

# *Old Fashioned Home Baking*

## TIPS AND RECIPES FOR SUCCESS



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## PICTURE PERFECT PIES

### Select the Right Pan:

- Never shiny! Soggy, soaked under crusts result when shiny metal pans are used because they deflect the heat.
- To improve browning, put shiny metal pans on a cookie sheet for baking. Glass or dull-metal pans absorb heat and make a crisp crust. This is especially important for custard pies.
- Check the size of ceramic or pottery plates; they may not be standard size. A standard size plate holds about 3 3/4 cups liquid. You may need to adjust the amount of filling and the baking time.
- Disposable foil pie pans usually are smaller than standard pie plates, although foil deep dish pie pans are closer to the norm.

### Ingredients for Pastry:

- Flour, use all purpose or pastry flour.
- Fat
  - Shortening produces a tender and rich pastry.
  - Cold shortening contributes to a more flaky texture than shortening at room temperature, but at the cost of a lesser tenderness.
  - Lard usually makes a more tender pastry than shortening
  - Margarine products usually make a less tender product than those made with shortening. To ensure best results use only butter or shortening. If you use margarine, your pie crust will be unacceptable tough and not flaky or crisp.
  - Oil usually produces more tender pastry than solid fats when mixed by the conventional method, but the pastry may be crumbly and greasy.
- Salt adds flavor. A pastry made without salt is flat and flavorless.
- Water
  - Too much water the pastry is tough.
  - Too little water the pastry is crumbly and hard to roll.
  - Use ice water if your kitchen is warm to help keep the shortening cooler.
  - Milk can be substituted for water but it will make the pastry browner.
  - Using vinegar in place of part of the water will make a tender pastry.
  - Pastry made with hot water is not as flaky as those made with cold water. It has a cookie like texture - a mealy, rather than flaky texture.



## *Tips for Baking the Perfect Pie Crust:*

- Use the ingredients specified in the recipe; don't make changes or substitutes.
- Measure ingredients carefully
- Stir together the flour and salt, then cut in the shortening until the mixture resembles small peas.
- If you do not have a pastry blender try using 2 knives in a crisscross motion to cut in shortening.
- Add water gradually to the mixture, then gently toss it together just until it's evenly moistened.
- Flour the rolling surface just enough to keep the dough from sticking.
- Use ice water unless recipe specifies otherwise.
- For best results, use a pastry blender to cut in the shortening, a rolling pin with stockinet cover to roll out the dough and a pastry cloth to keep the dough from sticking.
- Roll the pastry to an even thickness. Try not to stretch it as you're transferring it to the pie plate. Loosely wrap the pastry around a rolling pin to transfer it to the pie plate. Carefully lift the rolling pin, then unroll the pastry in the center of the plate. Or, if desired, fold the pastry in quarters, carefully lift and center it in pie plate, and unfold.
- If pastry is to be prebaked without filling, lightly press pastry into pan so that there are no air pockets under crust; prick it with a fork to prevent it from puffing up. Prick both bottom and sides. Bake the pricked pastry in 450 degree oven for 10-12 minutes or until it is golden. Cool.
- For a more uniformly shaped pastry shell, after pricking the shell with a fork line it with foil and fill with dry beans to prevent the crust from puffing. (Or line pastry shell with a double thickness of heavy-duty foil; press down firmly but carefully). The weight of the beans or foil keeps the pastry in shape. Bake pastry in 450 degree oven for 5 minutes. Remove beans and foil, continue baking 5-7 minutes more or until pastry is golden.
- For baking, use heat-resistant glass, ceramic, or dull metal pans as these absorb heat so that crusts brown perfectly. Shiny metal pans reflect heat and will produce a soggy crust.
- Use the size pie plate or pan recommended in the recipe so that the filling and crust will fit. If the size isn't marked on the bottom of the pie plate you can check by measuring the top inside diameter.
- Preheat your oven according to manufacturer's directions, allowing 10-15 minutes.
- For more even baking, bake pies on the center rack of the oven. You can bake more than one pie at a time - just leave enough space between the pies and the sides of the oven to let air circulate.
- If you are making double crust pie, trim the edge of the bottom pastry after you pour in the filling so it doesn't pull the pastry down into the pie plate.

