

No-Fear Pie Crust

The pastry can be pressed into the pie plate and refrigerated for up to 2 days or double-wrapped in plastic and frozen for up to 1 month. Once baked and cooled, the shell can be wrapped tightly in plastic and stored at room temperature for up to 1 day.

Makes one 9-inch Pie Shell

Ingredients

- 1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon table salt
- 8 tablespoons unsalted butter (1 stick), softened but still cool
- 2 ounces cream cheese , softened but still cool

Directions

1. Lightly coat 9-inch Pyrex pie plate with cooking spray. Whisk flour, sugar, and salt together in bowl.
2. With electric mixer at medium-high speed, beat butter and cream cheese in large bowl, stopping once or twice to scrape down beater and sides of bowl, until completely homogenous, about 2 minutes. Add flour mixture and combine on medium-low until mixture resembles coarse cornmeal, about 20 seconds. Scrape down sides of bowl. Increase mixer speed to medium-high and beat until dough begins to form large clumps, about 30 seconds. Reserve 3 tablespoons of dough. Turn remaining dough onto lightly floured surface, gather into ball, and flatten into 6-inch disk. Transfer disk to greased pie plate.
3. Press dough evenly over bottom of pie plate toward sides, using heel of your hand. Hold plate up to light to ensure that dough is evenly distributed. With your fingertips, continue to work dough over bottom of plate and up sides until evenly distributed.
4. On floured surface, roll reserved dough into 12-inch rope. Divide into three pieces, roll each piece into 8-inch rope, and form fluted edge. Wrap in plastic and refrigerate at least 1 hour.
5. Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 325 degrees. Lightly prick bottom of crust with fork. Bake until golden brown, 35 to 40 minutes. Cool on wire rack. (If large bubbles form, wait until crust is fully baked, then gently press on bubbles with kitchen towel. Bubbles will settle as crust cools.)