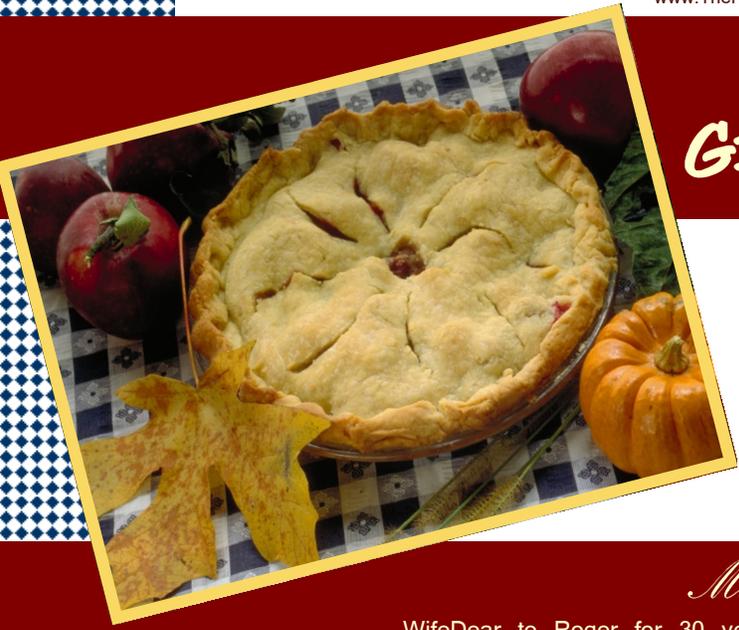




# Perfect Pies! Granny would be Proud!



In this lesson you will learn to make a homemade pie - yes!! --even the crust will be homemade -- Pies homemade by you - pies that would make your granny proud!  
Pie crusts for any level of cooking skill, pie crusts for bulk baking day, pie crusts for turnovers -- You can learn to make these and you will have no trouble finding taste-testers! Let's get started!

*Mrs. Martha Greene*

WifeDear to Roger for 30 years ~ MommaDear to 11 Children ~ and Marmee to 2 GrandDears



My DaddyDear is the youngest of seven and fondly tells me of his dear momma who was a devoted homemaker. He says, "She had her week completely scheduled with homemaking tasks and Saturday she spent ALL DAY long in the kitchen! . . . One hot milk batter cake from scratch, two fruit pies with homemade crusts, dinner rolls along with the Sunday dinner to prepare. He then chuckles and says to me, "And since I was the youngest, I was usually left home to help her, and had to stay in the kitchen with her and clean and scrub it while she baked and cooked all day."

He didn't like the cleaning up part. . . but he loved the part when it came time to eat her homemade rolls, cakes and pies!



## INTRODUCTION

I hope you won't think you are not an up-to-par-homemaker if you haven't made a practice of making pies or your pie crusts from scratch. Not so! A homemade pie crust isn't the standard of a loving homemaker! But, there came a time in my life where I just had this whim, a fancy notion, to make my own pies, crust and all. It came about one day when I was off to the grocery for just one thing-- that is not a good idea....who ever goes "IN" and comes "OUT" with just one thing??? But anyway, I needed pie crusts for a batch of pies I had been asked to make for a family gathering. I happened to turn over the pie crusts I took from the grocer's freezer shelf, had a streak of curiosity, and read the ingredient list.

- Enriched Flour, Niacin, Iron, Thiamin, Mononitrate
- Riboflavin, Folic acid, Partially hydrogenated lard
- BHA and BHT added to protect flavor
- Water, Corn Syrup, Salt, Whey
- Baking soda, Sodium Bisulfite (preservative)
- Added color Yellow 5 and Yellow 6

I thought to myself - "All this stuff in just a simple pie crust?" I think I'll try to make my own! And I did!

Pies certainly are not something I make all the time, but they do give me a cozy feeling of being a real 'Suzy-homemaker' when I do make them. And I'll tell you -- they are not hard! Let's try some of these together and soon you'll be the talk of the family for your -- perfect pies - My, oh, my! You would make your Granny proud!

Ethel Faithful Gurganus and her little GenieBoy (my very ownDaddyDear!)





