

Easy Pie Crust

(makes 2 generous pie crusts)

- 3 cups flour
- 1 t. salt
- 1 c. shortening
- 1 c. water

Mix salt and flour. Using a pastry blender (or two butter knives), cut the shortening into the flour until the shortening pieces are pea-size. Gently fold in water with a wooden spoon.

The secret to a flakey pie crust is to handle the dough as little as possible. Don't overmix, and don't add too much flour. Of course, this is hard when you are also trying to keep it from sticking to your rolling pin! A friend of mine showed me this great solution many years ago:

1. Go to one of the big box bulk stores (like Costco, Sam's Club, or even Smart & Final) and purchase the giant, commercial size box of plastic wrap. I am not kidding when I say you will never have to buy plastic wrap again in your lifetime!
2. Use a wet dish cloth to wipe down (and wet) your countertop.
3. Pull off a two-foot long piece of plastic wrap and "stick" it to your wet counter.
4. Spray plastic wrap with cooking spray.
5. Place mound of dough on wrap. It does not need to be mixed well or dry.
6. Pull out another two-foot piece of plastic wrap and spray one side with cooking spray.
7. Place wrap over dough mound, cooking spray side down.
8. Using a rolling pin, roll out dough that is between layers of plastic wrap. You will want it to be a few inches larger than your pie plate.
9. Pull off one layer of wrap.
10. Pick-up rolled pie crust with wrap and turn over into pie plate.
11. Pull off second layer of wrap. Voila!
12. Carefully form and adjust crust to fit plate. Add decorative edge by pinching edges with thumb and forefinger.
13. Add desired filling. Bake as directed.

The extra moisture in the crust will keep the edges from getting too brown when baking, and the plastic wrap allows you to easily roll out dough that is even a little sticky. If there is a little flour that didn't mix in, just dump it on the pile to be rolled out, and let the rolling pin do the work. Don't worry about all of the plastic wrap that you will throw away, especially if you are making multiple pies for the holidays. Remember, the commercial-size roll of it will last longer than you do!

