

COOKING SKILLS

Cooking Skills: Pastry 1

8 Chapters

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COOKING SKILLS: PASTRY 1

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Cooking Skills: Pastry 1

Chapter 1 · Know Your Pastry

SKILL GOAL

Understand what each ingredient does, and make shortcrust that is short, crisp and easy to roll.

Shopping list for this chapter

The basics

Shortcrust is the everyday pastry for pies and tarts. It has just four things: flour, fat, a little water and salt. The classic ratio is **2 parts flour to 1 part fat by weight** (200 g flour to 100 g fat), with about 3 to 4 tablespoons of cold water. In the mixing, fat coats the flour grains and stops water joining the proteins into long, stretchy gluten strands. That is what makes the pastry **short** (crumbly and tender) rather than chewy.

Cold is the main skill. Cold fat stays in small pieces until the oven, where it melts and leaves tiny gaps, so the pastry is light. Warm fat smears into the flour and gives a greasy, hard pastry. Butter gives flavour; lard or white vegetable fat gives crispness and is more forgiving; a half-and-half mix gives both. Quiche and savoury custards are in Cooking Skills: Eggs 2, chapter 4, which uses a pastry case like these.

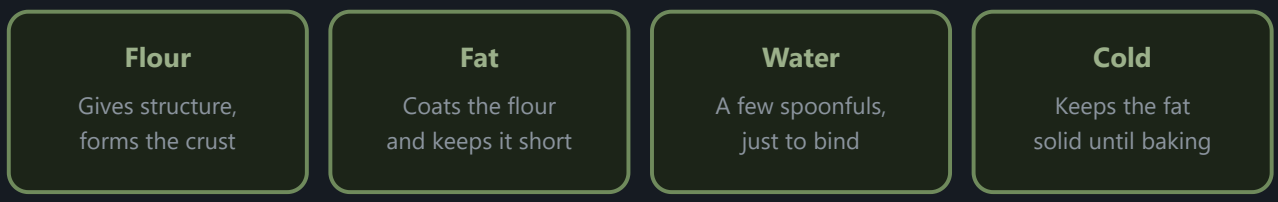


Figure 1. Four things make shortcrust: flour, fat, a little water and cold.

The method

- **Cut cold fat into small cubes** and chill the flour and bowl if the kitchen is warm.
- **Rub the fat into the flour** with the tips of your fingers, lifting to add air, until it looks like breadcrumbs with a few pea-sized bits.
- **Add cold water a spoonful at a time,** mixing with a knife, until the dough just comes together. Too much water makes it tough.
- **Press into a flat disc, wrap and chill** for at least 30 minutes, so the gluten relaxes and the fat firms up.
- **Handle as little as you can.** Overworked pastry shrinks in the oven and bakes hard.

PASTRY	FAT	FLAVOUR AND TEXTURE	BEST FOR
Plain shortcrust	Butter, or butter and lard	Light, crumbly, buttery	Pies, tarts, quiche
Food-processor shortcrust	Butter	As plain, faster	Quick bakes in a warm kitchen
Cheese pastry	Butter and cheese	Savoury, rich, golden	Straws, savoury tarts
Wholemeal pastry	Butter	Nutty, a little denser	Rustic pies, pasties

RAW DOUGH, COLD FAT AND ALLERGENS

Raw dough and raw flour: raw flour and raw egg can carry germs, so don't taste raw pastry or filling that contains raw egg or raw meat. Wash hands, bowls and the worktop afterwards, and keep tasting for the cooked result.

Cold and warm kitchens: pastry hates heat. If the kitchen is hot, chill the bowl, the flour and the butter, work quickly, and put the dough back in the fridge whenever it turns soft and sticky.

Allergens: pastry contains gluten (flour) and milk (butter); egg washes contain egg. Use a plant block fat for a dairy-free version, and note that gluten-free flour needs a different method.

Try it

LEVEL 1 · START HERE

Plain shortcrust by hand

15 minutes plus 30 minutes chilling | 1 batch (enough for a 23 cm tart or a pie lid) | rubbing in

Rubbing in by hand teaches you what pastry should feel like. Use your fingertips, not your palms, which are too warm. Stop as soon as the mixture looks like fine breadcrumbs.

INGREDIENTS (1 BATCH)

200 g	plain flour, plus extra for rolling
1 pinch	fine salt
100 g	cold unsalted butter, cubed (or 50 g butter and 50 g lard)
3 tbsp	cold water, plus a little more if needed

1. Mix the flour and salt in a large bowl. Add the butter and rub it in with your fingertips for **3 to 5 minutes,** lifting the mixture as you go, until it looks like breadcrumbs.
2. Add the water a spoonful at a time, stirring with a knife until the dough clumps. Squeeze a handful: it should hold together without being sticky.
3. Press into a disc, wrap in cling film and chill for **30 minutes** before rolling.

> **RAW DOUGH AND ALLERGENS**
>
> **Raw dough and raw flour:** raw flour and raw egg can carry germs, so don't taste raw pastry or filling that contains raw egg or raw meat. Wash hands, bowls and the worktop afterwards, and keep tasting for the cooked result.
>
> **Allergens:** pastry contains gluten (flour) and milk (butter); egg washes contain egg. Use a plant block fat for a dairy-free version, and note that gluten-free flour needs a different method.

LEVEL 2 · MACHINE

Shortcrust in a food processor

10 minutes plus 30 minutes chilling | 1 batch | making pastry fast, without warming it

A processor is quick and keeps the fat cold, which is good in a warm kitchen. The risk is going too far: pulse in short bursts and stop the moment the dough begins to clump.

INGREDIENTS (1 BATCH)

200 g	plain flour
1 pinch	fine salt
100 g	cold unsalted butter, cubed
3 tbsp	ice-cold water

1. Pulse the flour, salt and butter for **10 to 15 seconds** until the mixture looks like breadcrumbs.
2. Add the water through the funnel and pulse in 1-second bursts until the dough just starts to form clumps.
3. Tip onto a worktop, press into a disc, wrap and chill for 30 minutes.

> **SHARP BLADES AND RAW DOUGH**
>
> **Sharp blades:** unplug the processor before you take the blade out, and lift it by the central shaft; the blades are very sharp.
>
> **Raw dough and raw flour:** raw flour and raw egg can carry germs, so don't taste raw pastry or filling that contains raw egg or raw meat. Wash hands, bowls and the worktop afterwards, and keep tasting for the cooked result.

LEVEL 2 · SAVOURY

Cheese pastry

15 minutes plus 30 minutes chilling | 1 batch | adding flavour to the dough

Cheese and a pinch of mustard powder turn plain shortcrust into a golden, savoury pastry that suits straws, savoury tarts and pie lids. Use a strong cheese; a mild one gets lost. Grate it finely so it blends in.

INGREDIENTS (1 BATCH)

200 g	plain flour
1 pinch	fine salt
½ tsp	English mustard powder
100 g	cold unsalted butter, cubed
75 g	mature Cheddar, finely grated
1	egg yolk
2 tbsp	cold water

1. Rub the butter into the flour, salt and mustard powder until like breadcrumbs, then stir in the cheese.
2. Add the egg yolk and the water a spoonful at a time, mixing until the dough clumps.
3. Press into a disc, wrap and chill for **30 minutes.** Bake at 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6).

> **RAW EGG AND ALLERGENS**
>
> **Raw dough and raw flour:** raw flour and raw egg can carry germs, so don't taste raw pastry or filling that contains raw egg or raw meat. Wash hands, bowls and the worktop afterwards, and keep tasting for the cooked result.
>
> **Allergens:** pastry contains gluten (flour) and milk (butter); egg washes contain egg. Use a plant block fat for a dairy-free version, and note that gluten-free flour needs a different method.
>
> **Allergens:** contains egg, milk and mustard.

LEVEL 3 · RUSTIC

Wholemeal pastry

15 minutes plus 30 minutes chilling | 1 batch | adjusting water for a thirsty flour

Wholemeal flour has bran, which cuts gluten and soaks up more water, so the pastry is nutty, a little crumbly and needs a bit more liquid. Mixing wholemeal with white gives the best balance and is easier to roll.

INGREDIENTS (1 BATCH)

100 g	wholemeal flour
100 g	plain flour
1 pinch	fine salt
110 g	cold unsalted butter, cubed
4 tbsp	cold water, plus more if needed

1. Mix the flours and salt and rub in the butter until like breadcrumbs.
2. Add the water a spoonful at a time until the dough comes together. It should feel slightly damper than white pastry.
3. Press into a disc, wrap and chill for **at least 45 minutes,** so the bran softens, before rolling.

> RAW DOUGH AND ALLERGENS
>
> **Raw dough and raw flour:** raw flour and raw egg can carry germs, so don't taste raw pastry or filling that contains raw egg or raw meat. Wash hands, bowls and the worktop afterwards, and keep tasting for the cooked result.
>
> **Allergens:** pastry contains gluten (flour) and milk (butter); egg washes contain egg. Use a plant block fat for a dairy-free version, and note that gluten-free flour needs a different method.

Experiments

EXPERIMENT

Butter, lard or a mix

Flavour and crispness.

1. Make small batches with all butter, all lard and half and half, and bake a strip of each at 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6) for 12 minutes.

Look for: Butter tastes best and browns well; lard is the crispest and shortest; the mix gives a good balance of both.

EXPERIMENT

Cold water against warm

Gluten.

1. Mix two small batches, one with ice-cold water and one with warm tap water, and roll out both.

Look for: The warm-water dough is sticky, tough and shrinks when baked; the cold one is crumbly and rolls well. Use ice-cold water.

EXPERIMENT

Rested or not

Relaxing the dough.

1. Roll a piece straight after mixing and a piece after 30 minutes in the fridge, and bake both.

Look for: The unrested one shrinks and curls; the rested one holds its shape. Chilling is not optional.

EXPERIMENT

A lot or a little handling

Overworking.

1. Knead one piece of dough for a minute, and leave another barely touched, then bake both.

Look for: The kneaded dough turns tough, dense and shrinks. The lightly handled one is tender and crisp.

