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Old-Fashioned Flaky Pie Dough Recipe

STELLA PARKS • PROFILE / TWITTER / FACEBOOK / EMAIL













PRINTER-FRIENDLY VERSION

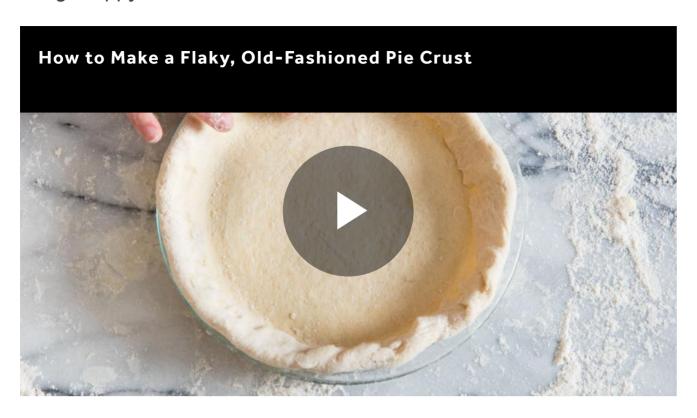


[Photographs: Vicky Wasik. Video: Serious Eats]

This is the sort of recipe pastry chefs tend to favor, but it doesn't require any fancy ingredients, equipment, or training. Just smash some cold butter in a bowl of flour, stir in a bit of water, roll it out, and fold it over a few times. It's essentially a streamlined blitz, making an easy layered dough that's supple but strong. That means it won't slump out of shape in the oven, so it can support all types of complicated decorative techniques, but it's wonderfully buttery, so it always turns out flaky and

tender, too.

In summer months, warm pantry staples and equipment will raise the temperature of pie dough, causing the butter to melt. If it's warmer than 73°F (23°C) in your kitchen, a few simple precautions will keep your dough happy and cool; more here.



Why It Works

- All-purpose flour gives the dough strength to hold its shape in the oven, preserving any sort of decorative design.
- A blitz-style ratio of flour to butter creates a dough that's pliable but strong, making cracks and tears a thing of the past.
- One round of folding provides eight major layers with minimal fuss.
- Refrigerating the dough after shaping ensures it's fully chilled and relaxed, preserving its flakes in the oven.

READ THE WHOLE STORY

YIELD: Makes 2 single- or 1 doublecrusted 9inch pie (regular or deep-dish)

ACTIVE TIME: 25 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 2 1/2 hours



TEXT ONLY

Directions







Ingredients

8 ounces all-purpose flour (1 2/3 cups; 225g), plus more for dusting

1/2 ounce sugar (1 tablespoon; 15g)

1. For the Dough: Whisk flour, sugar, and salt together in a medium bowl. Cut butter into 1/2inch cubes (this size is important, as smaller pieces will melt too fast) and toss with flour mixture to break up the pieces. With your fingertips, smash each cube flat—that's it! No



Don't Blame the Humidity: **How "Room Temperature"** Can Ruin a Pie Dough

1 teaspoon (4g)
Diamond Crystal
kosher salt; for table
salt, use half as much
by volume or use the
same weight

8 ounces unsalted butter (2 sticks; 225g), cold

4 ounces cold tap water (1/2 cup; 115g)