## STARTIN' OFF EASY!

This is a pie crust any one can make that is old enough to be in the kitchen 'playing cook'! Super easy -- can't fail unless you burn it to a crispy "blackish" color? Let's don't try that, dearies. On this one, you won't even need a rolling pin. . . . .

### ~ Buttery Pressed Pie Crust ~

Skill Level: EASY for Beginner Bakers

In a mixing bowl, place 2 cups of plain all-purpose flour.

Using a pastry blender cut in 1 cup of butter until the butter in the mixture resembles small peas. Butter should be firm, but not cold & hard nor soft to near melting point --just lightly chilled. Then add in either 1 cup of coconut flakes or 1 cup of finely chopped walnuts or pecans. Mix all together once again with the pastry blender. Press into a large pie pan until all areas are covered evenly.

For using with a no-bake pie filling, like a pudding cream pie, pre-bake the crust only at 375° for 15 minutes. For using with a baked filling, just add filling on top of crust and bake as directed for the pie filling recipe. This crust is suitable for any pie with a bottom crust. This is not suitable for a double-crust pie recipe as you can't roll and add to the top for a double crust pie.

A Pastry Blender



## SUMMER FRUIT PIE "SECRET"

I found this great ingredient just last summer! Our acres are loaded with blackberries but I've never been able to make a pie from fresh fruit that really cut and sliced nice. You know, you cut a slice and all the fruit and juices just sort of swim around the plate, while the crust floats around on it? Well, last summer I learned a secret trick .... - **Minute Tapioca**. I really had never liked tapioca pudding and didn't really know it had a use as an ingredient. I don't think I ever have even had tapioca pearls in my pantry in my 30+ years of keeping a home, but vaguely remember hearing about tapioca pudding from my childhood. It certainly wasn't a staple I remember at our house when I was growing up.

**Minute Tapioca** is found commonly on the grocery store shelf near the pies and pudding type items and it is an amazing ingredient when added to fruit to make a fresh fruit pie.

My children went out blackberry picking "for-to-stir-up-some-yummy-pies". We rinsed and gently patted the berries dry. Dumped 4 cups of berries into a mixing bowl along with 1/4 cup of the Minute Tapioca, 1 cup of sugar and 1 Tbsp. of lemon juice. Gently folded it all together, by lightly stirring in a rotating motion, and let it stand for 15 minutes. We filled up our pie crust and topped it with another crust. Sealed the edges of the crust, cut a few slits in the crust to let out any steam, and popped it in a hot 400 degree oven. 45 minutes later we pulled a beautiful, golden brown, homemade, hand-picked, berry pie from the oven. We let it cool before serving. Using this recipe, you get lovely slices of berry pie that are about picture perfect! This works for other fresh picked fruits too - just read the back of the tapioca box for recipes.





UH - OH!



Another REALLY GOOD reason to make your own homemade pie crusts. This is what the last one I brought home from the grocery looked like when I got it out of the freezer to make a pie.....I was in a pinch and didn't think I'd have time to make a homemade crust.....big mistake!.....they don't really even take that long to make....and as you'll see, if you keep reading in the lesson....you can have them on hand to pop right out of the freezer and I promise you they won't look like this! I'll show you a way to freeze your pie crusts so this just won't happen!

## HOW In~a~Pinch PIE CRUSTS CAME TO BE . . .

Well, dears, I was fed up with the ingredients listed in the store-bought crusts but loved that convenience. How could I make it convenient and easy when I needed to make a pie? Just grab a pre-made pie crust from the freezer....hmmm....my great- grandmother didn't have that convenience and she made hers from scratch, so I was determined to try it. She probably didn't have the benefit of a freezer either - so I was off to try to match convenience with homemade flavor and ingredients I could control.