Tasting notes

WHAT I TRIED	METHOD OR AMOUNT	WHAT I SAW	WHAT I THOUGHT	WILL I DO IT AGAIN?
Plain shortcrust				
Food-processor shortcrust				
Cheese pastry				
Wholemeal pastry				
Butter, lard or a mix				
Cold water against warm				
Rested or not				
A lot or a little handling				

Troubleshooting

PROBLEM	LIKELY CAUSE	WHAT TO DO
Dough too crumbly to roll	Not enough water	Sprinkle on a teaspoon of cold water and press together
Dough sticky	Too much water or fat warm	Chill for 20 minutes; dust lightly with flour

PROBLEM	LIKELY CAUSE	WHAT TO DO
Tough, hard pastry	Too much water or overworked	Use less water and handle gently next time
Greasy pastry	Butter warm and smeared in	Chill everything and work faster
Shrinks in the oven	Stretched when rolling, or not rested	Roll without stretching, and chill the lined tin for 20 minutes
Pale pastry	Oven too cool, or no wash	Bake hotter, and brush with egg or milk

HOT OVEN, RAW DOUGH AND LEFTOVERS

Hot oven and hot trays: ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.

Raw dough and raw flour: raw flour and raw egg can carry germs, so don't taste raw pastry or filling that contains raw egg or raw meat. Wash hands, bowls and the worktop afterwards, and keep tasting for the cooked result.

Keeping and freezing: raw pastry keeps in the fridge for about 2 days wrapped tightly, and freezes for about 3 months (general guidance). Cooked pies and tarts keep for about 2 days chilled; reheat pies until steaming hot all the way through, and freeze cooked pies for no more than about 2 to 3 months.

CHECKPOINT: CAN YOU DO THIS NOW?

- ☐ I know what flour, fat, water and cold do.
- ☐ I can rub fat into flour to breadcrumbs.
- ☐ I can add water a spoonful at a time.
- ☐ I know why pastry is rested.
- ☐ I can make shortcrust by hand and by machine.

NEXT CHAPTER

Cooking Skills: Pastry 1, chapter 2 is Rolling, Lining and Blind Baking: making a tart case that stays crisp.

Cooking Skills: Pastry 1

Chapter 2 · Rolling, Lining and Blind Baking

SKILL GOAL

Roll pastry evenly, line a tin without shrinkage and bake a case that stays crisp under a filling.

Shopping list for this chapter

The basics

Rolling is simple, but small habits matter. Use **just enough flour** to stop sticking; extra flour dries and toughens the pastry. Roll from the centre outwards, **turn the pastry a quarter turn** after every roll, and keep it moving so it does not stick to the worktop. Aim for about **3 mm**, the thickness of a pound coin. If it cracks or warms, chill it.

A tart with a wet filling needs a base that is cooked first, called **blind baking**: the case is baked empty, weighted with baking beans so it does not puff or slump. Then a brush of beaten egg seals it, so liquid cannot soak in. This is the cure for the soggy bottom. The case recipe in chapter 1 is shortcrust; for a custard filling in a case, see Cooking Skills: Eggs 2, chapter 4.



Figure 2. Five steps to a crisp case: roll, line, chill, blind bake, seal.

The method

- **Dust the worktop lightly,** roll from the centre outwards and turn the pastry a quarter turn after each roll.

- **Lift the pastry on the rolling pin** and ease it into the tin, pressing into the corners without stretching.
- **Leave a little overhang,** then chill for 20 minutes; pastry shrinks when it first heats, and the overhang is trimmed after baking.
- **Line with baking parchment and fill with beans** right up to the edges, then bake at 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6) for about 15 minutes.
- **Remove the beans and paper,** brush with beaten egg and bake for 5 minutes more to seal and dry the base.

CASE	BAKE BEFORE FILLING	FILLING	TIME (APPROXIMATE)
Blind-baked case	15 + 5 minutes	Any wet filling	35 minutes
Jam tarts	None (baked with filling)	Jam	25 minutes
Sweet case, lemon curd	15 + 5 minutes	Lemon curd, set cold	40 minutes
Treacle tart	None (baked with filling)	Syrup and crumbs	55 minutes

HOT OVEN, HOT BEANS AND HOT SYRUP

Hot oven and hot trays: ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.

Hot beans: baking beans hold heat for a long time. Lift the paper and beans out with the edges of the parchment and tip them into a heatproof bowl.

Hot syrup and sugar: syrup and jam fillings become hotter than boiling water and stick to skin. Let a tart cool for 15 minutes before cutting, and take care with hot jam when eating tarts straight from the tin.

Try it

LEVEL 1 · START HERE

A blind-baked tart case

35 minutes plus chilling | 1 case (23 cm) | rolling, lining and blind baking

The foundation of every tart in this course. Make it, cool it and fill it with whatever you like. Keep the baking beans in a jar for next time.

INGREDIENTS (1 CASE)

1	batch of plain shortcrust (chapter 1)
1 tbsp	plain flour, for rolling
1	egg, beaten
1	sheet of baking parchment
300 g	baking beans, dried rice or pulses

1. Roll the pastry to **3 mm** and a circle about 5 cm wider than the tin. Lift it on the rolling pin, ease it into the tin, press it into the corners and leave the overhang. Chill for 20 minutes.
2. Heat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6). Prick the base with a fork, line with parchment, fill with beans and bake for **15 minutes.**
3. Lift out the paper and beans, brush the case with beaten egg and bake for 5 minutes. Trim the edge with a knife and cool in the tin.

> **HOT OVEN AND RAW EGG**
>
> **Hot oven and hot trays:** ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.
>
> **Raw dough and raw flour:** raw flour and raw egg can carry germs, so don't taste raw pastry or filling that contains raw egg or raw meat. Wash hands, bowls and the worktop afterwards, and keep tasting for the cooked result.

LEVEL 1 · QUICK

Jam tarts

30 minutes plus chilling | 12 tarts | cutting and lining small tins

No blind baking needed: the filling is small and cooks quickly. The skill here is cutting rounds that fit and not overfilling, because jam bubbles out and sticks.

INGREDIENTS (12 TARTS)

1	batch of plain shortcrust (chapter 1)
1 tbsp	plain flour, for rolling
12 tsp	jam, any flavour
1	egg, beaten (optional)

1. Heat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6). Roll the pastry to 3 mm and cut 12 rounds with a cutter slightly larger than the holes of the tin. Press them in gently.
2. Put **1 level teaspoon** of jam in each, no more, or it will boil over. Brush the edges with egg if you like.
3. Bake for **15 to 18 minutes** until golden. Cool in the tin for 10 minutes before lifting out.

> **HOT JAM AND OVEN**
>
> **Hot oven and hot trays:** ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.
>
> **Hot syrup and sugar:** syrup and jam fillings become hotter than boiling water and stick to skin. Let a tart cool for 15 minutes before cutting, and take care with hot jam when eating tarts straight from the tin.

LEVEL 2 · SWEET

Lemon curd tartlets (sweet shortcrust)

50 minutes plus chilling | 12 tartlets | sweet pastry and a case that stays crisp

Sweet shortcrust has sugar and an egg yolk, which makes it crisper, richer and a little more fragile. Blind-bake the cases, cool them, and spoon in lemon curd. Shop-bought curd works, or make your own.

INGREDIENTS (12 TARTLETS)

200 g	plain flour
100 g	cold unsalted butter, cubed
50 g	icing sugar
1	egg yolk
2 tbsp	cold water
200 g	lemon curd

1. Rub the butter into the flour and icing sugar, add the yolk and water, mix to a dough and chill for 30 minutes.
2. Roll to 3 mm, cut 12 rounds and line a tart tin. Chill 15 minutes, then prick, add squares of foil and a few beans and bake at 190°C (170°C fan, gas 5) for **12 minutes.**
3. Remove the foil and beans and bake for 5 minutes until pale gold. Cool completely, then fill with lemon curd.

> **HOT OVEN AND ALLERGENS**
>
> **Hot oven and hot trays:** ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.
>
> **Allergens:** contains gluten, egg and milk; lemon curd contains egg.

LEVEL 3 · CLASSIC

A treacle tart

1 hour plus chilling | 8 portions | a filling that is baked with the case

Golden syrup, breadcrumbs and lemon in a shortcrust case. The breadcrumbs soak up the syrup so it sets rather than runs. The sugar caramelises on the top and the lemon cuts the sweetness. Serve warm with custard or cream.

INGREDIENTS (8 PORTIONS)

1	blind-baked case (above)
300 g	golden syrup
100 g	fresh white breadcrumbs
1	lemon, zest and juice
1	egg, beaten (optional)

1. Heat the oven to 190°C (170°C fan, gas 5). Warm the syrup gently in a pan until runny, then stir in the breadcrumbs, lemon zest and juice and the egg if using.
2. Pour into the blind-baked case.
3. Bake for **25 to 30 minutes** until set and golden. Cool for 15 minutes before cutting.

> **HOT SYRUP AND OVEN**
>
> **Hot syrup and sugar:** syrup and jam fillings become hotter than boiling water and stick to skin. Let a tart cool for 15 minutes before cutting, and take care with hot jam when eating tarts straight from the tin.
>
> **Hot oven and hot trays:** ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.
>
> **Allergens:** contains gluten, egg and milk.

Experiments

EXPERIMENT

Rested or unrested lining

Shrinkage.

1. Line one tin and bake it straight away, and line a second and chill for 20 minutes before baking.

Look for: The unrested case shrinks down the sides; the chilled one keeps its shape. Chill every lined tin.

EXPERIMENT

Baking beans or none

Puffing.

1. Blind-bake one case with beans and another with only a fork-pricked base.

Look for: The unweighted case puffs and slumps; the weighted one stays flat with straight sides.

EXPERIMENT

Egg seal or not

Sogginess.

1. Seal one blind-baked case with egg and leave another bare, then fill both with a wet filling and bake.

Look for: The sealed base stays crisp; the bare one is softer under the filling.

EXPERIMENT

Tin on a hot tray

Base cooking.

1. Bake one tart on a preheated tray and another on a cold shelf.

Look for: The preheated tray gives a golden, crisp base. The cold shelf gives a paler, less crisp one.

Tasting notes

WHAT I TRIED	METHOD OR AMOUNT	WHAT I SAW	WHAT I THOUGHT	WILL I DO IT AGAIN?
Blind-baked tart case				
Jam tarts				
Lemon curd tartlets				
Treacle tart				
Rested or unrested lining				
Baking beans or none				
Egg seal or not				
Tin on a hot tray				

Troubleshooting

PROBLEM	LIKELY CAUSE	WHAT TO DO
Pastry cracks when rolling	Too cold or too dry	Let it stand for 5 minutes and patch cracks with water
Pastry sticks to the worktop	Too warm or not enough flour	Chill it; dust with a little flour, lift and turn often
Case shrinks	Not rested or stretched	Chill the lined tin and ease, don't stretch
Soggy bottom	Not blind-baked or sealed	Blind-bake, seal with egg and use a preheated tray
Case puffs up	No weight	Use beans up to the edge and prick the base
Edges burn	Too hot or too long	Cover the edges with strips of foil

HOT OVEN, RAW EGG AND LEFTOVERS

Hot oven and hot trays: ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.

