

Basic Pastry

Don't handle this pastry dough any more than necessary or it will be tough: treat it firmly, not timidly, but don't fuss with it. The flour and shortening should not be blended too well: it is the bits of shortening left in the dough that puff and expand during baking and give the pastry its flaky identity. For that reason, the dough cannot be mixed as successfully in a food processor. Follow illustrated details pp. 571-574.

1 cup (140 g) plus 2
tablespoons flour
¼ teaspoon salt

½ cup (¾ dL) shortening
2-3 tablespoons cold water

(8-INCH PIE SHELL)

2 cups (280 g) flour
½ teaspoon salt

¾ cup (1½ dL) shortening
½ cup (¾ dL) cold water

(8-INCH TWO-CRUST PIE)

1½ cups (215 g) flour
¼ teaspoon salt

½ cup (1 dL) shortening
3-4 tablespoons cold water

(9-INCH PIE SHELL)

2½ cups (350 g) flour
½ teaspoon salt

¾ cup (1¾ dL) shortening
6-7 tablespoons cold water

(9-INCH TWO-CRUST PIE)

Mix the flour and salt. Cut in the shortening with a pastry blender or two knives (see illustration p. 571). Combine lightly only until the mixture resembles coarse meal or very tiny peas: its texture will not be uniform but will contain crumbs and small bits and pieces. Sprinkle water over the flour mixture, a tablespoon at a time, and mix lightly with a fork, using only enough water so that the pastry will hold together when pressed gently into a ball.

The Fannie Farmer Cookbook,
12th edition,
Revised by
Marion Cunningham
and Jeri Laber,
Alfred A. Knopf,
New York, 1979

Pie Shell

Roll the dough out 2 inches larger than the pie pan, then fit it loosely but firmly into the pan. Crimp or flute the edges. For a *baked pie shell* (sometimes known, incidentally, as baking blind) prick the bottom dough all over with a fork and bake the shell for 16–18 minutes in a preheated 425°F (220°C) oven (for a partially baked shell, bake 10 minutes). Open the oven door once or twice during the baking and see if the shell again has begun to swell up in spots; if it has, push it down gently. Or fill the *unbaked pie shell* with pie filling, and then bake the pie as directed in the filling recipe.

Two-Crust Pie

Divide the dough into two balls. Roll the bottom crust out 2 inches larger than the pie pan. Ease it into the pan, fitting it loosely but firmly. Roll out the top crust. Fill the pie generously, then put on the top crust and prick in several places with a fork or cut vents in it. Or cover the pie with lattice strips. Crimp or flute the edges. Bake as indicated in the filling recipe.
