



The Pie Academy

Paper Bag Apple Pie

I know it sounds a little crazy, but this is one of the best apple pies you'll ever eat. The bag keeps the pie extra juicy, protects the top from over-browning, and traps the gooey mess so you don't have to clean it off your baking sheet. Bake the pie next time you have guests and pull it out after they arrive. Makes for impressive pie theater. Don't forget the ice cream!

Food Processor Pie Dough (follows)	2 tablespoons cornstarch
	1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
FILLING	1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
7 - 8 cups peeled, cored, and sliced apples	1/8 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup packed light brown sugar	1 1/2 tablespoons lemon juice
2 tablespoons granulated sugar	1/2 cup dark raisins (optional)
	Melted Butter Crumb Topping (follows)

1. Prepare and refrigerate the pie dough. Roll the dough into a 12 1/2 to 13-inch circle and line a 9- or 9 1/2-inch deep-dish pie pan with it, shaping the edge into an upstanding ridge. Flute or crimp the edge, then refrigerate the shell until needed.

2. Position one of the oven racks in the lowest or second-to-lowest position. Remove any other racks above that one. Preheat the oven to 425°. Get out a paper grocery bag and a large baking sheet.

3. Mix the apples and brown sugar in a large bowl. Let stand for several minutes. Mix the granulated sugar, cornstarch, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt in a small bowl; stir into the fruit along with the lemon juice and raisins, if using.

4. Turn the filling into the pie shell, mounding it toward the middle. Cover the pie with a generous layer of the crumb topping; you may not need all of it. Pack the topping down gently.

5. Put the pie in the brown paper bag, fold the edge of the bag, and secure it with a metal clip or paper clip. Or simply fold the end over and tuck it under the pie. Put the pie and bag on the baking sheet and place in the oven. Make sure the bag doesn't touch the oven side walls or the element or any part of the oven.

6. Bake for 1 hour and 20 minutes. To check the pie, open the bag carefully; keep your face away from the opening so the steam can escape. The pie is done when you see thick apple juice bubbling around the edges. If the pie isn't done, close up the bag and bake for 20 minutes more. Remove the pie from the bag, transfer to a rack, and cool at least 1 hour before serving. Makes 8 servings.

(continued)



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Single-Crust Food Processor Pie Dough

I use this buttery dough for about 75% of all the sweet and savory pies I make - it's that versatile. It has great flavor and a flaky texture; it's easy to handle; and freezes beautifully.

1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour	10 tablespoons cold, unsalted butter, cut into 1/2-inch cubes*
1 1/2 teaspoons cornstarch	2 teaspoons white vinegar
1/2 teaspoon salt	Scant 1/3 cup water

1. Combine the flour, cornstarch, and salt in a bowl. Scatter the butter on a flour-dusted plate. Pour the vinegar into a 1-cup glass measuring cup. Add just enough cold water to equal a scant 1/3 cup. Refrigerate everything for 15 minutes.

2. Transfer the dry ingredients to a food processor. Add all of the butter, then pulse six or seven times, until the pieces of butter are roughly the size of small peas.

3. Pour the vinegar-water mixture through the feed tube in a 7- to 8-second stream, pulsing the machine as you add it. Stop pulsing when the mixture is just starting to form larger clumps.

4. Turn the dough onto your work surface and pack it into a ball. Put the dough on a sheet of plastic wrap and flatten it into a 3/4-inch-thick disk. Wrap the disk and refrigerate for 1 hour before rolling. Makes one 9 1/2-inch pie shell.

*I sometimes use 8 tablespoons butter plus 2 tablespoons Crisco or lard for a more tender crust.

Melted Butter Crumb Topping

Be sure to refrigerate the topping for at least 1 hour before adding it to your pie..

1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour	1/2 cup sweetened flaked coconut
1/2 cup sugar	1/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup finely chopped walnuts	1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, melted and partially cooled

1. Combine the flour, sugar, nuts, coconut, and salt in a large bowl. Mix lightly.

2. Get out a handheld electric mixer. When the butter is tepid, add it to the dry ingredients in a stream as you beat on low speed. When all the butter is added, continue to beat for 1 minute on medium-low. The topping will form small crumbs.

3. Spread the crumbs out on a rimmed baking sheet and refrigerate for 1 hour or freeze for 30 minutes, until firm. If you're not using the same day, transfer to a gallon freezer bag and freeze up to 3 months.