

DOUGH FOR A STANDARD DOUBLE CRUST OR 14 STRIP LATTICE 9 INCH PIE

MAKES 22 OUNCES/624 GRAMS

	VOLUME	WEIGHT	
unsalted butter, cold	12 tablespoons (1½ sticks)	6 ounces	170 grams
pastry flour (or bleached all-purpose flour)	2½ cups plus 1 tablespoon (or 2⅔ cups plus 1 tablespoon), lightly spooned into the cup and leveled off	10.2 ounces	290 grams
fine sea salt	½ teaspoon	.	3 grams
baking powder (use only an aluminum free variety; see page 518)	¼ teaspoon	.	1.1 grams
cream cheese, cold	½ cup	4.5 ounces	128 grams
heavy cream	3 tablespoons (44 ml)	1.5 ounces	43 grams
cider vinegar	1 tablespoon (15 ml)	.	.

MAKE THE DOUGH FOR THE PIE CRUSTS

FOOD PROCESSOR METHOD Cut the butter into small (about ½ inch) cubes. Wrap it in plastic wrap and freeze it until frozen solid, at least 30 minutes.

In a gallon-size reclosable freezer bag, place the flour, salt, and baking powder and freeze for at least 30 minutes. In the food processor, place the flour mixture. Cut the cream cheese into 3 or 4 pieces and add it to the flour. Process for about 20 seconds, or until the mixture resembles coarse meal. Add the frozen butter cubes and pulse until none of the cubes is larger than the size of peas. (Toss with a fork to see the size better.) Remove the cover and add the cream and vinegar. Pulse until most of the butter is reduced to the size of small peas. The mixture will be in particles and will not hold together. Spoon it into the plastic bag or, wearing latex gloves (which help to prevent sticking), empty it onto the counter. (For a double crust pie, it is easiest to divide the mixture in half. Spoon one-half into the bag, knead as described below, and then repeat with the second half.)

Hold either side of the bag opening and alternate using the heel of your hand and your knuckles to knead and press the mixture, from the outside of the bag, until most of the mixture holds together in one piece. Cut open the bag and empty the dough onto a large sheet of plastic wrap. Use the plastic wrap to finish kneading together the dough just until it feels slightly stretchy when pulled. (If using latex gloves, use the heel of your hand to push and flatten the dough against the counter.)

DIVIDE THE DOUGH For a pie shell and standard 10 strip lattice, divide the dough into two-thirds and one-third. Use about 9.5 ounces/269 grams for the shell and the rest for the lattice, flattening the smaller part into a rectangle. Wrap each piece and refrigerate for 45 minutes or up to 2 days.

For a double crust or 14 strip lattice pie, divide the dough into 2 equal pieces, about 11 ounces/312 grams each. Wrap each piece and refrigerate for 45 minutes or up to 2 days.

For an extra flaky pie crust approaching puff pastry but more tender, roll the dough into a rectangle and give it a business letter fold (fold it into thirds). Roll it again to flatten it and make it a fairly even square. Wrap the dough, flatten it into a disc (or 2 discs for a double crust or lattice pie), and refrigerate for 45 minutes or up to 2 days.

HAND METHOD Place a medium mixing bowl in the freezer to chill. Cut the butter into small (about ½ inch) cubes. Wrap it in plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.

Place the flour, salt, and baking powder in a medium bowl and whisk to combine. Add the cream cheese and rub the mixture between your fingers to blend the cream cheese into the flour until it resembles coarse meal. Spoon the mixture, together with the cold butter, into a gallon-size reclosable freezer bag. Express any air from the bag and close it. Use a rolling pin to flatten the butter into thin flakes. Place the bag in the freezer for at least 10 minutes, or until the butter is very firm. Transfer the mixture to the chilled bowl, scraping the sides of the bag. Set the bag aside. Sprinkle the mixture with the cream and vinegar, tossing lightly with a silicone spatula. Spoon the mixture back into the plastic bag. (For a double crust pie, it is easiest to divide the mixture in half. Spoon one-half into the bag, knead as described below, and then repeat with the second half.)

Hold either side of the bag opening and alternate using the heel of your hand and your knuckles to knead and press the mixture, from the outside of the bag, until it holds together in one piece and feels slightly stretchy when pulled.

DIVIDE THE DOUGH For a pie shell and 10 strip lattice, divide the dough into two-thirds and one-third. Use about 9.5 ounces/269 grams for the shell and the rest for the lattice, flattening the smaller part into a rectangle. Wrap each piece and refrigerate for 45 minutes or up to 2 days.

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STORE Refrigerated, up to 2 days; frozen, 3 months.

ROLL THE DOUGH The ideal temperature for rolling dough is 60°F/16°C, which is the temperature of most wine cellars. At this temperature, the dough is malleable enough to roll without cracking, but cool enough to keep the butter from softening.

