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**GRAHAM CRACKER PIE CRUST**

Yield: makes one 9-inch pie crust

Ingredients

- 1¼ cups (113 g) graham cracker crumbs (about 15 squares; see Note)
- 3 tablespoons sugar (39 g)
- ⅓ cup butter, melted (63 g)

Preparation

1. Heat the oven to 375 F (190 C).
2. In a medium bowl, combine the graham cracker crumbs and sugar and stir with a fork to mix them well. Add the butter and stir to mix it into the crumbs evenly and well.
3. Press the buttery crumbs into a 9-inch pie pan, distributing the mixture evenly, and pressing firmly with your hands or another pie pan of the same size, to flatten the crumbs and shape a sturdy crust to hold the filling. Make sure to work the crumbs up to the rim of the pan, to make an good, strong edge.
4. Place the crust on the center shelf of the oven. Bake at 375 F (190 C) until the crust is heated through and lightly browned, 8 to 10 minutes. Place the crust on a cooling rack and let it cool to room temperature before adding the filling.

Notes

On making graham cracker crumbs:

- To make crumbs by hand, break the graham crackers into small pieces, crumbling them over a medium bowl. Put the pieces in the bottom of a large plastic bag (don't seal the bag) and place it on its side. Using a rolling pin, a liter-sized glass bottle, or a large full can of soup or evaporated milk, crush the cracker pieces into a fine powder, rolling and smashing gently, to crumble up the cracker pieces into fine crumbs. Measure out 1¼ cups, and prepare the crust as directed.
- To make crumbs using a food processor, break the graham crackers into medium pieces, and put them into the work bowl of a food processor, which has been fitted with the metal blade. Pulse to break pieces down into bits, and then process until you have fine crumbs, stopping once or twice to scrape the sides and grind them evenly. Measure out 1¼ cups, and prepare the crust as directed.

**VEGETABLE OIL PIE CRUST**

This recipe makes a very soft dough that you press into the pie plate by hand, as you would do with a graham cracker crumb crust. You could also roll it out between sheets of waxed paper or baking parchment; or chill and roll it out using plenty of flour, like any pie crust dough.

Yield: makes one 9-inch (23-cm) pie crust

Ingredients

- 1½ cups (210 g) all-purpose flour
- 1½ teaspoons (6 g) sugar
- ½ teaspoon (2 g) salt
- ½ cup (97 g) vegetable oil
- 2 tablespoons (21 g) cold milk

Preparation

1. In a medium bowl, combine the flour, sugar, and salt. Use a fork or a whisk to stir them together well.
2. In a small bowl, combine the canola oil and milk. Use a fork to mix them together into a frothy mixture. (Or put them in a jar with a lid and shake well to combine them.)
3. Scoop out a well in the flour mixture. Pour the canola oil-milk mixture into the flour, and use a fork to bring the liquid and dry ingredients together into a crumbly mixture.
4. Press and pat the the dough into a 9-inch pie plate, distributing it evenly. Using your hands to build up the sides covering the pan well and pinching the rim to make a small edge around the top of the pie crust .
5. Wrap and refrigerate the crust for up to 1 days or freeze for up to 1 month.

**BUTTER PIE CRUST**

Yield: makes two 9-inch (23-cm) pie crusts

Ingredients

- 3 cups (420 g) all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon (2 g) salt
- 1 cup (226 g) very cold butter, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 6 tablespoons (91 g) very cold water
- Extra flour for rolling out the pie crust

