SIFTED MINI BAKING LESSON

Pie Dough

A straightforward, buttery pie dough. Keep everything cold, leave the butter visible and remember: we are pressing, not kneading.

YIELD

Two 9-inch single crusts or one double-crust pie

Ingredients

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 pound (8 ounces) cold butter, cut into small pieces
- 1/2 cup ice water

Equipment

Large bowl; two forks or your hands; plastic wrap; rolling pin; 9-inch pie plate

Method

1. Combine the dry ingredients

Blend the flour, sugar and salt in a large bowl.

2. Cut in the butter

Using your hands or two forks, cut the cold butter into the flour mixture until the pieces are about the size of small peas.

3. Add the ice water

Add the ice water and mix for only a few seconds - just long enough to loosely combine everything. Do not mix so thoroughly that the pieces of butter disappear.

4. Bring the dough together

Turn the mixture onto the table. Press the dough into itself until the loose flour and remaining bits are incorporated. Press - do not knead.

5. Chill the dough

Form the dough into a disk, wrap it tightly in plastic and refrigerate until thoroughly chilled.

6. Roll the dough

On a lightly floured surface, roll the chilled dough to about 1/4 inch thick. If it is very cold, firm or beginning to crack, give it a few minutes to soften slightly. We are not wrestling pie dough today. Try to maintain a circle, but do not fight it. If needed, trim a circle slightly larger than your pie plate.

7. Line the pie plate

Transfer the dough to the pie plate. Gently press it into the bottom and corners to eliminate any air pockets.

JULIUS SAYS

What happens next depends on the pie you are making. If the filling will bake inside the crust - such as apple, blueberry or my favorite, sweet potato - follow the baking temperature and timing in that pie recipe. For a fully baked crust with a no-bake filling, bake at 350°F for approximately 25-30 minutes, or until golden brown and crisp.

OPTIONAL CHOCOLATE SEAL

Using the crust for chocolate custard, banana cream or another wet, no-bake filling? Scatter chocolate chips across the bottom as soon as the fully baked crust comes out of the oven. Let the chocolate melt, then brush it across the bottom and sides. Once set, it creates a barrier that helps the crust stay flaky instead of soggy.