Raw dough and raw flour: raw flour and raw egg can carry germs, so don't taste raw pastry or filling that contains raw egg or raw meat. Wash hands, bowls and the worktop afterwards, and keep tasting for the cooked result.

Keeping and freezing: raw pastry keeps in the fridge for about 2 days wrapped tightly, and freezes for about 3 months (general guidance). Cooked pies and tarts keep for about 2 days chilled; reheat pies until steaming hot all the way through, and freeze cooked pies for no more than about 2 to 3 months.

CHECKPOINT: CAN YOU DO THIS NOW?

☐ I can roll pastry to an even 3 mm.

☐ I can line a tin without stretching.

☐ I can blind bake and seal a case.

☐ I can use a hot tray for a crisp base.

☐ I can fix a case that shrinks or puffs.

NEXT CHAPTER

Cooking Skills: Pastry 1, chapter 3 is Savoury Tarts and Flans: keeping the base crisp under a wet filling.

Cooking Skills: Pastry 1

Chapter 3 · Savoury Tarts and Flans

SKILL GOAL

Fill a tart so the base stays crisp and the topping is cooked through.

Shopping list for this chapter

The basics

A savoury tart is a blind-baked case with a filling that is mostly **cooked vegetables and cheese, not custard.** This makes it quicker and avoids the soggy bottom that wet custard can cause. Quiche and other egg custard fillings are in Cooking Skills: Eggs 2, chapter 4; these tarts have a lighter, more rustic style, and are good hot, warm or cold.

The skill is **moisture control.** Vegetables such as tomatoes, mushrooms and courgettes are mostly water. Cook or salt them first, spread a thin **barrier** of mustard, pesto or cheese on the case, and don't overfill. Make the case in advance (see Cooking Skills: Pastry 1, chapter 2), because a hot tart on a crisp base is the best part.

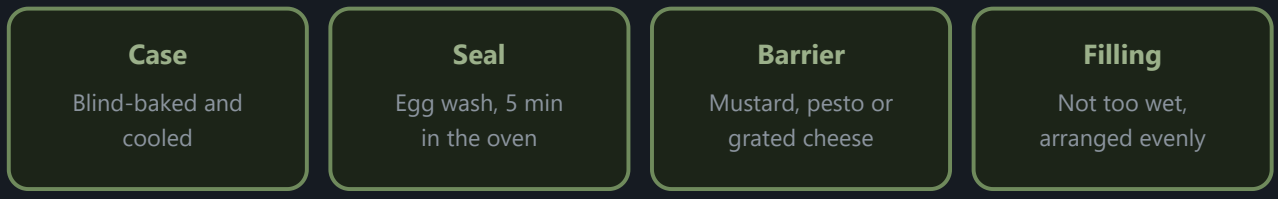


Figure 3. Four layers keep a savoury tart crisp: case, seal, barrier and filling.

The method

- **Blind-bake and seal the case** and let it cool a little so the barrier does not melt into it.
- **Spread a barrier layer** (a thin coat of Dijon mustard or a sprinkle of cheese) over the base.
- **Cook watery vegetables first,** or salt and drain them, so they do not flood the case.

- **Arrange the filling evenly** and keep it below the rim so it does not spill over.
- **Bake on a preheated tray** at 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6) until the filling is cooked and golden at the edges.

TART	MAIN FILLING	BARRIER	TIME IN OVEN (APPROXIMATE)
Tomato and mustard	Sliced tomatoes	Dijon mustard	25 minutes
Onion and cheese	Browned onions, Gruyère	Cheese	20 minutes
Mushroom and thyme	Fried mushrooms, crème fraîche	Cheese	20 minutes
Roasted vegetable	Roasted peppers and courgette	Mustard	20 minutes

HOT OVEN, HOT PANS AND ALLERGENS

Hot oven and hot trays: ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.

Allergens: pastry contains gluten (flour) and milk (butter); egg washes contain egg. Use a plant block fat for a dairy-free version, and note that gluten-free flour needs a different method.

Cooling: let the tart stand for 10 minutes before cutting; hot cheese and vegetable filling can burn the mouth.

Try it

LEVEL 1 · START HERE

A tomato and mustard tart

40 minutes plus the case | 4 portions | a mustard barrier and drained tomatoes

The simplest tart: mustard, ripe tomatoes, thyme and cheese. Salt the tomato slices for 15 minutes and pat them dry to draw out water. Serve warm with a green salad.

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

1	blind-baked case (chapter 2)
1 tbsp	Dijon mustard
4	large ripe tomatoes, sliced 5 mm thick
50 g	mature Cheddar or Gruyère, grated
1 tsp	fresh thyme leaves
1 tbsp	olive oil
1 pinch	flaked sea salt

1. Salt the tomato slices and leave them on kitchen paper for 15 minutes, then pat dry. Heat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6).
2. Spread the mustard over the case, scatter half the cheese, then overlap the tomatoes in circles. Top with thyme and the rest of the cheese.
3. Drizzle with oil and bake on a hot tray for **20 to 25 minutes** until the cheese is golden. Rest for 10 minutes.

> **HOT OVEN AND ALLERGENS**
>
> **Hot oven and hot trays:** ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.
>
> **Allergens:** contains gluten, milk and mustard.

LEVEL 2 · SWEET ONION

An onion and cheese tart

1 hour plus the case | 4 portions | slowly browning onions for a filling

Onions cooked slowly turn sweet and jammy and carry the whole tart. Don't rush them: 25 minutes over a low heat is the skill. Gruyère melts well and has a nutty flavour.

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

1	blind-baked case (chapter 2)
3	large onions, thinly sliced
1 tbsp	butter
1 tbsp	olive oil
1 tsp	fresh thyme leaves
100 g	Gruyère, grated
1 tsp	Dijon mustard

1. Cook the onions with the butter, oil and a pinch of salt over a low heat for **25 minutes,** stirring now and then, until golden and soft. Add the thyme.
2. Spread the mustard over the case, then the onions, then the cheese.
3. Bake at 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6) for **15 to 20 minutes** until bubbling and golden.

> **HOT PAN, HOT OVEN AND ALLERGENS**
>
> **Hot oven and hot trays:** ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.
>
> **Allergens:** pastry contains gluten (flour) and milk (butter); egg washes contain egg. Use a plant block fat for a dairy-free version, and note that gluten-free flour needs a different method.

LEVEL 2 · CREAMY

A mushroom and thyme tart

45 minutes plus the case | 4 portions | driving water out of mushrooms

Mushrooms hold enormous amounts of water. Fry them over a high heat in a wide pan until the liquid has gone and they turn golden, and the tart will be rich, not soggy. Crème fraîche gives a creamy bind.

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

1	blind-baked case (chapter 2)
1 tbsp	butter
400 g	mushrooms, sliced
2	garlic cloves, crushed
1 tsp	fresh thyme leaves
3 tbsp	crème fraîche
50 g	Gruyère, grated

1. Fry the mushrooms in the butter over a high heat for **8 to 10 minutes,** until the water has gone and they are golden, adding the garlic and thyme for the last minute. Cool for 5 minutes.
2. Stir in the crème fraîche, then spoon into the case and top with the cheese.
3. Bake at 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6) for **15 to 20 minutes** until golden.

> **HOT PAN, HOT OVEN AND ALLERGENS**
>
> **Hot oven and hot trays:** ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.
>
> **Allergens:** contains gluten and milk.

LEVEL 3 · ROASTED

A roasted vegetable tart

1 hour plus the case | 4 portions | roasting vegetables first to remove water

Roasting vegetables in a hot oven drives off water, concentrates flavour and browns the edges, so the tart is full of flavour and not wet. The same method works for any mix of peppers, courgette, aubergine and red onion.

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

1	blind-baked case (chapter 2)
1	red pepper, cut in chunks
1	courgette, sliced
1	red onion, cut in wedges
2 tbsp	olive oil
1 tbsp	Dijon mustard
75 g	mature Cheddar or crumbled feta
1 tsp	fresh thyme leaves

1. Toss the vegetables with the oil and a pinch of salt and roast at 220°C (200°C fan, gas 7) for **25 minutes** until browned at the edges. Cool for 10 minutes.
2. Spread the mustard over the case, add the vegetables and top with the cheese and thyme. Lower the oven to 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6).
3. Bake for **15 minutes** until the cheese is golden.

> **HOT OVEN, HOT TRAY AND ALLERGENS**
>
> **Hot oven and hot trays:** ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.
>
> **Allergens:** contains gluten, milk and mustard.

Experiments

EXPERIMENT

Sealing with egg or not

Crispness.

1. Fill one sealed case and one unsealed case with the same wet topping, bake both and cut a slice from each.

Look for: The sealed base stays crisp; the unsealed one is damp. The egg wash is worth the 5 minutes.

EXPERIMENT

Filling hot or cold

Base.

1. Spoon hot mushroom filling into one case and cooled filling into another.

Look for: Hot filling softens the base before it bakes; cooled filling keeps the case crisper.

EXPERIMENT

Cheese at the bottom or the top

Barrier or crust.

1. Put cheese under the filling in one tart and on top in another.

Look for: Cheese under the filling forms a barrier that keeps the base crisp; on top, it browns and gives a crunchy topping. Use both.

EXPERIMENT

Metal or ceramic tin

Heat.

1. Bake the same tart in a metal loose-bottomed tin and in a ceramic flan dish.

Look for: The metal tin conducts heat well and crisps the base; the ceramic is slower and the base is paler. Preheat a ceramic dish on a tray.

Tasting notes

WHAT I TRIED	METHOD OR AMOUNT	WHAT I SAW	WHAT I THOUGHT	WILL I DO IT AGAIN?
Tomato and mustard tart				
Onion and cheese tart				
Mushroom and thyme tart				
Roasted vegetable tart				
Sealing with egg or not				
Filling hot or cold				
Cheese at the bottom or the top				
Metal or ceramic tin				

Troubleshooting

PROBLEM	LIKELY CAUSE	WHAT TO DO
Soggy base	Wet filling, no barrier, or not blind-baked	Seal the case, spread a barrier, and cook watery vegetables first
Watery tart	Tomatoes or mushrooms not drained	Salt and drain tomatoes; fry mushrooms until dry

PROBLEM	LIKELY CAUSE	WHAT TO DO
Filling spills over	Overfilled	Keep the filling below the rim
Cheese greasy or burned	Too hot or too much cheese	Use less cheese; lower the heat
Pastry burns at the edges	Edges too thin or oven too hot	Cover the edge with foil strips
Tart falls apart when cut	Cut while hot	Rest it for 10 minutes before cutting

HOT OVEN, HOT FILLING AND LEFTOVERS

Hot oven and hot trays: ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.