Preparation

1. Put the flour and salt in the workbowl of a food processor fitted with a metal blade. Pulse to combine them, and then add the cold butter. Pulse again, cutting the butter into uneven bits and pieces, some pea sized and some smaller.
2. With the machine running, slowly pour 3 tablespoons of the cold water through the feed tube. The dough should begin to come together into a ball. Stop as soon as that begins to happen.
3. Turn the dough out onto a floured work surface and gently shape it into a ball. Divide the ball into halves. Shape each half into a disk about 1 1/2 inches thick. Wrap the dough in waxed paper or plastic wrap. Refrigerate it for 30 minutes to 1 hour.
4. On a floured surface, roll out one of the discs of dough into a circle. Work from the center out, returning to the center each time. Turn the dough gently as you work, up and down, left and right. Center the pie pan you will use upside down on the circle of dough: roll it out until it is about 2 inches larger than the edges of the pan.
5. Carefully transfer it to the 9-inch pie plate, rolling it up onto your rolling pin to move it. Or fold it gently into quarters and place it point in the center and unfold it over the pie pan. Press the dough gently into the pan; trim away any excess dough, and patch any holes pressing gently and evenly. Leave about 1/2 inch beyond the edge of the pie pan.
6. Fold the edges up and over, and then crimp the edges decoratively. Or press the back of a fork into the pastry rim, working around the pie to make a flat edge marked with the tines of the fork. Refrigerate the crust until needed.
7. To make the crust in advance, wrap it well in plastic and refrigerate it for up to 3 days or freeze it for up to 2 months.

**SHORTENING PIE CRUST**

Yield: makes two 9-inch (23-cm) pie crusts

Ingredients

- 2¾ cups (389 g) all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon (4 g) salt
- 1 cup (150 g) shortening
- 10 tablespoons (158 g) very cold water
- Extra flour for rolling out the pie crust

Preparation

1. Put the flour and salt in a large bowl and stir with a fork to mix them well. Add the shortening. Using a pastry blender or two table knives or your hands, mix and press and cut to break the shortening into bits and combine it with the flour. Work until the mixture is roughly combined, with pieces of shortening no larger than peas.
2. Sprinkle three tablespoons of the cold water over the flour mixture and toss to mix it in. Add another tablespoon and then pull the mixture into a ball. Add more water if needed to bring the dough together.
3. Turn the dough out onto a floured work surface and gently shape it into a ball. Divide the ball into halves. Shape each half into a disk about 4 inches across. Wrap the dough in waxed paper or plastic wrap. Refrigerate it for 30 minutes to 1 hour.
4. On a floured surface, roll out one of the discs of dough into a circle. Work from the center out, returning to the center each time. Turn the dough gently as you work, up and down, left and right. Center the pie pan you will use upside down on the circle of dough: roll it out until it is about 2 inches larger than the edges of the pan.
5. Carefully transfer it to the 9-inch pie plate, rolling it up onto your rolling pin to move it. Or fold it gently into quarters and place it point in the center and unfold it over the pie pan. Press the dough gently into the pan; trim away any excess dough, and patch any holes pressing gently and evenly. Leave about ½ inch beyond the edge of the pie pan.
6. Fold the edges up and over, and then crimp the edges decoratively. Or press the back of a fork into the pastry rim, working around the pie to make a flat edge marked with the tines of the fork. Refrigerate the crust until needed.
7. To make the crust in advance, wrap it well in plastic and refrigerate it for up to 3 days or freeze it for up to 2 months.

**LARD PIE CRUST**

Yield: makes one 9-inch (23-cm) pie crust

Ingredients

- 1½ cups (210 g) all-purpose flour
- ½ cup (109 g) lard
- ½ teaspoon (2 g) salt
- 8 tablespoons (118 g) cold water (about ½ cup)

Preparation

1. Combine the flour and salt in a large mixing bowl and stir with a fork to mix them well.
2. Using a pastry blender or two table knives or your fingers, cut the lard into the flour, mixing and tossing until you have uneven bits, some as large as peas, others smaller. Uneven texture is fine.
3. Quickly sprinkle about 3 tablespoons of the cold water over the flour-lard mixture, stirring quickly and gently with a fork, to bring everything together into a crumbly mass of dough. Add another tablespoon or two of ice water if needed just to bring the ingredients together.
4. Scoop up the dough in the palms of your hands, and press it together between into a flat disk, about 4 inches across. Wrap the dough disk in plastic wrap or waxed paper, and refrigerate it for 1 hour, until cold. Set the dough out at room temperature for 10 minutes before rolling.
5. Scatter flour onto a countertop, and use a rolling pin to roll out the pie crust into a 10-inch circle. Use long, quick, short strokes, moving quickly to roll out the crust. Carefully transfer it into a 9-inch pie plate. Press the dough gently into the pan and trim away any excess dough, leaving about ½ inch beyond the edge of the pie pan.
6. Fold the edges up and over, and then crimp the edges decoratively. Or press the back of a fork into the pastry rim, working around the pie to make a flat edge marked with the tines of the fork. Refrigerate the crust until needed, up to 2 days.