- Patch any cracks with a pastry scrap before adding the filling. Moisten the underside of the scrap with a little water so it stays in place.
- If the crust begins to brown too soon during baking, cover loosely with foil. (For single-crust pies, use a narrow strip of foil to cover the rim of the pie). To prevent the pastry edges from over browning, tear off a 12 inch square of foil. Fold it in quarters and cut a quarter circle off the folded corner ( about 3 inches from the tip). Unfold the foil and place it on the pie, slightly molding the foil over the edge.
- Avoid messy spills in the oven; set the pie plate on a baking sheet on the oven rack. The pan catches any juice if the pie bubbles over.
- After baking, cool your pie on a wire rack. Allowing the air to circulate under the pie prevents the crust from becoming soggy.
- To get a head start on your next pastry project, prepare your pastry as directed, but don't roll it out. Instead, flatten the pastry into a patty, place it in a freezer bag, and freeze for up to 2 months. When you are ready to use your pastry simply thaw overnight in the refrigerator.
- You also can roll pastry out and fit it into a pie plate or tart pan. Place the pastry in a freezer bag and freeze for up to 2 months. Frozen pastry shells can be baked without thawing, but you will need to use a freezer-to-oven pie plate and may need to add 5-10 minutes to the baking time.

### **Pie Crust Edges:**

- The edge that you put on your pie crust serves 2 purposes; to look good and to keep the pie filling sealed in. Making it look good is as easy as a few pinches, presses, tucks and twists.

### **Rope-shape Edge:**



- Trim and fold under the edge of the pastry for a single-crust, double-crust, or lattice-top pie. Then crimp around the edge of the pastry by pinching it. “When pinching, push forward on a slant with a bent finger and pull back with your thumb.

### **Flower Petal Edge:**



- Trim and fold under the edge of the pastry for a single-crust, double-crust, or lattice-top pie. Make a large scallop by placing your thumb flat against the inside pastry edge and pressing the dough around it with your other hand's thumb and index finger. Then lightly press the tines of a fork in the center of each scallop.

### **Cut Out Edge:**



- Line the plate with pastry, and trim pastry to the edge of the pie plate. Roll pastry scraps until they are thin. Use a knife or pastry cutter to cut the pastry scraps into desired shapes. Brush the edge of the pastry shell with water. Arrange the pastry cutouts on the edge of the pastry shell, and press lightly to secure.

### Twisted Edge:



- Line the pie plate with pastry, and trim pastry to the edge of the plate. Brush the edge of the pastry shell with water. Loosely twist two 1/2 inch wide strips of pastry dough around the edge of the pastry shell. As a strip runs out, seal another strip to it by pressing the ends together. Secure the twist by lightly pressing the bottom strip against the edge of the pastry shell.

### Scalloped Edge:



- To create a scalloped edge, use a round - bowled measuring tablespoon to press against thumb and index finger of other hand.

### Lattice Pie Top:

- Line pie pan with pastry leaving 1" overhang. Cut rolled pastry for top crust in strips 1/2 inch wide. Add filling to pastry lined pan. Moisten rim of pie with water and lay half of the strips over the pie about 1 inch apart. Repeat with remaining strips, placing them in opposite direction in a diamond or square pattern. Trim strips even with pie edge. Turn bottom crust's overhang up over rim and ends of strips. Press firmly all around to seal strips to rim. Flute edges as desired.

### Fancy Lattice Top:

- Twist strips of pastry place over pie to make the lattice; cut strips with rippled pastry wheel to give a pretty edge.