I had a recipe I had used on occasion before, for making pie crusts to freeze, but it just wasn't quite right to me. So scouring through my cookbooks, I found a recipe that sounded very interesting. It was in my MOMYS cookbook (LOVE!! MY MOMYS COOKBOOK!) and so I dove right in and started making this large batch of pie crusts that the recipe stated would freeze nicely. It was a really busy day and I was making these on the 'fly' and just hoping they would turn out and I would have this job done quickly. I was happy to be making my crusts I needed for the day from scratch, and was thrilled there would be more left to stash in the freezer for later. Oh good grief! Gulp! I had read the recipe before beginning, but didn't pay close enough attention....nor did I do the right thing as all good cooks do ☺ and gather all my ingredients before beginning. I was a bit over-confident as I always have a well stocked freezer, fridge and pantry. I let out a big "OhhhNoooo!" when I realized the recipe called for eggs and opened the fridge and NO EGGS! I already had this big batch of flour/shortening mixture mixed together and now I didn't have an important ingredient called for in this recipe. So....I had to decide what to do next. I almost NEVER just hop to the store for one thing. That to me is not thrifty and not done too often unless it really is an emergency. I live way out in the boonies, you know, although a high-dollar grocery store is in the closet town and not too far away. I had to get this recipe finished and wasn't sure what to do next. Then I had this thought...I really don't know where it came from...it just popped in my head.

I remembered an easy biscuit recipe my Mommy had given me that called for flour and buttermilk and mayonnaise. Those were the only 3 ingredients. It got me to thinking....mayonnaise has a lot of egg in it and biscuits are similar to pastry and those were really flaky biscuits...hmmm.....I think I'll put in 2 egg-size portions of mayonnaise to substitute for the eggs I don't have on hand to use. I plopped in the mayonnaise and continued on with my recipe and ...<drum roll>

The pie crusts turned out delicious, flaky and tasty, so I've come up with my own version from being "in a pinch" without the needed ingredients. Now I have my own recipe for a "perfect" pie crust that can be made ahead and frozen and popped from the freezer any time you need to use them.



## Pie Crust Recipe

I use a large kitchen mixer with a whip attachment to make the job much easier and very fast. If done by hand with a pastry blender I wouldn't attempt such a large batch.

### ~ In~a~Pinch Pie Crust ~

8 cups all-purpose unbleached flour

2 Tbsp. sugar

4 tsp. salt

Mix these ingredients together until well blended in a large mixer bowl equipped with whips.

Add in:

3 1/4 cups shortening

Turn mixer on and blend quickly for a short time until shortening is combined with flour and resembles small pea-size lumps. You must not over mix at this point or the mixture will be combined into large sticky ball and you don't want that at this point. It is a very brief whirl with the wire whips just to the point of pea-size lumps!! This step is important to follow.

Switch mixer to be equipped with dough hook as pastry dough will become stiff.

Add in:

1 cup cold water

3 Tbsp. mayonnaise

2 Tbsp. white vinegar

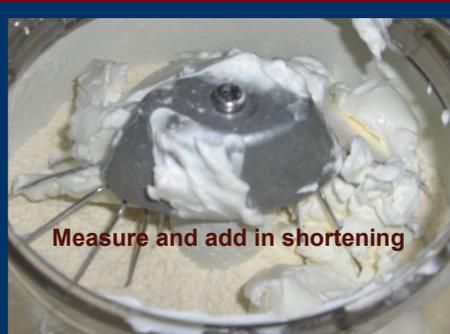
Mix only briefly until mixture forms a ball. Remove pastry dough from mixer bowl and divide into eight equal portions. Flatten out each portion to a small thick flat circle. Place each circle into a fold 'n' close sandwich bag. Fold over bag to enclose the dough in the bag. Press down bag to flatten circle to fit the bag and to press out any air pockets. Stack the circles in a zip-per seal bag and freeze for later use. To make pie(s) immediately save out one circle for each crust needed. Roll out between lightly floured sheets of wax paper and follow pie recipe.

To use frozen crusts I place them in the refrigerator 24 hours before ready to use and bake.