**BUTTERMILK PIE**

Yield: makes one 9-inch (23-cm) pie

Ingredients

- Pastry for a 9-inch single-crust pie
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup (148 g) sugar
- 3 tablespoons (26 g) flour
- 1 cup (234 g) buttermilk
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (53 g) butter, melted
- 2 eggs, beaten well (99 g)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (1.5 g) vanilla extract

Preparation

1. Heat the oven to 425 F (220 C). Line a 9-inch pie pan with crust, then crimp the edges decoratively.
2. In a medium bowl, combine the sugar and flour and use a fork to stir them together well. In another bowl, combine the buttermilk, butter, eggs, and vanilla, and use a whisk or a fork to mix them together very well. Add to the sugar and mix them together evenly and well.
3. Carefully pour the mixture into the pie shell and place it in the center of the oven. Bake for 10 minutes at 425 F, then lower the heat to 350 F (175 C). Bake until the edges puff up and the center is fairly firm, wiggling only a little when you gently nudge the pan, 20 to 30 minutes more. Place the pie on a cooling rack and let cool to room temperature.

Note

If you don't have buttermilk, make this simple substitute version. Take 1 cup of whole milk and stir in 1 tablespoon lemon juice or lime juice, or apple cider vinegar. Mix well, and let stand for 10 to 15 minutes. The milk will thicken up and curdle a little. Use at once, or cover and store in the refrigerator for up to 1 day.

SWEET POTATO PIE

Yield: makes one 9-inch (23-cm) pie

Ingredients

- Pastry for a 9-inch single-crust pie
- 1 cup (208 g) sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (1 g) ground cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (1 g) ground nutmeg
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (1 g) salt
- $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups (305 g) evaporated milk (or half-and-half works)
- 2 eggs, beaten well (99 g)
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups (345 g) mashed cooked sweet potatoes (about $1\frac{1}{2}$ pounds, about 2 medium sweet potatoes)
- 3 tablespoons (42 g) butter, melted
- 1 teaspoon (3 g) vanilla extract

Preparation

1. Heat the oven to 375 F (190 C). Line a 9-inch pie pan with crust, then crimp the edges decoratively.
2. Combine the sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt in a large bowl. Use a fork or a whisk to stir them together well. Add the milk and eggs, and stir to mix everything together evenly. Add the sweet potatoes, butter, and vanilla. Mix them together well, stirring them into the egg mixture carefully, until you have a thick, smooth, and evenly combined pie filling.
3. Pour the filling into the pie crust and place it on the middle rack of the 375 F (190 C) oven. Bake until the edges puff up and the center is fairly firm, wiggling only a little when you gently nudge the pan, 50 to 55 minutes. Place the pie on a cooling rack and let cool for 30 minutes. Serve warm or at room temperature.

**CHESS PIE**

Yield: makes one 9-inch (23-cm) pie

Ingredients

- Pastry for a 9-inch single-crust pie
- 1½ cups (293 g) sugar
- 1 tablespoon (10 g) cornmeal
- ¼ teaspoon (1 g) salt
- 3 eggs, beaten well (152 g)
- 1 tablespoon (15 g) apple cider vinegar or white vinegar
- 1 teaspoon (3 g) vanilla extract
- ½ cup (110 g) butter, melted

Preparation

1. Heat the oven to 325 F (165 C). Line a 9-inch pie pan with crust, then crimp the edges decoratively.
2. In a small bowl, use a fork to stir together the sugar, cornmeal, and salt, to mix them well. In a medium bowl, combine the eggs, vinegar, and vanilla and stir to mix everything well. Add the butter and stir well to combine everything into a smooth, thick filling.
3. Pour it into the pie crust. Place the pie on the lower shelf of the 325 F (165 C) oven. Bake until the edges puff up and the center is fairly firm, wiggling only a little when you gently nudge the pan, 40 to 50 minutes. Place the pie on a cooling rack and let cool to room temperature. Serve at room temperature.

