

# My Mom's Best Pie Crust

a recipe from [www.maureenabood.com](http://www.maureenabood.com)

*This oil-based crust is tender, flaky, and flavorful—everything you want in a pie crust. The texture of the dough depends on many factors like humidity and how the flour and oil are measured. It's best to scoop the flour into the measuring cup lightly, then level the top of the cup. Use a liquid measuring cup to measure the oil (like a glass Pyrex measuring cup with pour spout) to ensure the oil is measured properly. The dough should be fairly soft and pliable, not cracking and dry. If you've added all of the water and the dough still needs some elasticity, slowly add more oil, 1 teaspoon at a time. Use a pie plate with a flat rim. Recipe is based on Betty Crocker's, and makes one double crust pie.*

*For 9" double crust pie:*

1  $\frac{3}{4}$  cups unbleached, all-purpose flour  
1 teaspoon salt  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup plus 1 teaspoon vegetable, canola, or other neutral oil  
4 tablespoons ice water  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup milk (of any sort)

*For 10" double crust pie:*

2  $\frac{2}{3}$  cups unbleached, all-purpose flour  
1  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoons salt  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  cup plus 1-2 teaspoons vegetable, canola or other neutral oil  
5 tablespoons ice water  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup milk (of any sort)

In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour and salt. Add the oil, all but the extra teaspoon, and lightly stir with a metal spoon until most of the flour is incorporated and pea-sized meal forms. There will be some larger clumps of dough too.

Add the water 1 tablespoon at a time, incorporating after each addition. The dough should be soft and pliable, not cracking and dry. Add another teaspoon of oil to get there if needed, but do not add extra water. Divide the dough in half.

Tear off two 15" sheets of waxed paper. Wipe the work surface with a sponge dampened with cold water to keep the paper from slipping. Place one sheet of waxed paper on the damp surface lengthwise in front of you, and place half of the dough in the center of the paper. Shape the dough into a flat disk and cover with the other sheet of paper lengthwise.

Roll the dough, starting from the center of the disk and working your way out in every direction (think of working around the clock). The dough and paper do not turn; they stay fixed. As the rolling pin moves to the outer edges of the dough, be careful not to press too hard or else the dough will get too thin at the edges. Press more in the center, less at the edges, as you roll.

Roll the dough 2 inches larger than the pie pan, making room for the dough to slide down into the pan and still cover the rim. The crosswise edges of the waxed paper can serve as a guide at 12 inches. Roll to that edge for a 10" crust, and just inside at 11 inches for a 9" crust. If the

dough is rolled beyond the waxed paper, just scrape under it with a thin, sharp knife or spatula to loosen it before picking the crust up off the counter.

Peel off the top piece of waxed paper and discard. Place the pie plate right next to the crust. Pick up the crust with its paper and invert it over the pie plate. Move the crust to arrange it evenly over the rim of the plate. Remove the waxed paper and discard. Gently lift the edges of the crust and ease the crust into the pan. Trim the crust all the way around the rim right up against the rim. If an area is short of the rim, patch it with trimmings.

Fill the pie with filling, then roll the second half of the dough for the top crust just as you did the bottom crust, but roll this circle slightly smaller than the bottom crust (about an inch smaller). After the top crust has been arranged over the pie, trim the crust so that there is  $\frac{1}{2}$ -1 inch overhang of the top crust beyond the rim. Tuck that overhang under the bottom crust all around the rim. This seals the pie and prevents drips.

Crimp the edges of the pie in a rope design: place your thumb on the pastry rim at an angle and firmly pinch the dough between thumb and bent index finger. Push down into the rim as you pinch. Make the next pinch with thumb resting against the last pinched edge.

Coat the top of the crust entirely with milk, using your fingers or a pastry brush. Cut vents in the top of the crust. Cover the edges of the pie with pieces of foil or a pie guard. Bake at various temperatures and times depending on your pie. A strawberry rhubarb pie bakes at 425 degrees for 40-50 minutes (foil removed for the last 15 minutes of baking).