### HAVE A LOOK!



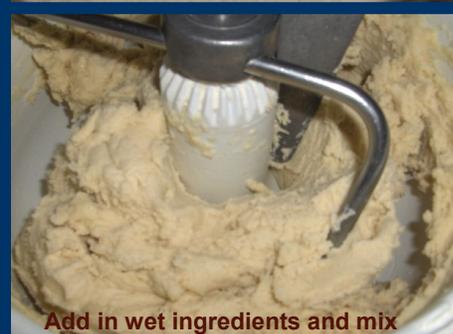
Flour mixed with dry ingredients



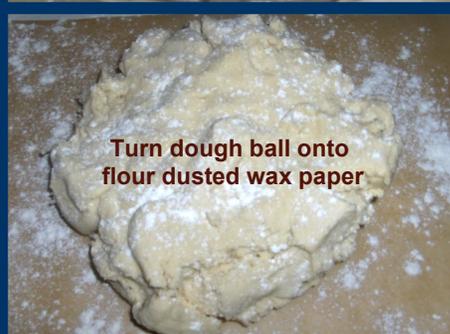
Measure and add in shortening



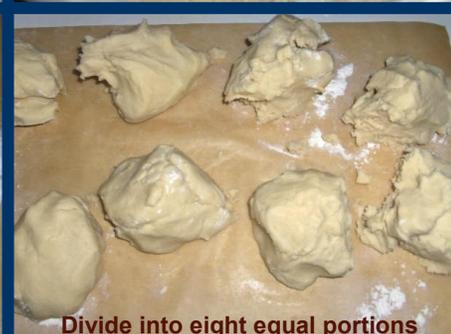
Mix in only till pea-size lumps form



Add in wet ingredients and mix



Turn dough ball onto flour dusted wax paper



Divide into eight equal portions

## PIES DON'T HAVE TO BE ROUND!

When feeding a large family or number of guests, pies don't tend to be the most practical as there are only eight basic slices per standard pie size. So why not have a big family size pie? I have used the "In-a-Pinch" Pie Crust and used a larger portion of the crust and made it to fit a 9"x13" glass pan using double the filling ingredients. Presto! You have a crowd-sized pie. This recipe usually presses easily into a large pan - so you can just press instead of roll! Certainly we can always stay with the traditional round pie and just make more than one! There is certainly something pretty and appealing about a round golden crusted pie stuffed with bubbling fruit filling. But just an idea for a big gathering or a large family to feed. I use the "big pan" pie often when feeding my family their favorite treat of hot apple pie.

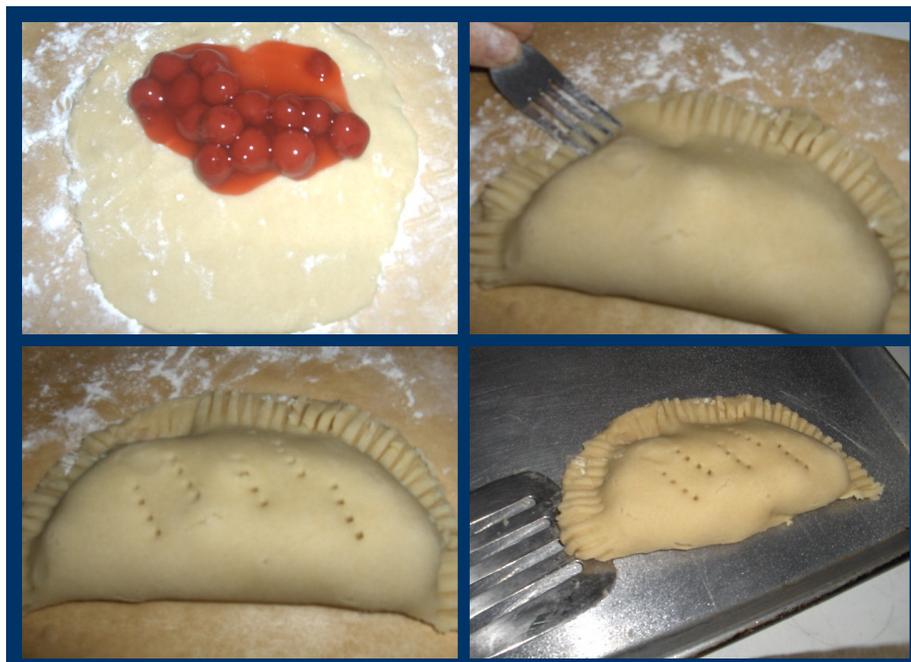
### TURNOVERS or MINI-PIES

Just the opposite from a large group wanting to gobble up your pies is making individual pies. They are called turnovers or other names depending on what part of the country you are from but no matter what they are called they are yummy and a real treat! This can be frozen on the baking sheet before baking and then individually wrapped. Just pull out and bake from frozen to golden brown.

