



## No-Fear Pie Crust

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**WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS:** We wanted a pie crust recipe that we could make without frustration or fear of botching. So we opted for a pat-in-the-pan pie dough, which doesn't necessitate rolling out or transferring to a pie plate. To make our pie crust easy to manipulate, we added cream cheese to the recipe, which, thanks to its high fat content, also ensured our recipe produced a tender pie dough. We also cut out the need for pie weights: As long as the dough was chilled when it went into the oven, it wouldn't shrink, so didn't need to be weighted down.

### Makes one 9-inch pie shell

*The pastry can be pressed into the pie plate and refrigerated for up to 2 days or double-wrapped in plastic and frozen for up to 1 month. Once baked and cooled, the shell can be wrapped tightly in plastic and stored at room temperature for up to 1 day.*

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/4** cups all-purpose flour
- 2** tablespoons sugar
- 1/4** teaspoon table salt
- 8** tablespoons unsalted butter (1 stick), softened but still cool
- 2** ounces cream cheese, softened but still cool

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Lightly coat 9-inch Pyrex pie plate with cooking spray. Whisk flour, sugar, and salt together in bowl.
2. With electric mixer at medium-high speed, beat butter and cream cheese in large bowl, stopping once or twice to scrape down beater and sides of bowl, until completely homogenous, about 2 minutes. Add flour mixture and combine on medium-low until mixture resembles coarse cornmeal, about 20 seconds. Scrape down sides of bowl. Increase mixer speed to medium-high and beat until dough begins to form large clumps, about 30 seconds. Reserve 3 tablespoons of dough. Turn remaining dough onto lightly floured surface, gather into ball, and flatten into 6-inch disk. Transfer disk to greased pie plate.
3. Press dough evenly over bottom of pie plate toward sides, using heel of your hand. Hold plate up to light to ensure that dough is evenly distributed (see photo 1 below). With your fingertips, continue to work dough over bottom of plate and up sides until evenly distributed.
4. On floured surface, roll reserved dough into 12-inch rope. Divide into three pieces, roll each piece into 8-inch rope, and form fluted edge (photos 2 through 4). Wrap in plastic and refrigerate at least 1 hour.
5. Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 325 degrees. Lightly prick bottom of crust with fork. Bake until golden brown, 35 to 40 minutes. Cool on wire rack. (If large bubbles form, wait until crust is fully baked, then gently press on bubbles with kitchen towel. Bubbles will settle as crust cools.)

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1. Hold the pie plate up to the light to check the thickness of the dough; it should be translucent, not opaque. Pay attention to the curved edges.



2. Roll the reserved dough into three 8-inch ropes. Arrange the ropes around the perimeter of the pie plate, leaving small (about 1-inch) gaps between them.



3. Squeeze the ropes together.



4. Create a fluted edge, dipping your fingers in flour if the dough is sticky.



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