

PERFECT PIES

Trimming and Crimping Pie Crust

You've rolled out the crust and transferred it to the pie plate. Now it's time to finish the edge. This step is both decorative and functional, so here's an up-close look.

Make a Thick Edge

For a traditional single-crust pie, you need to make an evenly thick edge before crimping. That thick edge will help keep the filling in place and provide visual appeal to the baked pie.



1. Using kitchen shears, trim pie dough to hang ½ inch over lip of pie plate.



2. Tuck overhang underneath to form tidy, even edge that sits on lip of pie plate.

Finish with Fluted Edge

Beyond looking nice, the flutes ensure that the dough isn't overly thick and that it bakes through properly.



Using index finger of one hand and thumb and index finger of other hand, create fluted ridges perpendicular to edge of pie plate.

Finish with Ridged Edge

This method is a very simple way to flatten the edge to a consistent thickness so that it bakes through properly.



Press tines of fork into dough to flatten it against rim of pie plate.

Troubleshooting a Single-Crust Pie Shell

Problem

Solution

I don't own pie weights.

If you don't have pie weights, pennies make a good substitute. The metal conducts heat much better than the usual dried beans or rice called for in traditional recipes.

I can't tell if the crust is done.

For a partially baked crust, the dough should be firm but only slightly colored. For a fully baked crust, the dough should be golden brown and crisp. Make sure to lift up the pie plate and check the underside when fully baking the pie shell; the bottom as well as the edges of the crust should be golden brown.

The edges of my pie shell are burning.

The foil sling should be lightly crimped over the edges of the pie shell to protect the fluted or ridged edge from burning. If you forget to do this and notice that the edges are starting to burn, simply fold the excess foil over the edges of the crust.

The sides of my pie shell slumped in the oven.

This can happen on occasion, even to experienced bakers. The pie will be fine. You might need to hold back some of the filling, which is a shame, but that's certainly preferable to letting the filling overflow the pie shell and spill into the oven and burn, causing a real mess.