To make a turnover is a bit time consuming but they are such a special treat! Roll out the "In~a~Pinch" pie crust (remember you can pop them out of your freezer anytime, thaw and use!) to a 8" circle on a piece of wax paper or use a turnover dough press. Place a small portion of filling on one half of the circle. (You must use wax paper and a dusting of flour to be able to handle and manage these and any pie crust!) Fold over the pastry dough (don't roll toooooo thin or it will break) to cover the filling and crimp and seal the edges closed using a fork. Then you have the option to either bake them on a greased baking sheet or to fry them. Baking of course is the healthier option if we can even consider that for this treat that is not exactly health food??

To bake a pan of turnovers: Bake at 400 degrees for 20-25 minutes or until golden brown. Don't forget that option of brushing them with milk and sprinkling the crust with sugar! Yuumm!

To fry turnovers: Carefully place each filled turnover into a deep skillet with about 1/2" of hot cooking oil. Fry on each side until lightly golden, turning only once and drain to absorb excess oil on paper towels. While still hot, dust with powdered sugar or frost with a thin glaze of 1 cups powdered sugar mixed smooth with 1 Tbsp. of milk. Use any fruit pie filling to fill your turnovers. How about cherry? Apple? What is your favorite?





## MOTHER'S STRAWBERRY PIE!

### Step 1:

Go berry picking with the children. Bring home a gallon of fresh, plump, sweet strawberries.

### Step 2:

Bake 4 deep dish pie crusts from the "In~a~Pinch" recipe. Set aside 4 cooled pie crusts.

### Step 3:

Mix together in a saucepan -

3 cups sugar

12 Tbsp. cornstarch

Pinch of salt

Add in 3 cups boiling water and cook & stir constantly over medium high heat until clear and thickened. Add in 1 small pkg. of strawberry flavored Jell-O powder. Stir well and let cool to room temperature.

### Step 4:

While mixture is cooling, wash and stem berries. Lay in a bowl lined with paper towels to absorb any moisture and to get them dry. Slice berries into a bowl and set aside in the refrigerator until mixture has cooled completely from step 3.

### Step 5:

Place prepared strawberries into baked pie crusts from step 2. Pour thickened glaze over berries from step 3, dividing glaze evenly between 4 pies. Chill until thick and set. Top pies with a thick layer of whipped topping and garnish with a few whole strawberries in the center or a ring of sliced strawberries around the edge. Serve immediately.

## PIE CRUST TOPPERS

For an old-fashioned crust with an extra appeal try this: Before baking a double-crust pie, brush the top of it with about 3 Tbsp. of milk. Then sprinkle liberally with Demara (turbinado sugar) and bake as directed. This leaves a beautiful sugary & shiny look to the top of the pie crust after baking.

Wow! A fancy topping on your next double-crust apple pie: Melt 1/4 cup butter in a small saucepan while apple pie is baking. Add in 1/2 cup brown sugar and 1 Tbsp. of heavy cream. Bring to a boil while stirring constantly. Remove from heat as soon as the mixture boils and add in 1/2 cup of finely crushed pecans. Pour over top crust after removing apple pie from oven and then return to the oven for 3 minutes. Serve warm or cooled with a scoop of vanilla ice cream.

A` la mode: Don't forget nearly any fruit pie is yummy served with a scoop of ice cream on top! And have any of you ever tried a thick slice of sharp Cheddar cheese with apple pie? That is good too!

Crumb topping: This is wonderful for a quick way to top off a fruit pie without having to have another crust in place on the top. Mix in a bowl, 1 cup of all-purpose unbleached flour, 1/3 cup brown sugar, 1/4 cup butter (cut this in the flour/sugar mixture with a pastry blender or a large fork). Then add in 3/4 cup finely chopped walnuts. If your family doesn't like nuts try substituting the walnuts with 1 cup of rolled oats. Mix well and sprinkle all over top of the pie and bake. Most pies take approximately 35-40 minutes to bake at 400 degrees. Check occasionally for a lovely golden brown color as oven temperatures vary.

