

Top Tips for Great Pie Crust

- Use a glass or dull-metal pie plate for best results. Aluminum pie plates prevent browning. Dark pans may cause too much browning.
- Cover edges of crust with a ring of aluminum foil after the first 15 minutes of baking to prevent edges from getting too brown. To make the ring, cut a 12 inch (30 cm) square piece of foil. Cut out a 7 inch (17 cm) circle from the centre. Place on top of the pie.
- Add vinegar to the crust ingredients to keep the crust tender.
- Do not over-mix ingredients or knead dough too much. Overworking leads to gluten formation which will make the dough tough.
- Start baking in a very hot oven for the first 15 minutes and then reduce the heat to finish baking. This will help the fat to create flaky pockets.
- Slice your apples thin or precook the filling to avoid a gap between the filling and the top crust. Smaller pieces reduce air pockets. Precooking shrinks the fruit by reducing the water content.
- To prevent a soggy bottom: coat the bottom of the pie crust with softened butter, an egg wash (1 egg beaten with 1 tbsp (15 ml) water), or with fine crumbs such as graham wafers or gingerbread cookies. Keep the crust as cold as possible, cool the pie filling before pouring into the crust and bake at a high temperature.
- Cool pie for 2 hours before slicing to allow the filling to set properly.
- Cut at least 5 vents into the top pie crust to allow steam to escape.
- Line the bottom of your oven with aluminum foil to catch any spills.
- If using frozen fruit, thaw just until pieces separate. If the frozen fruit has too many ice crystals, place in a colander and shake over a sink. The ice crystals should fall through the holes, leaving the fruit intact. Add an extra 5 to 15 minutes to your baking time.
- If baking a frozen pie, add 10-20 minutes to baking time.
- For a shiny, brown crust, brush top with beaten egg.
- For a golden brown - but not shiny crust, brush top with milk or cream.
- Hide any leftovers! If you don't, your pie will magically disappear before you have a chance to have a second piece.