Steam from a hot pie: a pie keeps hot steam and boiling filling inside the crust. Rest it for 10 minutes before cutting, cut from the side with the pie held steady, and keep your face back when you break the lid.

Keeping and freezing: raw pastry keeps in the fridge for about 2 days wrapped tightly, and freezes for about 3 months (general guidance). Cooked pies and tarts keep for about 2 days chilled; reheat pies until steaming hot all the way through, and freeze cooked pies for no more than about 2 to 3 months.

CHECKPOINT: CAN YOU DO THIS NOW?

- ☐ I can seal a blind-baked case.
- ☐ I can use a barrier layer under the filling.
- ☐ I can cook watery vegetables so they do not flood the tart.
- ☐ I can bake on a preheated tray.
- ☐ I can fix a soggy or overflowing tart.

NEXT CHAPTER

Cooking Skills: Pastry 1, chapter 4 is Covered Pies: a cooked filling, a lid, a vent and a glaze.

Cooking Skills: Pastry 1

Chapter 4 · Covered Pies

SKILL GOAL

Make a pie with a cooked filling, a lid that stays crisp and a crust that browns evenly.

Shopping list for this chapter

The basics

A pie is a cooked filling in a dish, topped with pastry. The most important rule is: **cook the filling first, and cool it before the lid goes on.** A hot filling melts the fat in the pastry before it reaches the oven and steams the underside. The filling should be thick, not runny, because the lid cannot hold back a thin gravy; thicken with flour, and simmer until the sauce coats a spoon. Sauces for fillings are in Cooking Skills: Sauces 1, chapters 2 and 3.

The lid needs two things: a **seal** (press the pastry to a wet rim) and a **vent** (a small slit that lets steam out). Without the vent, steam builds and the pie leaks. A **pie funnel** or an upturned egg cup in the middle holds the lid up. Brush the lid with beaten egg or milk for colour. A pie with only a lid is a **pot pie**; one with a base and lid is a **double-crust** pie.

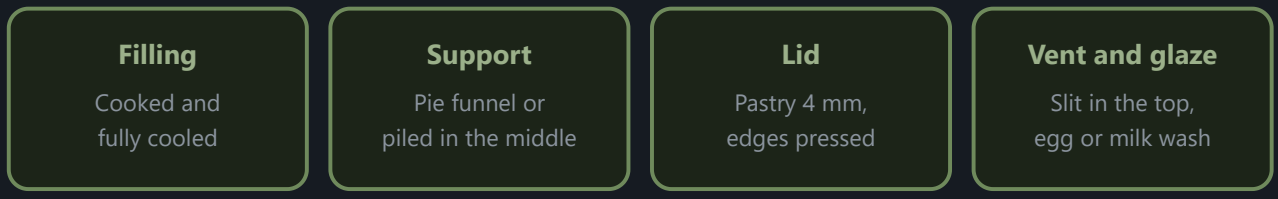


Figure 4. Four parts of a covered pie: filling, support, lid, and vent with glaze.

The method

- **Cook the filling until thick** and taste for seasoning; it will taste blander inside pastry.
- **Cool it completely,** then spoon into the dish, piling it higher in the centre.

- **Wet the rim of the dish** with water, lay a strip of pastry on it, wet it again, then lay the lid on top and press to seal.
- **Trim, crimp the edge,** cut a small slit in the middle and brush with egg or milk.
- **Bake at 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6)** for 25 to 35 minutes until deep golden, and rest the pie for 10 minutes before serving.

PIE	FILLING	PASTRY	TIME (APPROXIMATE)
Chicken and mushroom	Chicken in creamy sauce	Lid only	1 hour 15 minutes
Steak and onion	Slow-cooked beef	Lid only	2 hours 45 minutes
Cheese and onion	Potato, onion, Cheddar	Lid only	1 hour 15 minutes
Chicken and ham	Chicken, ham, leek	Base and lid	1 hour 30 minutes

HOT FILLING, STEAM AND RAW MEAT

Steam from a hot pie: a pie keeps hot steam and boiling filling inside the crust. Rest it for 10 minutes before cutting, cut from the side with the pie held steady, and keep your face back when you break the lid.

Raw chicken and meat: keep raw meat on its own board and plate, wash hands, knives and boards in hot soapy water afterwards, and cook meat fillings right through (no pink, juices running clear) before they go under a pastry lid.

Hot oven and hot trays: ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.

Try it

LEVEL 1 · START HERE

A chicken and mushroom pie

1 hour 15 minutes | 4 portions | a thick, cooled filling and a pastry lid

A creamy chicken and mushroom filling under a shortcrust lid. Thicken the sauce well; it will thin as it heats. Cool the filling completely before topping: you can make it a day ahead.

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

1 tbsp	butter
1	onion, chopped
200 g	mushrooms, sliced
500 g	chicken thighs, cubed
2 tbsp	plain flour
300 ml	hot low-salt chicken stock
3 tbsp	double cream
1 tsp	fresh thyme leaves
1	batch of plain shortcrust (chapter 1)
1	egg, beaten

1. Cook the onion in the butter for 5 minutes, add the mushrooms for 5 minutes, then the chicken for 5 minutes until sealed. Stir in the flour for 1 minute, then add the stock gradually and simmer for **15 minutes** until thick and the chicken is cooked through. Stir in the cream and thyme, season, and cool completely.
2. Heat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6). Spoon the filling into a pie dish, roll the pastry 4 mm thick, add a strip on the wet rim, lay the lid, press, trim and crimp. Cut a slit and brush with egg.
3. Bake on a hot tray for **30 to 35 minutes** until golden and the filling bubbles. Rest for 10 minutes.

> **RAW CHICKEN, STEAM AND ALLERGENS**

Raw chicken and meat: keep raw meat on its own board and plate, wash hands, knives and boards in hot soapy water afterwards, and cook meat fillings right through (no pink, juices running clear) before they go under a pastry lid.

Steam from a hot pie: a pie keeps hot steam and boiling filling inside the crust. Rest it for 10 minutes before cutting, cut from the side with the pie held steady, and keep your face back when you break the lid.

Allergens: contains gluten, milk, egg and cream; stock may contain celery.

LEVEL 2 · SLOW

A steak and onion pie (no beer)

2 hours 45 minutes | 4 portions | slow-cooking a filling until the meat is tender

Stewing steak needs about two hours of gentle simmering to turn tender. Worcestershire sauce and mustard give the depth beef pies usually get from beer. The filling must be thick; reduce the gravy, if needed, before cooling. Braising beef is covered in Cooking Skills: Beef and Steak 1, chapter 5.

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

2 tbsp	sunflower or rapeseed oil
600 g	stewing steak, in 3 cm cubes
2	onions, chopped
2 tbsp	plain flour
500 ml	hot low-salt beef stock
1 tbsp	Worcestershire sauce
1 tsp	English mustard
1 tbsp	tomato purée
2	bay leaves
1	batch of plain shortcrust (chapter 1)
1	egg, beaten

1. Brown the beef in batches in the oil, then the onions. Stir in the flour and purée, then the stock, Worcestershire sauce, mustard and bay leaves. Cover and simmer very gently, or cook at 160°C (140°C fan, gas 3), for **2 hours** until tender.
2. Uncover and simmer for 10 minutes until thick; remove the bay leaves. Cool completely, ideally overnight.
3. Fill the dish, add the lid as in the chicken pie, and bake at 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6) for **30 to 35 minutes** until golden.

> **HOT POT, RAW MEAT AND ALLERGENS**

Hot pot and hot steam: a heavy casserole dish or pan of hot liquid is heavy and scalding. Use oven gloves, lift the lid away from your face so the steam doesn't burn you, keep the handles turned in and never carry a full pot across a busy kitchen.

Raw chicken and meat: keep raw meat on its own board and plate, wash hands, knives and boards in hot soapy water afterwards, and cook meat fillings right through (no pink, juices running clear) before they go under a pastry lid.

Allergens: contains gluten, mustard and fish (Worcestershire sauce); stock may contain celery.

LEVEL 2 · VEGETARIAN

A cheese and onion pie

1 hour 15 minutes | 4 portions | a vegetarian filling that holds together

A traditional northern pie: potato, onion and mature Cheddar in a thick white sauce. The potatoes should be cooked but still firm so they do not break up. Cool before topping.

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

400 g	waxy potatoes, cut in 1.5 cm cubes
2	onions, chopped
30 g	butter
30 g	plain flour
300 ml	whole milk
150 g	mature Cheddar, grated
1 tsp	English mustard
1	batch of plain shortcrust (chapter 1)
1	egg, beaten

1. Boil the potatoes for 7 minutes until just tender, then drain. Cook the onions in half the butter for 8 minutes.
2. Make a thick white sauce with the remaining butter, flour and milk; take it off the heat and stir in the cheese and mustard. Mix with the potatoes and onions, season, and cool completely.
3. Fill, top with the lid, vent and brush with egg. Bake at 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6) for **30 minutes** until golden.

> **HOT SAUCE, STEAM AND ALLERGENS**
>
> **Steam from a hot pie:** a pie keeps hot steam and boiling filling inside the crust. Rest it for 10 minutes before cutting, cut from the side with the pie held steady, and keep your face back when you break the lid.

Allergens: contains gluten, milk, egg and mustard.

LEVEL 3 · DOUBLE CRUST

A double-crust chicken and ham pie

1 hour 30 minutes | 6 portions | lining a tin and keeping the base crisp

A pie with a pastry base and lid, baked in a tin. The base can go soggy, so use a preheated tray, a thick filling, and a cooled filling. Make 1½ batches of shortcrust so there is enough for both.

INGREDIENTS (6 PORTIONS)

1.5	batches of plain shortcrust (chapter 1)
1 tbsp	butter
2	leeks, sliced
400 g	cooked chicken, in chunks
150 g	cooked ham, in chunks
2 tbsp	plain flour
300 ml	hot low-salt chicken stock
2 tbsp	double cream
1 tsp	English mustard
1	egg, beaten

1. Soften the leeks in the butter for 8 minutes. Stir in the flour, then the stock gradually, and simmer for 5 minutes until thick. Add the chicken, ham, cream and mustard, season and cool completely.
2. Heat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6) with a tray inside. Line a 23 cm pie tin with two thirds of the pastry, chill 15 minutes, add the filling, wet the rim and top with the lid.
3. Crimp, vent, brush with egg and bake on the hot tray for **35 to 40 minutes** until deep golden. Rest for 15 minutes.