PECAN PIE

Yield: makes one 9-inch (23-cm) pie

Ingredients

- Pastry for a 9-inch single-crust pie
- 1 cup (195 g) brown sugar, dark or light
- 3 tablespoons (26 g) flour
- 3 large eggs, beaten well (152 g)
- 1 cup (280 g) syrup: sorghum, or pure cane syrup, or corn syrup, dark or light, or maple syrup
- ⅓ cup (63 g) butter, melted
- 3 tablespoons (31.5 g) milk
- 1 teaspoon (3 g) vanilla extract
- 1½ cups (162 g) pecans, chopped or halves, about 6 ounces

Preparation

1. Heat the oven to 350 F (175 C). Line a 9-inch pie pan with crust, then crimp the edges decoratively.
2. In a large bowl, combine the brown sugar and flour and stir to mix them well. Add the eggs, syrup, butter, milk, and vanilla. Use a fork to mix everything together evenly and well. Add the pecans and stir to mix them into the filling. Pour filling into the prepared pie crust.
3. Place the pie in the center of the 350 F (175 C) oven. Bake until the filling is edges puff up and the center is fairly firm, wiggling only a little when you gently nudge the pan, 45 to 55 minutes. Place the pie on a cooling rack and let cool to room temperature.



Pie Filling Recipes

STRAWBERRY-RHUBARB PIE

Yield: makes one 9-inch (23-cm) pie

Ingredients

- Pastry for a 9-inch double-crust pie
- 1¼ cups (259 g) sugar
- ⅓ cup (49 g) all-purpose flour
- ¼ teaspoon (1 g) ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon (2 g) salt
- 3 cups (365 g) chopped fresh rhubarb, cut into ½-inch chunks
- 2 cups (291 g) hulled and chopped fresh strawberries, cut into 1-inch chunks
- 1 tablespoon (14 g) freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons (30 g) cold butter, cut into ¼-inch chunks

Preparation

1. Heat the oven to 425 F (220 C). Line a 9-inch pie pan with crust, leaving a 1-inch overhang.
2. In a large bowl, stir together the sugar, flour, cinnamon, and salt. Add the rhubarb, strawberries, and lemon juice and mix very gently using a large spoon. Scrape the mixture into the pie crust, and distribute the pieces of butter evenly over the strawberry-rhubarb filling. Top the filling with a sheet of pie crust dough. Trim away excess pastry, and press to seal the edges. Crimp the edges or press with the back of a fork to make a decorative edge. You could do a simplified lattice crust, cutting strips of dough about 1 inch wide, and laying them over the filling like a tic-tac-toe board. First strips in one direction. Then strips in the other. They won't be woven in a lattice crust, but they will be pretty and the pie will be wonderful.
3. Place the pie on a baking sheet to catch spills, and place it on the bottom rack of the oven. Bake at 425 F (220 C) for 15 minutes. Reduce the heat to 350 F (175 C). Bake until the pink filling bubbles up and the pastry is golden brown, 45 to 50 minutes more. Place the pie on a cooling rack or a folded kitchen towel and let it cool for at least 15 minutes. Serve it warm or at room temperature.





