

# Foolproof Classic Pie Crust

Poetry & Pies

**prep time:** 10-15 minutes

**chill time:** 1 hour, 30 minutes

**total time:** 1 hour, 45 minutes (plus bake time, varies by recipe)

**servings:** 8-12 (for one 8"-10" pie--see note for a double or lattice crust)



## Ingredients\*

- 1 ¼ cups (170g) flour, plus more as needed
- 1 tablespoon (13g) sugar (optional)
- ¼ teaspoon (2) finely ground sea salt (or ½ teaspoon table salt)
- 4 tablespoons (46g) vegetable shortening, diced and chilled
- 6 tablespoons (85g) unsalted European butter, chilled
- 3-6 tablespoons (30-60g) iced water or vodka
- see note for variation options

## Instructions

1. First, prep your fats. Dice the shortening and put in the fridge. Use a [vegetable peeler](#) to shave super thin squares of the butter, peeling along the end (not lengthwise). Don't worry if you don't get a perfect square each time--it's fine to have smaller pieces as long as they're all nice and thin. Spread these pieces on a cookie sheet and freeze at least 10 minutes.
2. Blend your flour, sugar, salt, and optional mix-ins in a large mixing bowl. If your sugar is raw or large-grain (such as organic sugar), you may want to pulse it a few times in a food processor.
3. Add diced shortening. Using a [pastry blender](#) (or your hands or a food processor), cut in the shortening until it is a sandy texture.
4. Add in the frozen, thinly peeled butter. Toss gently to coat. Break up any pieces that stuck together. *Note: if you used a food processor in the previous step, be sure to dump everything into a mixing bowl for the rest of the steps.*

5. Sprinkle water, one tablespoon at a time, over the dough. Gently stir in a tossing motion (avoid pressing the dough down too much), until blended after each addition. A lot of the butter will naturally break up into halves or quarters of the squares you made as you do this, but if it's staying in large squares, you'll want to break those up as you go so you don't have dozens of large pieces. Also, be sure to stir well before adding more water, so that you don't add too much. Rarely do I need all 6 tablespoons (usually only if it's really dry out).
6. Once the dough can stick together when pressed against the side of the bowl, pour out onto a clean surface and gently shape into a 6" disc. Use the edge of your hand to get smooth sides. Wrap well in plastic wrap and chill at least 1 hour, or up to 2 days. (You can also freeze it up to 1-2 months, depending on your freezer.)

*Note: if making a lattice or double crust, make two discs, one slightly larger than the other.*

7. When ready to use, lightly flour a clean work surface or rolling mat. Sprinkle a little more flour over the top. Begin rolling out the dough, rotating the rolling pin as you go. I like to imagine it's a clock and I need to roll it over every hour—so top down is 12 and 6, left right is 3 and 9, etc. Roll it out to be about 3 inches bigger in diameter than your pie pan (e.g. 12" for a 9" pan).
8. Be sure to flip and rotate the dough every so often, sprinkling a tiny bit more flour as needed to 1) keep it from sticking and 2) ensure you're rolling evenly. I tend to roll the bottom left too thin and the top right too thick. Rotating balances this out.
9. If any bits of the edge crack or break, gently press them back together with your hands. Roll about half of the crust onto the rolling pin then gently slide it over the pie pan until centered. Gently lift the edges of the crust and press it into the pan. You want about ½ inch of overhang, so trim anything beyond that. Tuck the overhang under so that the edge is flush with the pie pan. Shape the edges as desired.

*Note: if making a lattice or double crust, roll the smaller disc out to just slightly larger than the pie pan. For lattice, cut into 1" strips. Once the pie is filled, weave as desired then crimp the edges together with the bottom crust and shape the edges. For a double crust, gently place over slightly mounded filling, crimping with the bottom crust and shaping the edges. Cut at least 4 slits in a concentric pattern. For both options, brush with a wash of 1 egg whisked with 1 tablespoon of milk or just milk.*

10. Freeze crust (empty if pre-baking or filled if doing a classic pie) for 30 minutes.

11. If pre-baking or par-baking the crust, line with a double layer of foil (criss cross each layer so there's enough to cover all edges). Loosely fold it over the edge of the pan without sealing it in. Fill the pan with rice or beans or pie weights. Rice is my favorite.
12. Bake on a parchment lined cookie sheet for 30 minutes at 375 (or as directed by your recipe). If par-baking, you can fill it at this point then finish baking. If fully pre-baking, remove the rice and foil and bake another 10-15 minutes, until the bottom begins to look golden.

*Enjoy!*

*\*For a lattice or double crust, double the recipe.*

**Variations:**

***Lemon:** add 1 tablespoon finely grated lemon zest with the flour*

***Cinnamon brown sugar:** substitute brown sugar for sugar and add 1/2 tablespoon ground cinnamon with the flour*

***Savory:** omit the sugar and add 1 tablespoon chopped thyme/rosemary*