- rubbing or cutting. Stir in water, then knead dough against the sides of the bowl until it comes together in a shaggy ball. Dough temperature should register between 65 and 70°F (18 and 21°C); if not, refrigerate briefly before rolling and folding (see note above).
- 2. Make the Layers: On a generously floured work surface, roll dough into a roughly 10- by 15-inch rectangle. Fold the 10-inch sides to the center, then close the newly formed packet like a book. Fold in half once more, bringing the short sides together to create a thick block. Divide in half with a sharp knife or bench scraper. Dough temperature should still be somewhere between 65 and 70°F (18 and 21°C); if not, refrigerate briefly before proceeding (see note above).
- 3. For Single-Crusted Pies: Using as much flour as needed, roll one piece into a 14-inch circle and drape across a 9-inch pie plate; it will be super easy to lift by hand. Dust off excess flour with a pastry brush, using it to nestle dough into the very corners of the pan. With scissors or kitchen shears, trim the edge so that it overhangs by 1 1/4 inches all around. Fold overhang over itself to create a thick border that sits atop the rim of the pan. Crimp or shape crust as desired. Repeat with remaining dough. Wrap with plastic and refrigerate at least 2 hours and up to overnight. Use as directed in your favorite recipe.
- 4. For a Double-Crusted Pie: Using as much flour as needed, roll one piece into a 14-inch circle and drape across a 9-inch pie plate; it will be super easy to lift by hand. Dust off excess flour with a pastry brush, using it to nestle dough into the very corners of the pan. With scissors or kitchen shears, trim the edge so that it overhangs by 1 inch all around. For a solid top crust, roll remaining dough as before, or roll into a 9- by 15inch rectangle for a lattice-top pie. Transfer the entire sheet, uncut, to a baking sheet or parchment-lined cutting board. (The parchment will prevent dough from absorbing any savory odors from the board.) Wrap both portions in plastic and refrigerate at least 2 hours and up to overnight. Use as directed in your favorite recipe.
- **5. For a Blind-Baked Pie:** Adjust oven rack to lower-middle position and preheat to 350°F (177°C).

Line chilled pie shell with a large sheet of aluminum foil, pressing so it conforms to the curves of the plate (a second sheet of aluminum may be needed for full coverage). Fill to the brim with sugar, transfer to a half sheet pan, and bake until fully set and golden around the edges, 60 to 75 minutes. Fold long sides of foil toward the middle, gather short sides, and use both hands to carefully transfer sugar to a heat-safe bowl. Let sugar cool to room temperature. If needed, continue baking crust a few minutes more to brown along the bottom. A full explanation of this process can be found here.

Special Equipment

Rolling pin, 9-inch pie plate (preferably tempered glass; see note below), pastry brush



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Notes

Compared to stoneware or heavy enameled ceramic, **tempered-glass** pie plates conduct heat quickly and evenly, so the crust bakes up light and crisp, never greasy or soft.

When room temperature exceeds 74°F, kitchen equipment and pantry staples will act as a heat source to the butter, creating a sticky dough. If it's warm in your kitchen, take these proactive steps to manage your dough temperature.

This Recipe Appears In

How to Bake a Pie With Frozen Fruit

2 Easy Pie Crusts, the BraveTart and Food Lab Ways

How to Freeze and Thaw a Fresh-Fruit Pie

Don't Blame the Humidity: How "Room Temperature" Can Ruin a Pie Dough

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Beautiful, Flaky Pie Crust the Old-Fashioned Way



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CIA-trained baking nerd, prodigal food writer, and James Beard Award–nominated pastry wizard. Once upon a time, Stella cashed out her life savings to attend language school in Tokyo so she could read the secret menu at her favorite sushi joint. Later, Food & Wine cited that compulsive dedication in naming her one of America's Best New Pastry Chefs. When not in the kitchen, Stella spends most of her time polishing Star Trek quotes, playing video games, and waiting for the arrival of her first cookbook, Brave Tart: Iconic American Desserts, available now.













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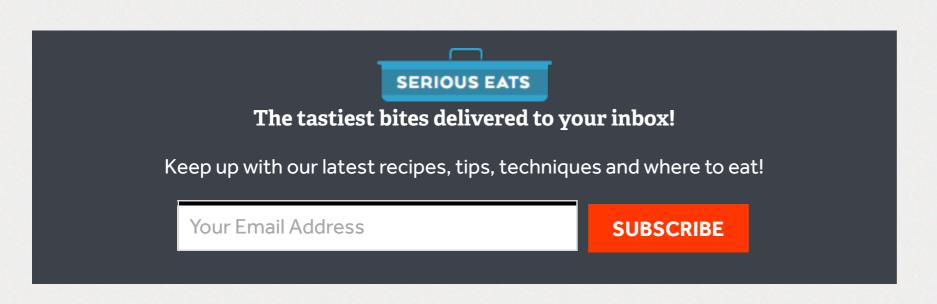
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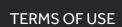
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