Pie Filling Recipes

PEACH & BLACKBERRY COBBLER

Yield: makes one 13-by 9-inch cobbler (serves 12 to 16)

Ingredients

- Pastry for four 9-inch single crust pies (4 circles of pie crust)
- 1½ cups (293 g) sugar
- ⅓ cup (49 g) all-purpose flour
- 1½ teaspoons (4 g) ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon (1 g) ground nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon (2 g) salt
- 9 cups (1295 g) peeled and chopped fresh or frozen peaches, cut into large chunks (about 3½ pounds)
- 1 cup (140 g) blackberries, about 6 ounces
- ½ cup (113 g) cold butter

Preparation

1. Heat the oven to 450 F (230 C). For the pie crust, drape one of the three circles of pastry dough over half of a 13- by 9-inch baking pan, tucking it into the corners. Trim away excess dough, and use it, along with the second circle of pastry dough, to piece and patch together a complete pastry lining of the rectangular pan. Press gently to seal up any seams, and extend the edges of the pastry dough all the way up to the rim of the baking pan.
2. In a large bowl, combine the sugar, flour, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt. Use a fork to stir everything together well. Add the peaches and gently stir and toss, until the fruit is evenly coated with the sugar mixture.
3. Pour the sugared peach filling into the pan and spread it out into an even layer. Scatter the blackberries over the peaches. Chop the butter into small pieces and scatter it over the peaches, too.
4. Roll out the remaining pastry to make a rectangle 3 inches larger than the baking pan. Gently place it over the fruit, and drape and press and place it so that it covers the filling evenly. Press the top crust edges to the bottom crust edge extending up above the peaches and press to seal it well. Trim away excess, and then roll the pressed two layers of dough down and tuck it against the top of the cobbler. Shape the edges into a lovely crimped finish, or press them together using the back of a fork to imprint its shape into a handsome edge. Using a sharp knife, cut steam holes all over the top of the pie. You could also use the tines of a fork to make dot-designs for your steam-and-juice vents.
5. Place the cobbler on the middle shelf of the 450 F (230 C) oven, and bake for 15 minutes. Lower the heat to 350 F (175 C), and continue baking until the crust is handsomely and evenly browned, and the filling is bubbling up vigorously, 45 to 55 minutes more.
6. Transfer the bubbling-hot cobbler to a cooling rack or a folded kitchen towel and let it cool. Serve your cobbler warm or at room temperature, scooped onto small plates or into bowls.

Note

Vanilla ice cream is not required, nor is whipped cream, but either one makes a lovely addition to this cobbler.





Pie Filling Recipes

BUTTERSCOTCH PIE

This pie will need at least 4 hours to set up and become firm enough to slice, so plan ahead allowing it plenty of time to cool and set.

Yield: makes one 9-inch (23-cm) pie

Ingredients

- 1 fully-baked 9-inch pie crust
- 1 cup (201 g) packed light or dark brown sugar
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (49 g) all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (1 g) salt
- $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups (297 g) evaporated milk (half-and-half, or milk works)
- 3 egg yolks, (52 g) beaten well
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (56 g) butter
- 1 teaspoon (3 g) vanilla extract
- 3 egg whites (90 g)
- 5 tablespoons (71 g) sugar

Preparation

1. In a medium saucepan, whisk together the sugar, flour, and salt. Add the milk to the saucepan, and cook over medium heat, stirring often, until you have a thickened, smooth sauce, about 10 minutes.
2. Add about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the hot milk mixture to the egg yolks, stirring constantly as you pour the milk slowly into the bowl. Mix well. Pour the warmed egg yolks into the saucepan of brown sugar and milk, stirring constantly to help them mix in smoothly.
3. Cook, stirring often, 2 to 3 minutes more, until the filling is thick and smooth. Remove it from the heat and stir in the butter and vanilla, mixing everything evenly and well. When the butter has melted and the filling is smooth and even in texture, scrape it into the baked pie crust and set aside.
4. To make the meringue, heat the oven to 375 F (190 C). In a medium bowl, beat the egg whites with an electric mixer on medium speed until foamy. Increase the speed to high, and add the sugar gradually, about 2 tablespoons at a time. Beat the egg whites until they thicken and swell up into plump, shiny clouds, and will hold firm, curly peaks.
5. Scoop the meringue onto the filling. Spread it out to seal the edges to the crust, mounding it up in the middle. Use the back of a spoon to swirl it up into curly shapes.
6. Place the pie on the middle rack of the 375 F (190 C) oven. Bake until the meringue has turned a beautiful golden brown, 10 to 15 minutes. Place the pie on a cooling rack to cool completely, about 4 hours.
7. Chill for 2 hours or overnight. Serve at room temperature, or slightly chilled.