Handling a pie crust can be a bit delicate. They take a little patience and a sheet or two of wax paper and a dusting of flour always helps. Wipe your surface with a wet cloth. This will make your wax paper adhere to the surface and not slip around. Dust your wax paper with flour and lay down your pastry dough, forming a circle with your hands. Don't over handle the dough - it will make it tough. Dust the top of your dough a bit more flour. Set another sheet of wax paper on top. And press and roll out with a rolling pin or pastry roller. Not toooooo thin! Pick the crusts up, wax paper and all, and peel off paper as you get the crust in place. Trim crust as needed. Press edges to seal and flute or press a fork around the edges to make a nice edging.

One  
Of  
My  
Favorite  
Kitchen  
Tools  
~~~  
A  
Pastry



German Chocolate CAKE? Make it in a PIE!

~ German Chocolate Pie ~

Blend in a large mixing bowl with an electric mixer:

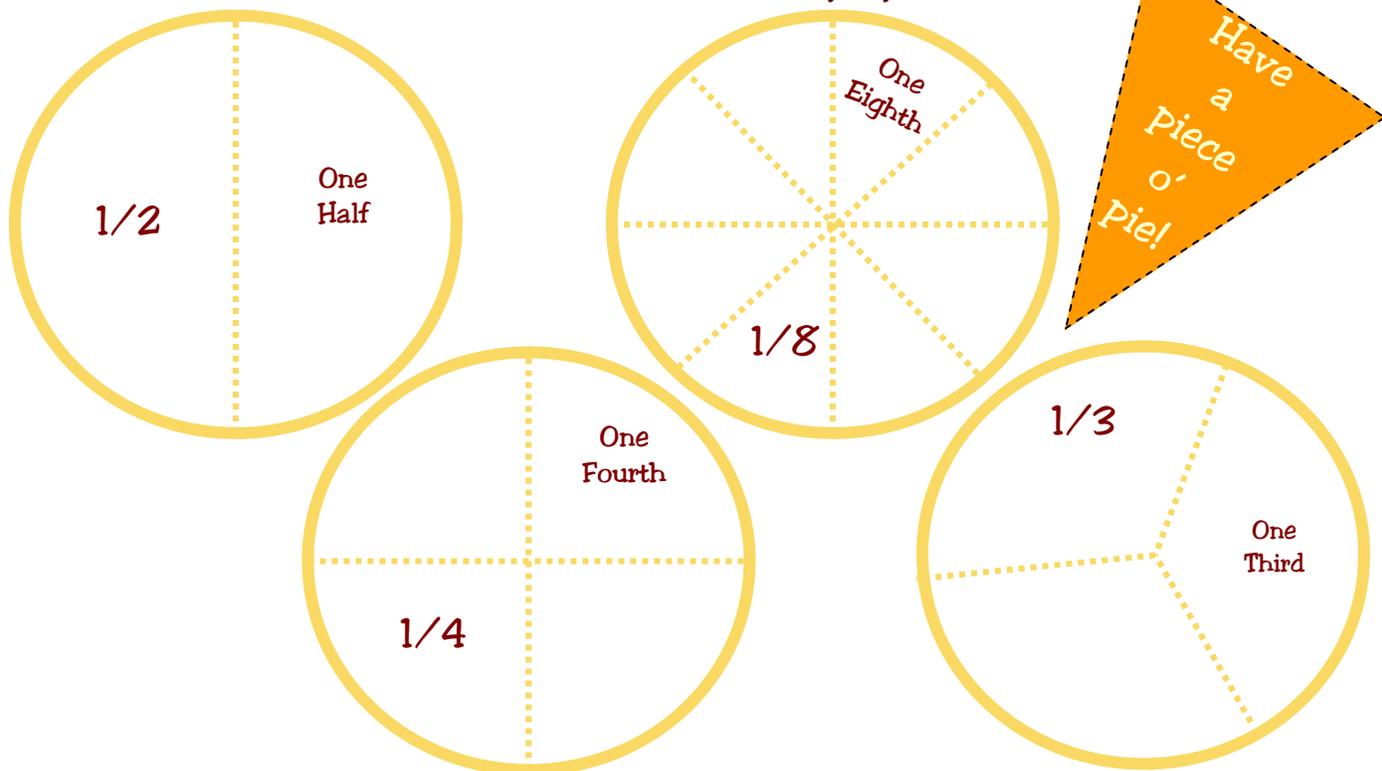
- 3 cups sugar
- 6 Tbsp. baking cocoa powder
- 4 eggs, well beaten
- Dash salt
- Add in :
- 1 12 oz. can evaporated milk (not sweetened condensed!)
- 1 tsp. vanilla flavoring
- 1 stick of butter or margarine, melted
- 1 1/2 cups flaked coconut
- 1 cup walnuts or pecans, coarsely chopped