### Woven lattice Top:

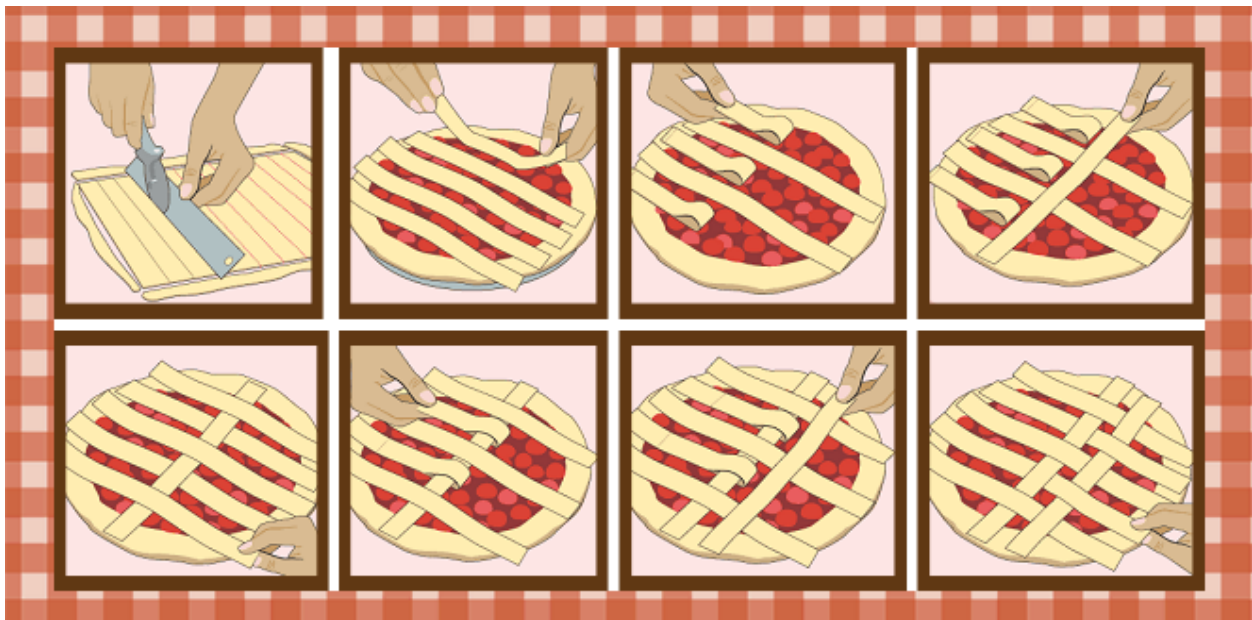
- Lay half the pastry strips one inch apart over the filled pie. Weave the first across strip through the center. Add another cross strip, first folding back every other strip to help in weaving crosswise strips over and under. Continue weaving until lattice is complete. Fold lower crust over pastry strips, press firmly around the edge to seal strips to the rim. Flute edge as desired. You may find it easier to weave lattice on waxed paper, lifting it on to pie.





## Lattice-Top Pie:

1. Prepare pastry for double-crust pie. Roll out dough for bottom crust and line pie plate. Trim bottom crust to 1/2 inch beyond edge of pie plate. Roll out second ball of dough. Cut dough into 1/2 to 3/4 inch strips with a pastry wheel or sharp knife. Use a ruler to keep strips straight.
2. Place the desired fruit pie filling in the bottom pastry shell. Carefully lay half of the cut strips atop the filled pie, spacing strips at 1-inch intervals and all in the same direction, as shown.
3. Carefully fold back alternate strips already in place atop fruit filling. Place another cut pastry strip in center of pie at right angles to the pastry strips that are already in place, as shown.
4. Slowly unfold the folded pastry strips and fold back the strips that were straight. Add another pastry strip at right angles to the folded strips and 1 inch away from the last strip, as shown. Repeat this weaving process till the lattice top is completed.
5. Trim the pastry strips even with the bottom crust. Fold bottom pastry over the lattice strips to build up the edge. Seal and flute edge.
6. Brush pastry with milk and sprinkle with some granulated sugar before baking, if desired. Adjust foil. Bake as directed. For an easy lattice, cut pastry into 1/2 inch strips. Lay half the strips 1 inch apart across pie (twist strips, if desired). Arrange remaining strips in diamond-shaped pattern, as shown. Press ends of strips into rim of crust. Fold bottom pastry over the lattice strips; seal and flute.



## Fork Trim:

- Make a high standing rim. With 4 tined fork, press pastry to rim at 1/2 inch intervals.

## Coin:

- Trim overhand even with pie pan. Cut circles the size of pennies from pastry scraps with toy cookie cutter, thimble or bottle cap. Moisten with cold water and place circles on rim, overlapping them slightly. Press lightly to rim. For one crust pies.

## Pretty Tops:

- **Sparkle tops:** Moisten top crust with cold water, using fingers. Then sprinkle evenly with a little sugar.
- **Shiny tops:** Brush top crust lightly with beaten egg or egg yolk, cream, milk, undiluted evaporated milk or melted butter, shortening, or salad oil. Sprinkle with sugar if desired.
- **Decorative Vents:** Use tin cookie cutters or cut around homemade patterns with sharp knife to make steam vents in the shape of the fruit in the pie. Cherries, apples or a cluster of grapes, for instance.
- **Initial tops:** Cut initials with a knife or prick them with a fork of steam vents. A for apple, B for blueberry, etc.