**KEY LIME PIE**

This pie will need 2 to 3 hours to chill and become firm enough to slice nicely, so plan ahead. Longer is even better.

Yield: makes one 9-inch pie

Ingredients

- 1 9-inch graham cracker pie crust
- 4 egg yolks (69 g)
- 1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk (1¼ cups) (396 g)
- ½ cup (127 g) Key lime juice, from 10 to 15 limes, or bottled key lime juice, or freshly squeezed lime juice
- ¼ teaspoon (1 g) salt
- 2 cups (297 g) heavy cream
- ⅓ cup (226 g) confectioners' sugar or granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon (3 g) vanilla extract

Preparation

1. Heat the oven to 350 F (175 C). In a medium bowl, combine the egg yolks and the sweetened condensed milk. Use a whisk or fork to mix them together evenly and well. Add the key lime juice and salt, and stir well until you have a smooth, thick filling.
2. Spoon the filling into the graham cracker crust. Place the pie on the middle shelf of the 350 F (175 C) oven, and bake for 15 minutes, until filling is set. Place on a cooling rack to cool completely. Cover loosely and refrigerate for at least 3 hours and as long as overnight.
3. To complete the pie, whip the cream in a large bowl at high speed. When it thickens, swells up, and increases in volume, gradually add the sugar and vanilla, and continue beating until the cream is billowing and thick, able to hold soft peaks beautifully and easily. Pile the whipped cream onto the pie filling. Refrigerate the pie for 2 to 3 hours or longer. Serve cold.



Pie Filling Recipes

STRAWBERRY ICEBOX PIE

This pie will need four to six hours to chill completely once it is made, so plan ahead.

Yield: makes one 10-inch (25-cm) deep-dish pie, or two 9-inch (23-cm) pies

Ingredients

- One large, deep-dish 9-inch graham cracker pie crust, or two small 8- or 9-inch graham cracker pie crusts
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (51 g) cornstarch
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (76 g) cold water
- 6 cups (978 g) hulled, coarsely-chopped strawberries, fresh or frozen,
- About $1\frac{1}{2}$ pounds
- 1 cup (203 g) sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (1 g) salt
- 1 tablespoon (13 g) butter
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (1.5 g) vanilla or almond extract
- $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups (297 g) heavy cream
- 2 cups (326 g) fresh strawberries, sliced (optional)

Preparation

1. In a small bowl, combine the cornstarch and the $\frac{1}{3}$ cup cold water. Stir with a spoon to combine them well, dissolving any lumps.
2. In a medium saucepan, combine the chopped strawberries, sugar, and salt. Stir to combine the fruit and sugar, and then cook over medium heat until the mixture comes to a gentle boil. Cook, stirring often, until the berries create a pool of sauce, 3 to 5 minutes.
3. Stir up the cornstarch-water mixture, and add it to the pan. Cook, stirring often, until the strawberry sauce boils again, thickens up, and the berries are soft, 3 to 4 minutes more. Remove from heat, stir in the butter and vanilla, and set aside to cool to room temperature.
4. To finish the filling, beat the cream in a large bowl until it is very thick and luscious, holding its shape in round medium peaks but not cottony-stiff. Stir in the strawberry jam mixture and gently fold the cream and jam together to make an even, rich mixture.
5. Pile the filling into the graham cracker crust and refrigerate for 4 to 6 hours, until very cold and fairly firm. Serve very cold.
6. If you have sliced strawberries, spoon a small pile of them over or alongside each piece of pie. Refrigerate any remaining pie for up to 1 day.