Pour into 3 unbaked 9" round pie crusts. Bake at 300 degrees for 40 minutes. Cool and before serving, lightly drizzle each slice with chocolate syrup and a dollop of whipped cream.

Remember you have "In-a-Pinch" pie crusts already in your freezer? Just take 3 circles out the night before and place in the refrigerator. The next day you can make these delicious pies. We like German Choc Cake but we L-O-V-E this pie too. Hope you can try it too.

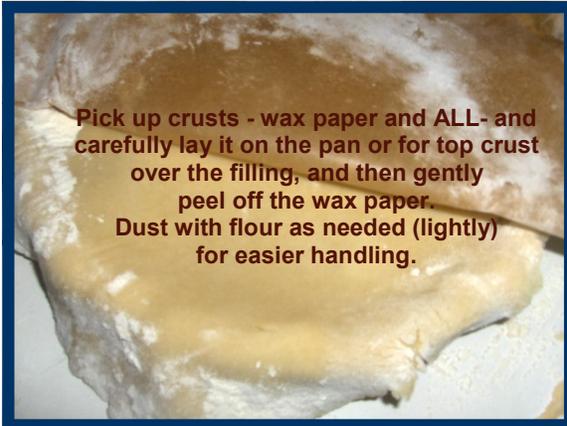
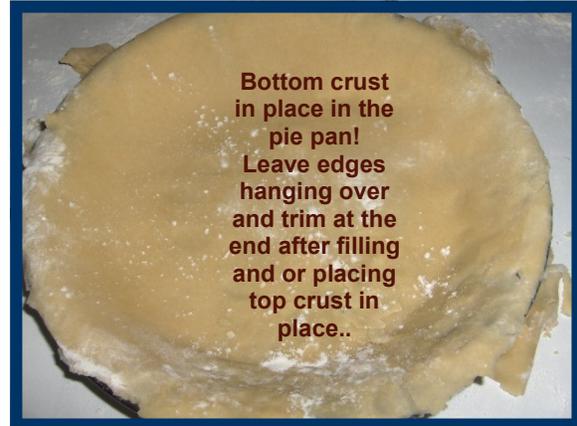
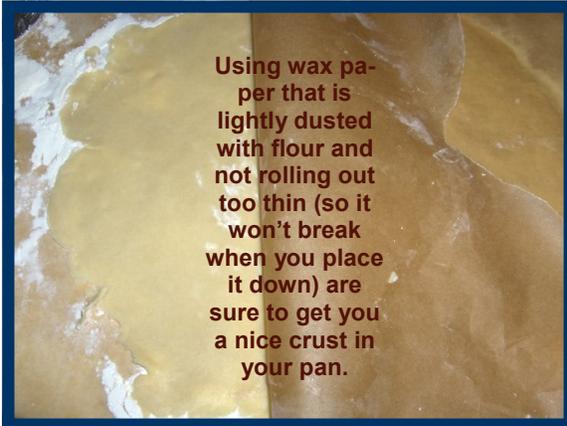
Mommas! ~ Make Your Kitchen a Classroom ~

Don't forget that your kitchen can be a classroom teaching your children all sorts of things that they will need to learn in life. These can be special times and the they don't even realize they are learning. PIES are perfect for learning fractions so give them a circle of pie dough and let them roll and cut and learn about fractions the next rainy day!



## Making a PIE!

Step by step, Martha in her kitchen rolling out and making pie from "In~a~Pinch" Pie Crusts. The pictures show a double crusted pie. Nothing fancy - just plain homemade good!



View a short video clip of packing pie crusts for the freezer.

[CLICK HERE](#)