## Crumb Crusts:

- Crumb crusts are best for freezer pies because they are not as brittle as a standard pastry. A frozen crumb crust becomes firmer.
- Four 2 1/2 inch graham crackers will yield about 1/4 cup crumbs.
- Chilling the crust after baking hardens the butter and makes a firmer crust.
- For a non-stick crumb crust, wrap a hot, wet towel under the bottom and around the sides of the pie plate just before serving the pie. Hold the towel against the plate for a few minutes; this loosens the crust so it will slip out easily.

CRUST	CRUMBS	MELTED BUTTER	SUGAR	OTHER INGREDIENTS	OVEN TEMP.	BAKING TIME
Graham-Cracker	1 1/4 cups graham-cracker crumbs	1/3 cup	1/4 cup		375F (190C)	8 minutes
Gingersnap	1 1/4 cups gingersnap crumbs	1/3 cup	1/4 cup		375F (190C)	8 minutes
Vanilla-wafer	1 1/2 cups vanilla-wafer crumbs	1/3 cup	1/4 cup		375F (190C)	8 minutes
Nutty-graham	1 cup graham-cracker crumbs	1/3 cup	1/4 cup	1/3 cup finely chopped walnuts or pecans	375F (190C)	8 minutes
Coconut-graham	1 cup graham-cracker crumbs	1/3 cup	1/4 cup	1/2 cup flaked or shredded coconut	375F (190C)	8 minutes
Coconut-graham	2 cups flaked or shredded coconut	1/4 cup			325F (190C)	8 minutes
Chocolate-cookie	1 1/2 cups chocolate cookie crumbs	1/3 cup	2 Tbsp.		375F (190C)	8 minutes

Preheat oven. Combine all ingredients in a medium bowl. Use a spoon to mix well. Spread mixture evenly over bottom of a 9 inch pan. Use a smaller pie pan, the back of a large spoon, a custard cup of your hands to press mixture against bottom and up sides of pan 1/2 inch higher than rim of pan. Bake and cool. Makes one 9 inch crust.

# *Common Difficulties with Pastry*

POOR CHARACTERISTIC	REASON WHY
Tough crust	Insufficient fat Too much water Over mixing Too much flour on molding board Kneading
Crumbly crust	Too little water Too much fat Self rising flour used Insufficient mixing
Crust does not brown	Too little fat Too much water Too much flour on board Over mixed Rolled too thick Oven temperature too low
Soggy lower crust	Filling too moist Bottom crust torn or broken Soaked before baking starts Using shiny pie pan Placing pie pan on cookie sheet or aluminum foil Oven temperature too low or time too short
Shrinks in pan	Unbalanced recipe Too much handling Pastry stretched tightly in pan Dough stored too long in refrigerator Dough uneven in thickness
Pastry shell blisters	Pastry fitted too tightly in pan Not pricked enough Oven temperature too low



## PERFECT PIE CRUST

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 1/4 cup shortening
- 1 whole egg
- 1/2 cup water
- 1 tablespoon vinegar

Bake at 400 F for 10-12 minutes. Makes 2 double crusted pie shells.

1. Cut shortening into flour and salt mixture with a pastry blender until particles resemble coarse crumbs or small peas.
2. Combine water, egg and vinegar. Sprinkle over flour mixture while stirring with a fork, until particles are just moist enough to cling together and form a ball. You may not need all the water mixture.
3. Add just the right amount of water. Too little makes a dry dough which is hard to roll out and cracks around the edge. Too much makes a sticky dough. Either will result in tough pastry.
4. Flour pastry cloth evenly, working in some flour with your hands. Cloth or stocking covered rolling pin reduces amount of flour and handling need and makes a tender pastry.
5. Form dough into ball. Flatten to 1/2 inch. Roll out on floured pastry cloth to scant 1/8 inch thick circle, at least 2 inches larger than inverted pie plate.
6. To maintain a circular shape and even thickness, roll from the center to edge in all directions.
7. Transfer rolled out pastry to pie plate by folding in half, then in half again; lift carefully to plate.
8. Unfold pastry and fit loosely into plate. Pat out air pockets on bottom. Lift sides and let fall gently into bend of plate. Do not stretch dough or it will shrink.  
  