> **HOT OVEN, STEAM AND ALLERGENS**
>
> **Hot oven and hot trays:** ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things

on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.

Steam from a hot pie: a pie keeps hot steam and boiling filling inside the crust. Rest it for 10 minutes before cutting, cut from the side with the pie held steady, and keep your face back when you break the lid.

Allergens: contains gluten, milk, egg and mustard; ham may contain nitrites and sulphites.

Experiments

EXPERIMENT

Filling hot or cold

Pastry under the lid.

1. Top one pie with hot filling and another with cold filling, then bake both.

Look for: The hot-filled pie has a steamed, pale underside; the cold-filled one has a drier, flakier lid. Always cool the filling.

EXPERIMENT

Vented or not

Steam.

1. Bake one small pie with a slit and one without.

Look for: The unvented pie leaks at the edge and the lid may bulge or split; the vented one stays tidy.

EXPERIMENT

Egg or milk wash

Colour.

1. Brush one pie lid with beaten egg and another with milk and bake together.

Look for: Egg gives a deep golden shine; milk is paler and softer. Egg and a pinch of salt also give a stronger colour.

EXPERIMENT

Pie dish size

Depth.

1. Put the same filling in a deep pie dish and a wide, shallow tin.

Look for: The deep dish gives a tall, filling-rich pie but a long cook; the shallow one cooks faster and has more crust per bite.

Tasting notes

WHAT I TRIED	METHOD OR AMOUNT	WHAT I SAW	WHAT I THOUGHT	WILL I DO IT AGAIN?
Chicken and mushroom pie				
Steak and onion pie				
Cheese and onion pie				
Chicken and ham pie				
Filling hot or cold				
Vented or not				
Egg or milk wash				
Pie dish size				

Troubleshooting

PROBLEM	LIKELY CAUSE	WHAT TO DO
Soggy lid underside	Hot filling	Cool the filling completely before topping
Filling leaks out	No vent, runny filling or poor seal	Thicken the filling; press the lid to a wet rim; cut a vent
Lid collapses	No support	Use a pie funnel or pile the filling in the centre
Pale top	Oven too cool, or no wash	Use egg wash and bake hotter, on a hot tray
Soggy base (double crust)	Wet filling or cold tray	Thicken the filling; bake on a preheated tray
Meat tough	Not cooked long enough	Simmer the filling for longer before baking

HOT PIE, STEAM AND LEFTOVERS

Steam from a hot pie: a pie keeps hot steam and boiling filling inside the crust. Rest it for 10 minutes before cutting, cut from the side with the pie held steady, and keep your face back when you break the lid.

Raw chicken and meat: keep raw meat on its own board and plate, wash hands, knives and boards in hot soapy water afterwards, and cook meat fillings right through (no pink, juices running clear) before they go under a pastry lid.

Keeping and freezing: raw pastry keeps in the fridge for about 2 days wrapped tightly, and freezes for about 3 months (general guidance). Cooked pies and tarts keep for about 2 days chilled; reheat pies until steaming hot all the way through, and freeze cooked pies for no more than about 2 to 3 months.

CHECKPOINT: CAN YOU DO THIS NOW?

☐ I can make a thick filling and cool it.

☐ I can seal a lid to a wet rim.

☐ I can vent and glaze a pie.

☐ I can line a tin for a double-crust pie.

☐ I can fix a soggy or leaking pie.

NEXT CHAPTER

Cooking Skills: Pastry 1, chapter 5 is Sweet Pies and Tarts: pastry with fruit, nuts and syrup.

Cooking Skills: Pastry 1

Chapter 5 · Sweet Pies and Tarts

SKILL GOAL

Bake pastry with fruit and nut fillings so the fruit is cooked, the juices stay in and the base stays crisp.

Shopping list for this chapter

The basics

A sweet pie or tart uses the same pastry, but the filling brings new problems: **juice.** Fruit gives off water as it cooks, which turns the pastry soggy and bubbles out of the pie. The remedies are the same as before: a hot tray, a thickener such as cornflour or ground almonds mixed with the fruit, and a vent in the lid. A little sugar in the pastry makes it crisper and helps it brown.

Apples are the beginner's fruit because they are firm, hold their shape and keep well. **Bramley** cooking apples collapse into a fluffy sauce, eating apples hold their shape, and a mix gives both. Pastry cases are covered in Cooking Skills: Pastry 1, chapters 1 and 2; custard tarts and lemon meringue are in Cooking Skills: Eggs 2, chapters 3 and 6.



Figure 5. Four sweet bakes: a double crust, a folded galette, a nut tart and a crumble tart.

The method

- **Toss the fruit with sugar and a thickener** (cornflour, or ground almonds) just before it goes in, so the juice does not run early.

- **Pile the fruit high in the middle,** because it shrinks as it cooks and the lid needs support.
- **Seal the lid to a wet rim,** cut a vent and brush with milk or egg, then sprinkle with sugar for a crunchy top.
- **Bake on a hot tray** so the base cooks, at 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6) for pies, and lower for custardy fillings.
- **Cool for at least 15 minutes** before cutting; the filling needs to set or it runs out.

BAKE	PASTRY	FILLING	TIME (APPROXIMATE)
Double-crust apple pie	Base and lid	Apples, sugar, cinnamon	1 hour 15 minutes
Fruit galette	One sheet, folded	Plums or berries	1 hour
Bakewell tart	Blind-baked case	Jam and frangipane	1 hour 15 minutes
Fruit crumble tart	Blind-baked case	Fruit and crumble	1 hour 15 minutes

HOT FRUIT, STEAM AND NUTS

Hot syrup and sugar: syrup and jam fillings become hotter than boiling water and stick to skin. Let a tart cool for 15 minutes before cutting, and take care with hot jam when eating tarts straight from the tin.

Steam from a hot pie: a pie keeps hot steam and boiling filling inside the crust. Rest it for 10 minutes before cutting, cut from the side with the pie held steady, and keep your face back when you break the lid.

Nuts: Bakewell tart contains almonds, a tree nut. Say so clearly when serving, keep it away from anyone with a nut allergy, and check jam and almond extract labels.

Try it

LEVEL 1 · START HERE

A double-crust apple pie

1 hour 15 minutes plus chilling | 6 portions | a double crust over cooking apples

The classic. Cook the filling's sugar and apples gently first for a few minutes so they shrink before the lid goes on; otherwise the lid sits on an air gap. Mix a cooking apple with an eating apple for flavour and shape.

INGREDIENTS (6 PORTIONS)

1.5	batches of plain shortcrust (chapter 1), with 1 tbsp caster sugar added to the flour
700 g	apples (half Bramley, half eating), peeled, cored and sliced
75 g	caster sugar
1 tbsp	cornflour
1 tsp	ground cinnamon
1 tbsp	lemon juice
1	egg or a little milk, to glaze
1 tbsp	caster sugar, to sprinkle

1. Heat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6) with a tray inside. Toss the apples with the sugar, cornflour, cinnamon and lemon juice. Line a 23 cm pie tin with two thirds of the pastry.
2. Pile the apples into the pastry-lined tin, dome them in the middle, wet the rim and lay the lid on. Press, trim, crimp and cut a vent. Brush with egg and sprinkle with sugar.
3. Bake on the hot tray for **40 to 45 minutes** until golden and the juices bubble. Rest for 20 minutes.

> **HOT OVEN, STEAM AND ALLERGENS**
>
> **Hot oven and hot trays:** ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.
>
> **Steam from a hot pie:** a pie keeps hot steam and boiling filling inside the crust. Rest it for 10

minutes before cutting, cut from the side with the pie held steady, and keep your face back when you break the lid.

Allergens: contains gluten, milk and egg.

LEVEL 2 · RUSTIC

A fruit galette

1 hour plus chilling | 4 portions | shaping pastry freehand around the fruit

A galette is a pie with no tin. Roll the pastry out, pile fruit in the middle and fold the edge over. Leaving ground almonds under the fruit soaks up the juice. It is meant to look rustic.

INGREDIENTS (4 PORTIONS)

1	batch of plain shortcrust (chapter 1)
2 tbsp	ground almonds
500 g	plums or berries, stoned and halved
3 tbsp	caster sugar
1 tsp	cornflour
1	egg, beaten
1 tbsp	caster sugar, to sprinkle

1. Heat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6). Roll the pastry into a 30 cm round on baking parchment and slide onto a tray. Scatter the ground almonds over the centre, leaving a 5 cm border.
2. Toss the fruit with the sugar and cornflour and pile it on. Fold the border up and over the fruit in loose pleats. Brush with egg and sprinkle with sugar.
3. Bake for **35 to 40 minutes** until the pastry is deep golden and the fruit is bubbling. Slide onto a rack to cool.

HOT OVEN, HOT FRUIT AND ALLERGENS

Hot oven and hot trays: ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.

Nuts: Bakewell tart contains almonds, a tree nut. Say so clearly when serving, keep it away from anyone with a nut allergy, and check jam and almond extract labels.

> **Allergens:** contains gluten, milk, egg and almonds.

LEVEL 2 · NUT

A Bakewell tart

1 hour 15 minutes plus the case | 8 portions | a baked sponge-like filling over jam

Jam under a soft almond sponge (frangipane) in a crisp case. Blind-bake the case first. Spread the jam thinly: too much boils through the sponge. Flaked almonds on top toast in the oven.

INGREDIENTS (8 PORTIONS)

1	blind-baked sweet case (23 cm; chapter 2)
3 tbsp	raspberry jam
100 g	soft unsalted butter
100 g	caster sugar
2	eggs
100 g	ground almonds
25 g	plain flour
½ tsp	almond extract
2 tbsp	flaked almonds

1. Heat the oven to 180°C (160°C fan, gas 4). Spread the jam over the base of the case.
2. Beat the butter and sugar until pale, then beat in the eggs one at a time. Fold in the almonds, flour and extract. Spoon over the jam and smooth, and scatter the flaked almonds on top.
3. Bake for **30 to 35 minutes** until golden and set; a skewer should come out clean. Cool for 20 minutes.

> **HOT OVEN, RAW EGG AND NUTS**
>
> **Hot oven and hot trays:** ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.
>
> **Nuts:** Bakewell tart contains almonds, a tree nut. Say so clearly when serving, keep it away from anyone with a nut allergy, and check jam and almond extract labels.