My favorite surface on which to roll the dough is the Magic Dough pastry mat (see page 541). Alternatively, roll the dough on top of two large sheets of overlapping plastic wrap, preferably Freeze-Tite (see page 541), or a pastry cloth rubbed with flour. (If using plastic wrap, two or three times during rolling, flip the dough over, lift off the plastic wrap to prevent it from creasing into the dough, and dust the dough lightly with flour, if needed.) For the top of the dough, a pastry sleeve, slipped onto the rolling pin and rubbed with flour, is also a great aid in keeping the dough from sticking. Alternatively, set two overlapping sheets of plastic wrap on top of the dough. If the dough softens while rolling and becomes sticky, slip a large baking sheet under the mat, cover the dough with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for about 10 minutes before continuing to roll it.

Specially designed rubber bands that fit over the ends of a rolling pin and serve as spacers between the counter and rolling pin are great for ensuring an evenly rolled crust. (Note that if stretching them to fit larger rolling pins, the bands will thin, resulting in less space between the pin and the rolling surface.) My preference is to roll the dough $\frac{1}{8}$ inch thick or slightly less. Roll the dough from the center outward, using a firm, steady pressure. Avoid pressing down on the edges, which would make them too thin. Lift the dough from time to time as you are rolling and add flour as necessary to keep it from sticking. Before measuring the dough, make sure to lift it from the surface to allow it to shrink in so that it doesn't retract when set in the pie plate.

CUT THE DOUGH AND LINE THE PIE PLATE It's easier to shape the dough evenly and to the right size for the pie plate before you transfer the dough to the pie plate. To determine the ideal size, measure your pie plate. Use a flexible tape measure and start at one inside edge, not including the rim. Go down the side, across the bottom, and up the other side. Then measure the rim. Enough dough is needed to make a decorative crimped border, but if it is too thick, it will droop and/or not bake through.

For a single crust pie, a double thickness border is desirable, so multiply the size of the rim by 4. For a lattice pie, multiply the size of the rim by 3. For a double crust pie, multiply the size of the rim by 2. To cut a round disc of dough, use an expandable flan ring or make a cardboard template. Cut out the dough for the bottom crust. To fit it into the pie plate, fold the dough gently into fourths, position the point in the center of the pan, and gently unfold it. Ease the dough into place, but do not stretch it or it will shrink during baking.

If making a lattice, after cutting the dough for the bottom crust, add any scraps to the dough reserved for the lattice by layering the strips on top of it. When cutting lattice strips, remember that they should extend $\frac{1}{2}$ inch over the edge of the pie plate so that they can be tucked under the bottom crust, which has a thinner border than a single crust pie in order to accommodate the extra layers of dough from the lattice strips.

For a double crust pie, when lining the pie plate, the bottom crust should come to the outer edge of the pie plate. When draping the top crust over the filling, the crust will extend far enough so that it can be tucked under the bottom crust, pressed down, and fluted decoratively, if desired.

MAKE A BORDER For a rustic style, simply press the dough down with your fingers. Alternatively, use the tines of a fork or crimp the dough with your fingers. If the dough softens, either refrigerate it until firm or dip your fingers in flour.

Crimping pie crust edges.



FRUIT PIES AND TARTS

LUSCIOUS APPLE PIE

SERVES 8

OVEN TEMPERATURE 425°F/220°C

BAKING TIME 45 to 55 minutes

A commenter on my blog came up with the idea to add thickened apple cider to the apples in an apple pie to make more sauce in the filling—a request from her husband. I tried the idea and love the luscious texture and added flavor the apple cider gives to the apples. I still like to concentrate the apples' juices to keep the bottom of the crust from getting soggy and to add a wonderful caramel undertone to the filling.

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT One 9 inch pie plate | An expandable flan ring or 12 inch round cardboard template | A baking stone or baking sheet | A foil ring to protect the edges of the crust

PERFECT FLAKY AND TENDER CREAM CHEESE PIE CRUST

	VOLUME	WEIGHT	
dough for a standard double crust 9 inch pie (page 189)	.	22 ounces	624 grams

ROLL THE DOUGH FOR THE BOTTOM CRUST Remove the dough for the bottom crust from the refrigerator. If necessary, let it sit for about 10 minutes, or until it is malleable enough to roll.

On a floured pastry cloth, pastry mat, or between two sheets of lightly floured plastic wrap, roll the dough into a ⅛ inch thick disc, 12 inches in diameter or large enough to line the bottom of the pie plate and extend slightly past the edge of the rim. Lift the dough from time to time and add flour as necessary to keep it from sticking. Before measuring the dough, make sure to lift it from the surface to allow it to shrink in so that it doesn't retract when set in the pie plate. Use the expandable flan ring, or a small sharp knife with the cardboard template as a guide, to cut a 12 inch disc of dough.

LINE THE PIE PLATE Transfer the dough to the pie plate, easing it into place. If necessary, trim the edge almost even with the edge of the plate. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for a minimum of 30 minutes or up to 3 hours.