Instead of folding pastry simply wrap pastry around the rolling pin. Unroll onto the pie plate. Ease pastry into pie plate, being careful not to stretch it.
9. For single crust pastry, trim pastry to 1/2 inch beyond edge of plate. Fold under extra pastry and crimp edges and bake as directed in recipes. Before baking prick bottom and sides of pastry with fork. Bake in a 450 degree oven for 10 - 12 minutes or until golden.
10. For a double crust pie, trim top crust 1/2 inch beyond edge of plate. Fold top crust under bottom pastry. Seal, crimp edge. Bake as directed in recipe.

## FRUIT PIES



- A mixture of sugar and a thickening agent such as flour, cornstarch, or tapioca is combined with the fruit.

- Cornstarch or tapioca produces a clearer filling than flour, but some people prefer the flavor of flour. The amounts of sugar and thickening depend upon the sweetness and juiciness of the fruit. One tablespoon cornstarch is equal to 2 tablespoons flour.

- A product called Clear Jel is one of the best pie filling thickeners. This is a modified food starch that produces the correct thickening. Other starches, such as corn starch, break down and result in a runny filling. To order Clear Jel call Home Canning Essentials (Alltrista) at 1-800-392-2575 or Sweet Celebrations at 1-800-328-6722.

Another thickening product is available in the King Arthur's Baking Catalog called pie filling enhancer. This product is a blend of Clear Jel, fine sugar that keeps the Clear Jel from clumping and ascorbic acid, to highlight the flavor the fruit. Use 1/4 to 1/2 cup of enhancer in your favorite apple, blueberry, cherry, pear, strawberry-rhubarb or other fruit pie. This thickener is not gluey, not cloudy, just smooth and not watery. To order a free catalog call 1-800-827-6836.

- Sometimes for berries 1 cup of sugar is enough, but if berries are very tart or not fully

ripe you may need as much as 3 cups. 1 1/3 cup sugar is the average amount.

- Some like to add spice to berry pies; usually 1/3 tsp. cinnamon or 1/4 tsp. cloves or nutmeg.
- One to two tablespoons lemon juice can be added to berry pie filling to bring out the best flavor.
- Be sure to use either a double-crust or lattice-top as the recipe specifies. It won't work to substitute one for the other because some fillings require the venting of the lattice; others, such as apples, benefit from steaming under a top crust.
- You can use either fresh or frozen fruit in your pie. Be sure to mix frozen fruit with the sugar-flour mixture; let it thaw for 15 to 30 minutes - until the fruit is partially thawed but still icy-before transferring it to a pastry lined plate. Pies made with frozen fruit will take a little longer to bake. Before the foil is removed, bake a pie made with frozen fruit in a 375 degree oven about 50 minutes (rather than 25). Remove the foil and continue baking until the pie is done (usually 20 to 30 minutes longer).
- Place a pizza pan or baking sheet under a double crust fruit pie when you put it in the oven to catch any filling that bubble over.
- Fruit pies need to bubble in the center to be properly cooked - otherwise the thickener won't be clear. To see if the pie is done, make a small hole in the top crust and spoon out some of the juice. If the juice is clear, the pie is done. If it's cloudy, bake the pie a little longer.
- Allow fruit pies to cool 3-4 hours before serving so the pieces don't fall apart when you cut it.



#### ALL AMERICAN PIE:

Which pie is the number one American favorite? You guessed it-apple pie. Apple pies date back to 14th Century England when apple filling was substituted in traditional meat pies. The Pilgrims brought apples to America and served apple pie for breakfast. In Colonial America, apple pie was served with, not after, the main course at lunch or dinner.



#### CHRISTMAS PIE:

Mincemeat pie has been a traditional Christmas pie since the 13th century. These early pies were baked in a rectangular crust that symbolized the manger. The spices were symbolic of the wise men's gifts. For good luck, it was a custom to eat a mincemeat pie each day for the 12 days between Christmas and the Twelfth Night.

### BASIC FRUIT PIE

Prepare favorite pastry for double crust 9" pie. To make filling: mix together dry ingredients. Toss with fruit and lemon juice (1 -2 Tbsp.), if used. Turn into pastry-lined pie plate. Dot with margarine. Make several slits in top crust. Cover pie with pastry; seal and flute edge. Bake as directed or until crust is browned.