> **Raw dough and raw flour:** raw flour and raw egg can carry germs, so don't taste raw pastry or filling that contains raw egg or raw meat. Wash hands, bowls and the worktop afterwards, and keep tasting for the cooked result.

LEVEL 3 · CRUMBLE

A fruit crumble tart

1 hour 20 minutes plus the case | 8 portions | two textures on a crisp base

The best parts of a crumble and a tart: a crisp case, tender fruit and a buttery topping. Rub the crumble together like pastry and keep it chunky. Use berries and apples, or any fruit that is not too wet.

INGREDIENTS (8 PORTIONS)

1	blind-baked case (23 cm; chapter 2)
500 g	apples and blackberries, prepared
2 tbsp	caster sugar
1 tbsp	cornflour
75 g	plain flour
50 g	cold unsalted butter, cubed
40 g	caster sugar
25 g	rolled oats

1. Heat the oven to 190°C (170°C fan, gas 5). Toss the fruit with 2 tbsp sugar and the cornflour and spoon into the case.
2. Rub the butter into the flour, then stir in the 40 g sugar and the oats to make a crumble with some larger lumps. Scatter over the fruit.
3. Bake for **30 to 35 minutes** until the top is golden and the fruit bubbles at the edges. Cool for 15 minutes.

> **HOT OVEN, HOT FRUIT AND ALLERGENS**
>
> **Hot oven and hot trays:** ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.
>
> **Hot syrup and sugar:** syrup and jam fillings become hotter than boiling water and stick to skin. Let a tart cool for 15 minutes before cutting, and take care with hot jam when eating tarts straight from the tin.

> **Allergens:** contains gluten, milk and oats (which may contain gluten traces).

Experiments

EXPERIMENT

Pre-cooking the apples

Air gap.

1. Bake one apple pie with raw sliced apples and one with apples simmered for 5 minutes and cooled.

Look for: Raw apples shrink and leave a gap under the lid; pre-cooked apples stay full. Pre-cooking is also quicker in the oven.

EXPERIMENT

Sugar in the pastry

Colour and crispness.

1. Roll two strips of pastry, one with 1 tablespoon of sugar per batch and one without, and bake.

Look for: The sweet pastry browns faster, is crisper and has more flavour; plain pastry is paler and more savoury.

EXPERIMENT

A layer of ground almonds

Soaking juice.

1. Make two galettes, one with ground almonds under the fruit and one without.

Look for: The almonds soak up juice and keep the base crisp; without them the base is softer under the fruit.

EXPERIMENT

Thickener in the fruit

Runny or set.

1. Bake two small fruit pies, one with cornflour and one without, and cut after 15 minutes.

Look for: The cornflour version sets into a glossy filling that holds; the other floods the plate.

Tasting notes

WHAT I TRIED	METHOD OR AMOUNT	WHAT I SAW	WHAT I THOUGHT	WILL I DO IT AGAIN?
Apple pie				
Fruit galette				
Bakewell tart				
Fruit crumble tart				
Pre-cooking the apples				
Sugar in the pastry				
A layer of ground almonds				
Thickener in the fruit				

Troubleshooting

PROBLEM	LIKELY CAUSE	WHAT TO DO
Soggy bottom	Wet fruit or cold tray	Add cornflour or ground almonds; bake on a hot tray
Juice leaks out	No vent or not sealed	Cut a vent, press the lid to a wet rim, bake on a tray to catch drips
Gap under lid	Raw fruit shrank	Pile higher or pre-cook the fruit

PROBLEM	LIKELY CAUSE	WHAT TO DO
Pale top	Oven too cool or no glaze	Brush with egg or milk and sprinkle with sugar
Bakewell filling sinks	Underbaked or oven door opened	Bake until a skewer is clean; keep the door closed for 25 minutes
Crumble goes pasty	Butter warm or overmixed	Use cold butter and stop when lumpy

HOT OVEN, HOT FRUIT AND LEFTOVERS

Hot oven and hot trays: ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.

Hot syrup and sugar: syrup and jam fillings become hotter than boiling water and stick to skin. Let a tart cool for 15 minutes before cutting, and take care with hot jam when eating tarts straight from the tin.

Keeping and freezing: raw pastry keeps in the fridge for about 2 days wrapped tightly, and freezes for about 3 months (general guidance). Cooked pies and tarts keep for about 2 days chilled; reheat pies until steaming hot all the way through, and freeze cooked pies for no more than about 2 to 3 months.

CHECKPOINT: CAN YOU DO THIS NOW?

- ☐ I can thicken fruit so the juice stays in.
- ☐ I can build a double crust over fruit.
- ☐ I can fold a free-form galette.
- ☐ I can bake a sponge filling in a case.
- ☐ I can fix a soggy or leaking pie.

NEXT CHAPTER

Cooking Skills: Pastry 1, chapter 6 is Ready-Made Puff Pastry: handling bought puff so it rises.

Cooking Skills: Pastry 1

Chapter 6 · Ready-Made Puff Pastry

SKILL GOAL

Use bought puff pastry well: keep it cold, cut it cleanly and bake it hot so it rises into crisp layers.

Shopping list for this chapter

The basics

Puff pastry rises because it has hundreds of thin layers of dough and fat. In the oven, the water in the fat turns to steam and pushes the layers apart. Making it from scratch is a long job, and it is covered in Pastry 2; here you start with **ready-made all-butter puff,** which is excellent and makes quick bakes. Look for butter on the label rather than vegetable fat, for taste.

Three habits make it rise: **keep it cold** (take it out of the fridge only when you are ready), **cut with a sharp knife straight down** (a blunt knife or sawing squashes the layers shut at the edges), and **bake it hot.** Egg wash on the cut edges glues the layers together, so keep it on the top only. Savoury pastry cases are in Cooking Skills: Pastry 1, chapter 3; sweet cases in chapter 5.



Figure 6. Cold, sharp, hot: the three rules for puff pastry.

The method

- **Keep the pastry in the fridge** until the moment you use it, and chill shaped pieces for 15 minutes before baking if it warms.

- **Cut with a very sharp knife** or pizza wheel, pressing straight down, not sawing or dragging.
- **Brush egg wash on the top only,** not down the cut sides, or the layers glue together.
- **Bake on a baking-parchment-lined tray** at 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6), and keep the oven door closed for the first 15 minutes.
- **Bake until deep golden,** not pale: pale puff is doughy inside.

BAKE	SHAPE	TIME (APPROXIMATE)	SERVE
Cheese straws	Strips, twisted	15 minutes	Warm or cold, with drinks
Sausage rolls	Rolled and cut	30 minutes	Warm, with chutney or sauce
Palmiers	Folded and sliced	25 minutes	Cold, with tea
Upside-down apple tart	Pastry lid on caramel	40 minutes	Warm, with cream

HOT OVEN, HOT CARAMEL AND RAW SAUSAGE MEAT

Hot oven and hot trays: ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.

Hot syrup and sugar: syrup and jam fillings become hotter than boiling water and stick to skin. Let a tart cool for 15 minutes before cutting, and take care with hot jam when eating tarts straight from the tin.

Raw chicken and meat: keep raw meat on its own board and plate, wash hands, knives and boards in hot soapy water afterwards, and cook meat fillings right through (no pink, juices running clear) before they go under a pastry lid.

Try it

LEVEL 1 · START HERE

Cheese straws

25 minutes | about 20 straws | cutting cleanly and twisting

The easiest puff pastry bake. Cheese goes on the pastry, which is folded or cut, then twisted. Parmesan and Cheddar together give salt and flavour. A pinch of mustard powder lifts the cheese.

INGREDIENTS (ABOUT 20 STRAWS)

1	sheet of ready-rolled all-butter puff pastry (320 g)
50 g	mature Cheddar, finely grated
25 g	Parmesan, finely grated
½ tsp	English mustard powder
1	egg, beaten

1. Heat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6). Unroll the pastry and brush the top with egg. Scatter the cheeses and mustard powder over half, fold the other half over and roll lightly.
2. Cut into strips about 1.5 cm wide with a sharp knife, twist each strip and lay on a lined tray, pressing the ends down.
3. Brush with egg and bake for **12 to 15 minutes** until golden. Cool for 5 minutes.

> **HOT OVEN AND ALLERGENS**
>
> **Hot oven and hot trays:** ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.
>
> **Allergens:** contains gluten, milk, egg and mustard.

LEVEL 2 · SAVOURY

Sausage rolls

50 minutes | 12 rolls | rolling a filling inside pastry

Home-made sausage rolls beat shop ones. Mix good sausage meat with onion and sage, roll it into a log, wrap it in puff and cut it to size. Cook right through: pork must be cooked to 75°C in the middle, with no pink.

INGREDIENTS (12 ROLLS)

2	sheets of ready-rolled all-butter puff pastry (320 g each)
400 g	pork sausage meat
1	small onion, finely chopped
1 tsp	chopped fresh sage
1 tsp	English mustard
1	egg, beaten

1. Heat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6). Mix the sausage meat, onion, sage and mustard. Cut each pastry sheet lengthways in half.
2. Shape the meat into 4 long sausages and lay one along each pastry strip. Brush the edge with egg, fold the pastry over and press with a fork, seam side down. Cut into 6 rolls each and make 2 slits in each.
3. Brush the tops with egg and bake for **25 to 30 minutes** until golden and cooked through, with no pink in the middle. Cool for 10 minutes.

RAW PORK, HOT OVEN AND ALLERGENS

Raw chicken and meat: keep raw meat on its own board and plate, wash hands, knives and boards in hot soapy water afterwards, and cook meat fillings right through (no pink, juices running clear) before they go under a pastry lid.

Hot oven and hot trays: ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.

Allergens: contains gluten, egg and mustard; sausage meat often contains sulphites and rusk (gluten).

LEVEL 2 · SWEET

Palmiers

40 minutes | about 16 | folding and slicing pastry into layers

Palmiers, also called elephant ears, are puff pastry folded in on itself with sugar and baked until caramelised. Leave space between them: they spread and puff up.

INGREDIENTS (ABOUT 16)

1	sheet of ready-rolled all-butter puff pastry (320 g)
4 tbsp	caster sugar, plus extra for the tray

1. Heat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6). Sprinkle half the sugar over the pastry. Fold the two long sides in to meet at the middle, sprinkle the rest of the sugar and fold again in half like a book.
2. Chill for 15 minutes, then slice into 1.5 cm slices with a sharp knife and lay them cut side up, spaced well apart, on a lined tray.
3. Bake for **8 minutes,** turn each over and bake for 5 to 8 minutes more until deeply golden and caramelised. Cool on a rack.

