

Triple Crusts

This week for the **WTRE Recipe of the Week**, we are diving into the archives of the Pershing Twp. Volunteer Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary cookbook. If there is one thing these ladies knew, it was how to make a crust that would make a grown man cry.

We have three distinct approaches to the perfect crust today ranging from a massive batch for the serious baker to a quick "oleo" version for a weeknight treat. But stick around until the end, because we're filling those crusts with a **"Pecan" Pie** that contains a secret ingredient so surprising, your guests will never guess what's in their slice!

1. Foolproof Pie Crust

Contributor: Bonnie Scott

This is the "gold standard" of vintage crusts. It uses vinegar and egg to ensure a tender, flaky texture that handles beautifully.

Ingredients

- 4 c. all-purpose flour
- 1 Tbsp. sugar
- 2 tsp. salt
- 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ c. shortening
- 1 Tbsp. vinegar
- 1 egg
- $\frac{1}{2}$ c. water

Instructions

1. Mix together the flour, sugar, and salt.
2. Using a pastry blender or fork, cut in the shortening until crumbly.
3. In a separate bowl, lightly beat the vinegar, egg, and water.
4. Combine the two mixtures. Stir with a fork until moist, then use your hands to mold the dough into a ball.
5. **Pro Tip:** Chill for at least 15 minutes before rolling out.

6. Roll dough 1/8 inch thick. Fit into the pan, trim to leave a 1-inch overhang, fold under, and flute the edges.
7. Prick the crust thoroughly with a fork and bake in a very hot oven (**450°F**) for about 15 minutes or until delicately browned.

Hints to keep crust from shrinking: Place rolled dough in the pan and set aside for 5 minutes before fitting. You can also line the shell with waxed paper and fill with rice or beans (pie weights) for the first 10 minutes of baking.

2. Egg and Vinegar Pie Crust

Contributor: Theresa Rouse

A slightly different ratio for those who prefer working with chilled vegetable shortening for maximum lift.

Ingredients

- 1 c. chilled vegetable shortening
- 3 ¼ c. sifted all-purpose flour
- ¾ tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. cider vinegar
- 1 egg, beaten until frothy
- Cold water (enough to make 3/4 c. when mixed with the egg)

Instructions

1. Mix all ingredients together.
 2. Roll out for pie crust as you usually do. (This version is prized for being easy to handle!)
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3. Never-Fail Pie Crust

Contributor: Edna Bottorff

If you're looking for a smaller batch using "oleo" (margarine), this is the one for you. This recipe makes exactly 2 crusts.

Ingredients

- 1 1/3 c. sifted flour
- 1/8 tsp. salt
- 1 stick oleo
- 2 Tbsp. cold water

Instructions

1. Cut the oleo into the flour and salt until the mixture is crumbly.
 2. Add water and mix until the dough comes together.
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The Big Surprise: Mock Pecan Pie

Contributor: Joanne Fish

Now that you've mastered the crust, it's time for the filling. At first glance, this looks like a standard pecan pie—it's sweet, rich, and custardy. But look closely at that first ingredient.

There isn't a single nut in this recipe. This is a Depression-era classic that uses pinto beans to mimic the texture of pecans!

Ingredients

- **2 c. cooked pinto beans** (The "Secret" Ingredient!)
- 2 c. sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 3 eggs
- 1 tsp. salt

Instructions

1. Mash the cooked pinto beans thoroughly.
2. Beat the beans, sugar, vanilla, eggs, and salt all together.
3. **Let the mixture set for 30 minutes.** (This is crucial for the texture!)
4. Pour the mixture into your unbaked pie crust.

5. Bake at **450°F** until the crust is brown, then turn the oven down to **325°F** and bake for an additional 30 minutes.