#### RHUBARB

1 1/4 cups sugar  
 1/4 cup corn starch  
 2 tsp. orange rind  
 1/4 tsp. salt  
 5 cups 1-inch pieces rhubarb  
 1 Tbsp. margarine

Bake in 425 oven 45 minutes. Note: 2 (1 lb., 4 oz) pkgs. Frozen rhubarb thawed and drained, may be substituted for fresh.

#### PINEAPPLE

3/4 cup sugar  
 1/4 cup corn starch  
 1/4 tsp. salt  
 1/4 tsp. nutmeg  
 4 cups drained, diced, ripe, fresh pineapple  
 1 Tbsp. margarine

Bake in 425 oven 15 minutes; reduce to 350 and bake 40 minutes longer.

#### CHERRY

3/4 cup sugar  
 3 Tbsp. corn starch  
 1/2 tsp. salt  
 2 cans (1 lb. each) pitted sour red cherries, drained with 1/3 cup juice reserved  
 1/4 tsp. almond extract  
 1 Tbsp. margarine

Mix dry ingredients; too with cherries, juice and almond extract. Bake in 425 oven 15 minutes; reduce to 350 and bake 40 minutes.

#### PEACH

3/4 cup sugar  
 2 1/2 Tbsp. corn starch  
 1/2 tsp. cinnamon  
 6 cups sliced, peeled, pitted peaches  
 1 Tbsp. lemon juice  
 1 Tbsp. margarine

Bake in 425 oven 40 minutes.

### APPLE

- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1 Tbsp. corn starch
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 6 cups sliced, pared, cored apples
- 1 Tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 Tbsp. margarine

Bake in 425 oven 50 minutes.

### BLUEBERRY

- 1 cup sugar
- 2 1/2 Tbsp. cornstarch
- 4 cups blueberries
- 1 Tbs. margarine

Bake in 425 oven 40 minutes.

### PEAR

- 1/2 cup firmly packed dark brown sugar
- 3 Tbsp. corn starch
- 1/2 tsp. ginger
- 1/8 tsp. salt
- 4 1/2 cups thinly sliced, pared, cored ripe pears
- 1 Tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 Tbsp. margarine

Bake in 425 oven 15 minutes, reduce to 350 and bake 40 minutes longer.

### STRAWBERRY

- 1 cup sugar
- 2 1/2 Tbsp. corn starch
- 4 cups strawberries, hulled and halved
- 1 Tbsp. margarine

Bake in 425 oven 40 minutes.

### MICROWAVE FRENCH APPLE PIE

- 1 microwaved 9-inch pastry shell, with high fluted edge.

#### Filling:

- 5-6 cups peeled, sliced apples
- 1 Tbsp. lemon juice
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 Tbsp. flour
- 1/2 tsp. cinnamon or 1/4 tsp. nutmeg

#### Topping:

- 1/4 cup butter or margarine
- 1/2 cup flour
- 1/4 cup brown or granulated sugar
- 1/2 tsp. nutmeg

Toss filling ingredients together. Pile high in pastry shell. Cut butter into other topping ingredients until crumbly. Sprinkle evenly over filling. Place wax paper under plate while microwaving. Microwave at high 8 minutes. Rotate 1/2 turn. Microwave 6 to 10 minutes until apples are tender.

### CHERRY PIE

- 1 1/4 - 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 2 Tbsp. quick-cooking tapioca
- 5 cups fresh or frozen unsweetened pitted tart red cherries
- 1/4 tsp. almond extract
- 1 recipe Pastry for Double-Crust Pie

In a large mixing bowl stir together sugar and tapioca. Add cherries and almond extract. Gently toss to coat. Let mixture stand about 15 minutes or until a syrup forms, stirring occasionally. (If using frozen fruit, let mixture stand about 1 hour.)

Meanwhile, prepare and roll out pastry. Line a 9-inch pie plate with half of the pastry; set aside.

Stir cherry mixture. Transfer cherry mixture to pastry-lined pie plate. Trim pastry to edge of pie plate. Cut slits in remaining pastry; place on filling and seal. Crimp edge as desired.

To prevent overbrowning, cover edge of the pie with foil. Bake in a 375 oven for 25 minutes for fresh fruit (50 minutes for frozen fruit). Remove foil. Bake for 25 to 35 minutes more for fresh fruit (about 30 minutes more for frozen fruit) or until top is golden. Cool completely on a wire rack.