HOT CARAMELISED SUGAR AND OVEN

Hot syrup and sugar: syrup and jam fillings become hotter than boiling water and stick to skin. Let a tart cool for 15 minutes before cutting, and take care with hot jam when eating tarts straight from the tin.

Hot oven and hot trays: ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.

LEVEL 3 · CARAMEL

An upside-down apple tart (no alcohol)

1 hour | 6 portions | turning out a caramel tart

A simple tarte tatin: caramel in a pan, apples on top, pastry over everything, baked and turned upside down. Use a pan with an oven-safe handle. Traditional recipes sometimes include brandy; here there is none.

INGREDIENTS (6 PORTIONS)

75 g	caster sugar
40 g	unsalted butter
5	firm apples, peeled, cored and quartered
1	sheet of ready-rolled all-butter puff pastry (320 g)

1. Heat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6). In an ovenproof 24 cm frying pan, melt the sugar and butter over a medium heat for **5 to 6 minutes** until amber caramel; don't stir, just swirl.
2. Pack the apples tightly in the caramel, cook for 8 minutes, then cover with the pastry, tucking the edges down inside the pan. Prick the top.
3. Bake for **25 to 30 minutes** until the pastry is deep golden. Rest for 5 minutes, then turn out onto a plate with oven gloves. Be quick, before the caramel sets.

> **HOT CARAMEL, HOT PAN AND TURNING OUT**
>
> **Hot syrup and sugar:** syrup and jam fillings become hotter than boiling water and stick to skin. Let a tart cool for 15 minutes before cutting, and take care with hot jam when eating tarts straight from the tin.
>
> **Hot oven and hot trays:** ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.
>
> **Turning out:** the pan is hot and the caramel is scalding. Use oven gloves, hold the plate firmly over the pan, flip away from your body and keep your face back.

Experiments

EXPERIMENT

Scored or unscored

Rise.

1. Bake one square of puff with a shallow score around the border and one without.

Look for: The scored square puffs around a frame, which is useful for tarts; the unscored one puffs unevenly.

EXPERIMENT

Chilled or room-temperature

Layers.

1. Bake one cut shape straight from the fridge and another after 30 minutes at room temperature.

Look for: The chilled one rises tall in clear layers; the warm one is flat and greasy.

EXPERIMENT

Sharp or blunt knife

Cut edges.

1. Cut puff with a very sharp knife and with a blunt one, and bake both.

Look for: The sharp cut rises straight; the blunt one squashes the layers shut and the edge rises crookedly.

EXPERIMENT

Egg wash or milk

Colour.

1. Brush one half of a tray of puff pieces with egg and the other with milk.

Look for: The egg gives a deep golden shine, milk a paler matt finish.

Tasting notes

WHAT I TRIED	METHOD OR AMOUNT	WHAT I SAW	WHAT I THOUGHT	WILL I DO IT AGAIN?
Cheese straws				
Sausage rolls				
Palmiers				
Upside-down apple tart				
Scored or unscored				
Chilled or room-temperature				
Sharp or blunt knife				
Egg wash or milk				

Troubleshooting

PROBLEM	LIKELY CAUSE	WHAT TO DO
Pastry didn't rise	Warm pastry or blunt knife	Keep it cold and cut cleanly
Rose lopsided	Egg wash ran down the edges	Brush the top only
Doughy inside	Underbaked	Bake until deep golden
Leaked fat on the tray	Warm pastry or too-low oven	Chill the shapes; bake hot

PROBLEM	LIKELY CAUSE	WHAT TO DO
Sausage rolls raw inside	Rolled too thick	Use thinner logs; check there is no pink
Caramel burnt	Cooked too long or too hot	Take it off the heat as soon as it is amber

HOT OVEN, HOT CARAMEL AND LEFTOVERS

Hot oven and hot trays: ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.

Hot syrup and sugar: syrup and jam fillings become hotter than boiling water and stick to skin. Let a tart cool for 15 minutes before cutting, and take care with hot jam when eating tarts straight from the tin.

Keeping and freezing: raw pastry keeps in the fridge for about 2 days wrapped tightly, and freezes for about 3 months (general guidance). Cooked pies and tarts keep for about 2 days chilled; reheat pies until steaming hot all the way through, and freeze cooked pies for no more than about 2 to 3 months.

CHECKPOINT: CAN YOU DO THIS NOW?

- ☐ I know why puff pastry rises.
- ☐ I can cut puff cleanly and glaze it correctly.
- ☐ I can fold and slice a palmier.
- ☐ I can wrap a filling in puff.
- ☐ I can make and turn out a caramel tart.

NEXT CHAPTER

Cooking Skills: Pastry 1, chapter 7 is Hand Pies and Turnovers: sealing, folding and crimping small pies.

Cooking Skills: Pastry 1

Chapter 7 · Hand Pies and Turnovers

SKILL GOAL

Fill, fold and seal small pies so the filling stays inside and the pastry bakes crisp.

Shopping list for this chapter

The basics

A hand pie is a small, portable pie. Its rules are the ones for big pies, made smaller: a **cooled, thick filling**, a **wet edge** for sealing, and an **escape for steam.** Because there is so much pastry compared with filling, the pastry matters: it should be firm enough to handle and not tear. Pastry with an egg yolk works well. Pasties filled with potatoes are in Cooking Skills: Potatoes 2, chapter 4.

Don't overfill. A level tablespoon or two in the centre of a 12 cm round is enough; the filling swells and bursts if it is pressed against the seam. Seal with **water or egg wash,** press the edge together firmly with your fingers, then crimp with a fork. Chill the shaped pies for 15 minutes before baking so the pastry sets and shrinks less.

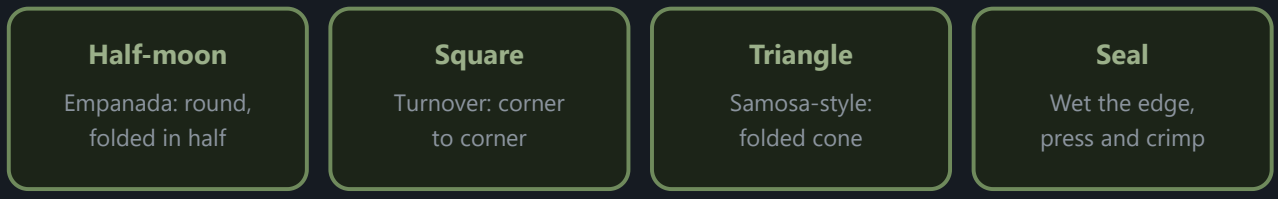


Figure 7. Round, square or triangle: all hand pies are sealed the same way.

The method

- **Cook and cool the filling;** it must be thick enough to hold its shape on a spoon.
- **Cut the pastry** to a standard size, with a cutter or a plate, and keep the offcuts for patching.

- **Place the filling off-centre,** brush the edge with water or beaten egg, and fold over.
- **Press out the air,** crimp the edge with a fork and cut a small vent in the top.
- **Chill for 15 minutes,** brush with egg and bake on a lined tray at 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6).

HAND PIE	PASTRY	FILLING	TIME (APPROXIMATE)
Baked empanadas	Shortcrust with egg	Spiced beef and egg	55 minutes
Jam turnovers	Puff	Jam	30 minutes
Spinach and feta pie	Shortcrust	Spinach, feta, ricotta	55 minutes
Samosa-style triangles	Shortcrust	Spiced potato and peas	1 hour

HOT OVEN, HOT FILLING AND RAW MEAT

Hot oven and hot trays: ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.

Raw chicken and meat: keep raw meat on its own board and plate, wash hands, knives and boards in hot soapy water afterwards, and cook meat fillings right through (no pink, juices running clear) before they go under a pastry lid.

Steam from a hot pie: a pie keeps hot steam and boiling filling inside the crust. Rest it for 10 minutes before cutting, cut from the side with the pie held steady, and keep your face back when you break the lid.

Try it

LEVEL 1 · START HERE

Jam turnovers

30 minutes | 8 turnovers | folding and sealing a square

The simplest hand pie: squares of puff pastry folded corner to corner over a spoonful of jam. A little cornflour in the jam stops it running out, and a vent stops it bursting.

INGREDIENTS (8 TURNOVERS)

2	sheets of ready-rolled all-butter puff pastry (320 g each)
8 tsp	thick jam
1	egg, beaten
2 tbsp	caster sugar

1. Heat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6). Cut each sheet into 4 squares. Put 1 teaspoon of jam in the centre of each.
2. Brush two adjacent edges with egg, fold the pastry corner to corner into a triangle, press the edges and seal with a fork. Cut a small vent.
3. Brush with egg, sprinkle with sugar and bake on a lined tray for **15 to 18 minutes** until puffed and golden. Cool for 10 minutes; the jam is very hot.

> **HOT JAM AND OVEN**
>
> **Hot syrup and sugar:** syrup and jam fillings become hotter than boiling water and stick to skin. Let a tart cool for 15 minutes before cutting, and take care with hot jam when eating tarts straight from the tin.
>
> **Hot oven and hot trays:** ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.

LEVEL 2 · SPICED

Baked empanadas

55 minutes plus chilling | 10 empanadas | a firm dough and a spiced filling

Empanadas are the Latin American hand pie. The dough has an egg yolk so it holds; the filling is dry and spiced beef with hard-boiled egg. Cook the mince until no pink remains, drain, and cool completely before filling.

INGREDIENTS (10 EMPANADAS)

1	batch of plain shortcrust (chapter 1), with 1 egg yolk added
1 tbsp	sunflower or rapeseed oil
1	onion, finely chopped
2	garlic cloves, crushed
250 g	beef mince
1 tsp	ground cumin
1 tsp	smoked paprika
2	hard-boiled eggs, chopped
1	egg, beaten, to glaze

1. Cook the onion in the oil for 5 minutes, add the garlic, mince and spices and cook for **8 to 10 minutes** until no pink remains and the mixture is dry. Stir in the chopped eggs and cool completely.
2. Heat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6). Roll the pastry to 3 mm and cut 10 rounds of 12 cm. Put a heaped tablespoon of filling on each, wet the edge, fold, press and crimp with a fork.
3. Chill for 15 minutes, then brush with egg and bake for **20 to 25 minutes** until deep golden.

> **RAW BEEF MINCE, HOT OVEN AND ALLERGENS**
>
> **Raw chicken and meat:** keep raw meat on its own board and plate, wash hands, knives and boards in hot soapy water afterwards, and cook meat fillings right through (no pink, juices running clear) before they go under a pastry lid.

Hot oven and hot trays: ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.

