommended).
- This protects you if someone becomes ill from eating your products or if an accident occurs related to your business.
- Some venues require proof of insurance before accepting deliveries.

#### **Home Insurance (if baking from home)**

- Inform your home insurance provider that you're running a business from home.
- You may need additional cover or a business extension to your policy.

#### **Product Liability Insurance**

- Consider product liability insurance for added protection against claims related to your products.

## 4. Labelling Requirements

If you're selling packaged cakes (e.g., brownies, cupcakes), you must comply with food labelling laws.

### Required Information on Labels

- Name of the food (e.g., "Chocolate Brownie")
- List of ingredients (in descending order by weight)
- Allergen information (must be clearly highlighted in the ingredient list)
- Net quantity (weight or volume)
- Use by or best before date
- Storage instructions (if applicable)
- Your business name and address

**Note:** Custom celebration cakes sold to order and not pre-packaged have more relaxed labelling requirements, but allergen information **MUST** still be provided (verbally or in writing)

.

## 5. Allergen Information

You MUST provide allergen information for all 14 major allergens, even if you're not labelling the product.

### **The 14 allergens are:**

- Cereals containing gluten (wheat, rye, barley, oats)
- Crustaceans
- Eggs
- Fish
- Peanuts
- Soybeans
- Milk
- Nuts (almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, etc.)
- Celery
- Mustard
- Sesame seeds
- Sulphur dioxide and sulphites (at levels above 10mg/kg)
- Lupin
- Molluscs

Include allergen information on your order form, website, or provided to customers in writing.

Always include a disclaimer about cross-contamination if your kitchen handles multiple allergens.

## **6. Data Protection (GDPR)**

If you collect customer information (names, emails, phone numbers), you must comply with GDPR.

- Only collect data that's necessary for your business.
- Store customer data securely (password-protected files, encrypted email).
- Have a privacy policy if you collect data through your website or social media.
- Get consent before adding customers to marketing emails or mailing lists.
- Delete customer data when it's no longer needed (e.g., after 1-2 years).

More info at: [www.dataprotection.ie](http://www.dataprotection.ie)

## **7. Social Media and Marketing Compliance**

- If using images of copyrighted characters (e.g., Disney, Marvel), be aware that this is technically copyright infringement. Use at your own risk.
- Always get permission before posting photos of customers or children on social media.
- Disclose any paid partnerships or sponsored posts (as per Advertising Standards Authority of Ireland rules).

Ensure all marketing claims are truthful and not misleading

## **8. Additional Considerations**

### **Trading Standards**

- Ensure your pricing is clear and transparent.
- Honor any advertised prices or promotions.

### **Planning Permission (if working from home)**

- Check with your local planning authority if you need permission to run a business from your home (usually not required for small-scale home baking).
- Consider your neighbors – excessive traffic, noise, or smells could cause issues.

### **Mortgage/Tenancy Agreement**

- If you own your home, check your mortgage terms to ensure running a business doesn't breach any conditions.
- If you rent, get written permission from your landlord before operating a food business from the property.

### **Key Resources and Contacts**

Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI)–[www.fsai.ie](http://www.fsai.ie) | 1890 336 677

Revenue Commissioners–[www.revenue.ie](http://www.revenue.ie) | 1890 22 44 25

Companies Registration Office (CRO)–[www.cro.ie](http://www.cro.ie) | 01 804 5200

Data Protection Commission–[www.dataprotection.ie](http://www.dataprotection.ie) | 01 765 0100

Local Authority Environmental Health–Contact your County Council

Safe Food for Everyone–[www.safefoodforbusiness.ie](http://www.safefoodforbusiness.ie) (Free HACCP resources)

Local Enterprise Office–[www.localenterprise.ie](http://www.localenterprise.ie) (Free business support)

## Final Notes

This checklist covers the main legal requirements, but regulations can change. Always verify current requirements with the relevant authorities before starting your business.

If you're ever unsure about any legal requirement, seek professional advice from a solicitor, accountant, or business advisor.

**Remember.** Operating legally protects you, your customers, and your business reputation. It's worth the effort to get it right from the start.

Protect your business. Operate legally. Build with confidence.

*The Membership*  
**SUGARCOATED**  
— BY LISA —