

## 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!

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### 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 ¾ c. shortening
- 1 Tbsp. vinegar
- 1 egg
- 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.

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## 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 1/4 c. sifted all-purpose flour
- 3/4 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 Botorff**

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.