**Lattice Cherry Pie:** Prepare as above, except substitute 1 recipe pastry for lattice-top pie.

## CUSTARD PIES

Custard pies consist of an egg and milk moisture in which the egg cooks and thus thickens the pie during baking. The best custard pies are smooth and velvety. They may look difficult, but they are easy to make.

- Use a wire whisk to thoroughly mix the filling ingredients.
- Avoid messy spills by placing the pie shell on the oven rack, then pouring in the liquid pie filling.
- When baking pumpkin and other custard type pies, start with the higher temperature to help “set” the crust, preventing it from getting soggy. Switch to the lower temperature, allowing the pie to bake gradually and help prevent it from burning.
- To check for doneness after baking for the recommended time, insert a knife off-center; if it comes out clean with no custard filling clinging to it, the pie is done. Or, gently shake the pie. If that area that appears to be liquid is less than the size of a quarter, the pie is done. It will continue to set after it is removed from the oven.
- Overcooking custard mixtures results in an undesirable product. When a baked custard pie overcooks, tiny bubbles appear around the edge of the pie, and there is a separation of liquid from solid when custard is cut.
- After the custard pie cools to room temperature, always cover and refrigerate it if it’s to be stored for any length of time before serving. Cover and chill to after serving as well.
- To avoid bubbles on the surface of custard pies, beat the filling mixture only until it is mixed well. Do not beat so hard that the mixture becomes foamy.

The problem with milk-based custard pies is a soggy crust on the bottom of a pie. Here are 2 solutions:

1. Use a heavy freezer to oven glass baking dish. They retain the heat longer than metal does and gives a brown well-cooked bottom crust.
2. Bake the unfilled crust for about 5 minutes. Do not prick the crust before baking it and cool it for 15 minutes before adding filling. After the crust has been filled, bake the pie as directed in the recipe. It may be necessary to cover edge with foil to prevent over browning.





# CREAM PIES

The filling for a cream pie is cooked before it goes into a baked pastry shell.

After cooling pies to room temperature, cover and refrigerate any with fillings containing eggs or dairy products.

To cover a meringue-topped pie, insert several toothpicks halfway into the surface of the meringue to hold wrap away from pie. Loosely cover with clear plastic wrap and chill to store (After the meringue is refrigerated, it will be somewhat rubbery).

## Tips to Make a Smooth Cream Filling:

For a smooth consistency in cream fillings be sure to:

1. Mix sugar and cornstarch thoroughly before adding liquid. This separates the starch granules and helps prevent lumping.
2. Stir constantly when cooking filling to prevent scorching. Don't stir too quickly or the mixture will break down and won't thicken.
3. Boil 2 minutes so starch will cook thoroughly and filling won't taste starchy.
4. Be sure to add at least half of the hot cornstarch mixture to egg yolks to prevent thinning after filling is cool.
5. Never add egg yolks directly to hot mixture. Particles of cooked egg will result.
6. Use a heavy saucepan.
7. If butter or margarine is added to the filling, stir it very gently, or the mixture will break down and become thin.



## Tips for Meringues:

1. Avoid using plastic bowls and utensils when possible because plastic attracts fat.
2. Older eggs increase volume in meringue.
3. Use egg whites that are room temperature. To speed this up, place the bowl containing the egg whites in another bowl containing about 1 inch of warm water.
4. Avoid getting any yolk into the bowl of whites. If even a drop of yolk is in the egg whites, they will not beat to the desired stiffness.
5. Whip egg whites till frothy, then add cream of tartar. Beat egg whites until soft peaks form. Then add sugar (1 tablespoon at a time) beating well after each addition. Beat until stiff but not rigid.
6. Beat until sugar dissolves to help prevent beading (those brown sugar drips on top). To test, rub some meringue between your fingers to see if it is still grain. The grains are undissolved sugar.
7. Meringues are more tender when beaten at a high speed throughout beating time.
8. Cream of tartar increases foam stability to heat.
9. For less leakage and slippage, put meringues on top of hot fillings sealing it well by pushing it unto the edge of the fluted pastry.
10. Put spoonfuls of meringue on filling so that it touches the edge of crust all around. This prevents shrinkage. Also if filling is not covered completely, the oven heat may cause it to weep.
11. Meringue may be topped with coconut, slivered almonds or mini chocolate chips before baking.
12. Bake Meringues for 12-15 minutes at 350 degrees or until peaks are brown. Too long for baking causes weeping.
13. Cool away from drafts in a warm place to avoid shrinkage.
14. For ease in cutting meringue, dip knife in cold water.
15. You can substitute 1 tsp. lemon juice for cream of tartar in meringues. The acid gives the same result.

