

# Perfect Pastry Crust for pie

Serves: 8 | Prep: 1 hr 30 min | Cook: 45 min | Source: America's Test Kitchen

The secret for this recipe is to use butter and lard, as well as using vodka to replace some of the water in traditional crust. The recipe is for a 9" two crust pie.

## Ingredients

- 170 g very cold unsalted butter cut into small cubes
- 102 g very cold lard cut into small cubes
- 354 g all-purpose flour
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- ¼ cup chilled vodka
- ¼ cup chilled water

## Notes

Vodka is essential to the texture of the crust and imparts no flavor—do not substitute extra water. The alcohol is key to our recipe; if you don't have vodka on hand, you can use another 80 proof liquor. This dough will be moister and more supple than most standard pie doughs and will require more flour to roll out (1/4 cup must be used to prevent the dough from sticking to the counter).



## Method

1. Process 1/2 of the flour, salt, and sugar in food processor until combined, about 2 one-second pulses. Add butter and lard and process until homogenous dough just starts to collect in uneven clumps, about 15 seconds (dough will resemble cottage cheese curds and there should be no uncoated flour). Scrape bowl with rubber spatula and redistribute dough evenly around processor blade. Add remaining cup flour and pulse until mixture is evenly distributed around bowl and mass of dough has been broken up, 4 to 6 quick pulses. Empty mixture into medium bowl.

Sprinkle vodka and water over mixture. With rubber spatula, use folding motion to mix, pressing down on dough until dough is slightly tacky and sticks together. Divide dough into two even balls and flatten each into 4-inch disk. Wrap each in plastic wrap and refrigerate at least 45 minutes or up to 2 days.

After rolling out the bottom crust, gently ease it into the pie pan and dock (prick with a fork on the bottom to allow steam to escape). NOTE: if baking a liquid pie such as lemon meringue or pumpkin, it's a good idea to blind-bake the crust first. For most fruit pies, this is not necessary.

After placing bottom crust in the pan, trim excess to about 1" and chill the crust for 30 minutes before filling.

After rolling out and adding the top crust (whether solid or lattice crust, crimp and refrigerate for another 30 minutes.

Another tip is to preheat your oven WITH a baking sheet in the oven. This will help prevent the dreaded "soggy bottom crust" because the red hot sheet will immediately begin cooking the bottom crust.

Finally, a nice finishing touch is to scramble 1 egg with 1 tbsp cream and brush the top crust and then sprinkling with sugar. The result will be a glossy crust with a sugary crunch.