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### Trouble Shooting Guide to Meringues:

If your meringue has one of the following problems, here's the solution:

#### If your Meringue is Low in Volume:

- Start adding the sugar to the egg whites as soon as soft peaks form (tips bend over slightly).
- After adding the sugar, beat till stiff peaks form and the sugar is completely dissolved.

#### If your Meringue Shrinks:

- Beat meringue till stiff peaks form and sugar is completely dissolved.

#### If your Meringue Beads or Weeps:

- Be sure the oven temperature is not too low.

#### If your Meringue Leaks:

- Spread the meringue on the filling while filling is still hot, sealing it well to edges of the pastry.

### Sky High No Weep Meringue

- 1 Tbsp. cornstarch
  - 3 egg whites
  - 7 Tbsp sugar
  - 1/2 cup cold water
  - 1/4 tsp. cream of tartar
  - 1 tsp. vanilla
1. Dissolve cornstarch in cold water. Cook until clear, cool.
  2. In a medium mixing bowl beat the egg whites until they are frothy.
  3. Add cream of tartar and beat egg whites until soft peaks form.
  4. Beat in cooled cornstarch paste.
  5. Add sugar ( 1 Tbsp. at a time) and beat until stiff and sugar is dissolved.
  6. Add vanilla and mix.
  7. Immediately spread meringue over pie, carefully sealing to edge of pastry to prevent shrinkage.
  8. Bake at 350F for 12-15 minutes or until golden brown.

## Store or Freeze your Pie Safely:

- Fruit pies may stand at room temperature for 24 hours. Cover and refrigerate for longer storage.
- Custard and cream pies should be served as soon as they are cool, or covered lightly with plastic wrap and refrigerated for up to 2 days. Don't freeze cream or custard pies.
- To freeze unbaked fruit pies, treat any light colored fruit with an ascorbic-acid color keeper.
- Assemble the pie in a metal or freeze-to-oven pie plate. Place it in a freezer bag; seal, label and freeze. Frozen pies should be used within 2-4 months. To bake a frozen pie, unwrap it and cover with foil. Bake in a 450 F oven for 15 minutes; reduce the temperature to 357 F and bake another 15 minutes. Uncover and continue baking for 55-60 minutes more or until crust is golden and filling is bubbly.
- To freeze baked fruit pies, bake and cool the pie completely. Place it in a freezer bag, seal, label,

## Refrigerator Pies - Chiffon Pies

Chiffon pies can be tricky, so it's important to fully understand the technique. For a smooth pie, the gelatin needs to be of the proper consistency.

1. Combine the gelatin with other ingredients and heat as recipe directs until the gelatin dissolves and the liquid is clear. The gelatin must be completely dissolved for the mixture to thicken evenly.
2. Pour the hot gelatin mixture into a metal bowl and chill in the refrigerator or in another bowl of iced water. Metal helps the mixture cool because it conducts the heat to the outside more quickly than other materials.
3. Chill the gelatin mixture until it has the consistency of unbeaten egg whites. Then remove from the refrigerator or bowl of iced water and let stand at room temperature while you beat the egg whites; this will prevent the gelatin from becoming too thick.
4. Beat the egg whites in another bowl until foamy. Add the sugar very gradually, beating at high speed, until the mixture forms stiff, glossy peaks that stand up straight and don't lop over when you raise the beaters. Rub some of the mixture between your fingers to see whether the sugar is dissolved. If the texture

feels grainy, continue beating until it's smooth.

5. Check the gelatin mixture by lifting a spoonful and dropping it back into the bowl; it should form a soft mound on top, if it doesn't, chill the mixture until it thickens and test it again.
6. To fold the gelatin mixture into the egg white mixture, cut down through the mixture with a rubber spatula, scraping across the bottom of the bowl. Then bring the spatula up and over, close to the surface. Repeat this circular down-up and over motion until the two mixtures are blended.
7. If your recipe contains heavy cream, whip it in another bowl until stiff peaks form. The peaks should mound slightly when the beaters are raised. Fold the egg white gelatin mixture into the whipped cream.
8. Chill the filling until it mounds well when spooned, and turn it into a baked pie shell. Cover with a plastic wrap or waxed paper and chill several hours or overnight until set.