Allergens: contains gluten, egg and milk.

LEVEL 2 · GREEN

A spinach and feta pie

55 minutes plus chilling | 8 pies | squeezing water from a filling

Spinach is almost all water, so squeeze it dry or the pastry will go soggy. Feta and ricotta give a creamy, salty filling. A little nutmeg lifts the spinach.

INGREDIENTS (8 PIES)

1	batch of plain shortcrust (chapter 1)
300 g	frozen spinach, defrosted and squeezed very dry
150 g	feta, crumbled
100 g	ricotta
1	egg yolk
1 pinch	nutmeg
1	egg, beaten, to glaze

1. Mix the spinach, feta, ricotta, egg yolk, nutmeg and pepper. Taste: feta is salty, so check before adding salt.
2. Heat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6). Cut 8 rounds of 12 cm from the rolled pastry, add a heaped tablespoon of filling to each, wet the edges, fold, press and crimp.
3. Chill for 15 minutes, glaze, vent and bake for **20 to 25 minutes** until golden.

> **HOT OVEN AND ALLERGENS**
>
> **Hot oven and hot trays:** ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.
>
> **Allergens:** contains gluten, milk and egg.

LEVEL 3 · TRIANGLES

Samosa-style baked triangles

1 hour plus chilling | 12 triangles | folding a cone and sealing a triangle

Real samosa pastry is a different dough, and filo is for Pastry 2. This version uses shortcrust and bakes the triangles, with a classic spiced potato and pea filling. Cut thinner rounds for easier folding.

INGREDIENTS (12 TRIANGLES)

1	batch of plain shortcrust (chapter 1)
300 g	potatoes, boiled and diced
100 g	frozen peas
1 tbsp	sunflower or rapeseed oil
1	small onion, finely chopped
1 tbsp	grated fresh ginger
2 tsp	mild curry powder
1	egg, beaten, to glaze

1. Cook the onion in the oil for 5 minutes, add the ginger and curry powder for 1 minute, then the potatoes and peas. Mash lightly, season and cool completely.
2. Roll the pastry to 3 mm and cut 12 cm rounds, then cut each in half. Wet the straight edge, fold into a cone, fill with a spoonful, wet the open edge and press to seal into a triangle.
3. Chill 15 minutes, brush with egg and bake at 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6) for **20 to 25 minutes** until deep golden.

> **BURNING SPICES, HOT OVEN AND ALLERGENS**
>
> **Burning spices:** ground spices burn in seconds in a hot pan and turn bitter. Lower the heat before adding them, stir constantly and add a splash of water or the next ingredient if they start to catch.
>
> **Hot oven and hot trays:** ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things

on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.

Allergens: contains gluten, milk and egg; curry powder may contain mustard or celery.

Experiments

EXPERIMENT

Cutter size

Filling ratio.

1. Make small and large hand pies with the same amount of filling per square centimetre.

Look for: Small pies are crisper with more crust; large ones are juicier. About 12 cm is a good middle size.

EXPERIMENT

Water or egg seal

Strength.

1. Seal one batch of pies with water and another with beaten egg.

Look for: Egg makes a firmer seal that is less likely to open; water works if you press well.

EXPERIMENT

Filling cold or warm

Bursting.

1. Fill one pie with cooled filling and one with warm filling and bake both.

Look for: The warm filling softens the pastry and bursts the seam; the cooled filling holds.

EXPERIMENT

Baked on a hot tray or cold

Base.

1. Bake one tray of pies on a preheated tray and another on a cold tray.

Look for: The preheated tray gives a crisp, golden base; the cold tray gives a paler one.

Tasting notes

WHAT I TRIED	METHOD OR AMOUNT	WHAT I SAW	WHAT I THOUGHT	WILL I DO IT AGAIN?
Jam turnovers				
Baked empanadas				
Spinach and feta pie				
Samosa-style triangles				
Cutter size				
Water or egg seal				
Filling cold or warm				
Baked on a hot tray or cold				

Troubleshooting

PROBLEM	LIKELY CAUSE	WHAT TO DO
Pie bursts open	Overfilled or hot filling	Use less filling; cool it first
Seam opens	Wet edge missing or too little pressure	Wet the edge and press firmly, then crimp
Soggy base	Wet filling	Cook or squeeze the filling dry

PROBLEM	LIKELY CAUSE	WHAT TO DO
Pale pies	No glaze or low heat	Brush with egg and bake hotter
Dough tears when folded	Too cold or too thin	Rest 5 minutes; roll slightly thicker
Filling leaks	No vent	Cut a small vent in each pie

HOT OVEN, HOT FILLING AND LEFTOVERS

Hot oven and hot trays: ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.

Steam from a hot pie: a pie keeps hot steam and boiling filling inside the crust. Rest it for 10 minutes before cutting, cut from the side with the pie held steady, and keep your face back when you break the lid.

Keeping and freezing: raw pastry keeps in the fridge for about 2 days wrapped tightly, and freezes for about 3 months (general guidance). Cooked pies and tarts keep for about 2 days chilled; reheat pies until steaming hot all the way through, and freeze cooked pies for no more than about 2 to 3 months.

CHECKPOINT: CAN YOU DO THIS NOW?

- ☐ I can cut and fill a standard round.
- ☐ I can seal a hand pie so it stays closed.
- ☐ I can cook a filling thick and dry.
- ☐ I can fold a square, a half-moon and a triangle.
- ☐ I can fix a pie that bursts or leaks.

NEXT CHAPTER

Cooking Skills: Pastry 1, chapter 8 is A Pastry Day: planning, freezing and rescuing pastry.

Cooking Skills: Pastry 1

Chapter 8 · A Pastry Day

SKILL GOAL

Plan a pastry day, freeze pastry safely and use what you have made in one relaxed meal.

Shopping list for this chapter

The basics

Pastry is the best food to batch-cook. It freezes well raw, saves hours on a busy day and lets you make a pie from the freezer in the time the oven takes. **Make more than you need,** wrap it well, label it with the date and what it is, and defrost it slowly in the fridge. The work is the same for one batch or four, so doing several together is much more efficient.

A pastry day also teaches planning: chill times are your friend, so the plan is built around them. While one batch chills, another can be rolled. By the end of the day you have a lunch on the table and a freezer with pastry ready for next time. Fillings are in Cooking Skills: Pastry 1, chapters 3 and 4, and sauces for pie fillings in Cooking Skills: Sauces 1, chapters 2 to 4.

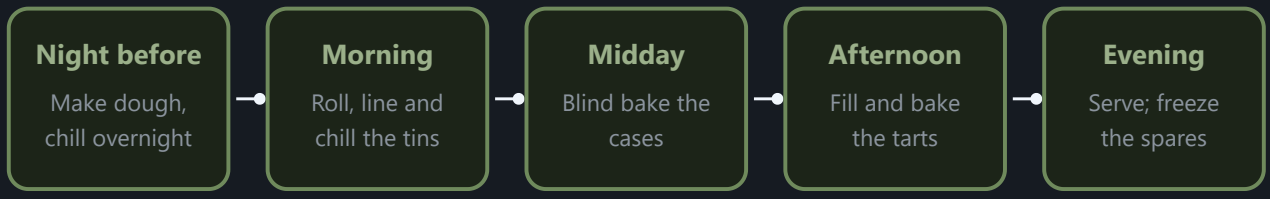


Figure 8. A pastry day runs on chill times: dough, line, bake, fill, serve and freeze.

The method

- **Write the plan first:** list each task with the chilling it needs, and start the longest one first.
- **Make dough in batches,** not one big mass, so each stays cold and is easy to roll.
- **Wrap and label:** cling film, then a freezer bag, with the date and contents written on it.

- **Freeze flat** in discs or lined foil tins, which stack and defrost evenly.
- **Defrost in the fridge overnight,** never on the worktop, and use within 24 hours of defrosting.

ITEM	FREEZES RAW?	FREEZER LIFE (APPROXIMATE)	FROM FROZEN
Shortcrust dough	Yes, as a disc	About 3 months	Defrost overnight in fridge
Lined foil tin	Yes, wrapped	About 3 months	Bake from frozen, add 5 minutes
Baked tart case	Yes, boxed	About 2 months	Crisp in oven from frozen
Cooked pie	Yes, wrapped	About 2 to 3 months	Reheat until steaming hot

FREEZING, DEFROSTING AND REHEATING

Keeping and freezing: raw pastry keeps in the fridge for about 2 days wrapped tightly, and freezes for about 3 months (general guidance). Cooked pies and tarts keep for about 2 days chilled; reheat pies until steaming hot all the way through, and freeze cooked pies for no more than about 2 to 3 months.

Raw dough and raw flour: raw flour and raw egg can carry germs, so don't taste raw pastry or filling that contains raw egg or raw meat. Wash hands, bowls and the worktop afterwards, and keep tasting for the cooked result.

Hot oven and hot trays: ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.

Try it

LEVEL 1 · START HERE

A batch of pastry for the freezer

40 minutes | 4 batches of shortcrust | making and freezing several batches

Make four batches, one at a time, in the same bowl. Shape each into a flat disc, because a disc defrosts faster than a ball and rolls out easily. Use the first batch tomorrow, and the rest over the next three months.

INGREDIENTS (4 BATCHES)

800 g	plain flour
4 pinch	fine salt
400 g	cold unsalted butter, cubed
12 tbsp	ice-cold water

1. Make each batch separately: 200 g flour, a pinch of salt and 100 g butter, rubbed in to breadcrumbs, then 3 tablespoons of cold water.
2. Shape each into a flat disc, wrap in cling film and put it in a freezer bag. Write the date and "shortcrust" on the bag.
3. Chill one disc in the fridge for **30 minutes** for today's use and freeze the other three, flat.

RAW DOUGH, FREEZING AND ALLERGENS

Raw dough and raw flour: raw flour and raw egg can carry germs, so don't taste raw pastry or filling that contains raw egg or raw meat. Wash hands, bowls and the worktop afterwards, and keep tasting for the cooked result.

Keeping and freezing: raw pastry keeps in the fridge for about 2 days wrapped tightly, and freezes for about 3 months (general guidance). Cooked pies and tarts keep for about 2 days chilled; reheat pies until steaming hot all the way through, and freeze cooked pies for no more than about 2 to 3 months.

Allergens: pastry contains gluten (flour) and milk (butter); egg washes contain egg. Use a plant block fat for a dairy-free version, and note that gluten-free flour needs a different method.

LEVEL 2 · READY TO BAKE

Freezer-ready pie and tart cases

40 minutes plus freezing | 4 cases | lining tins for the freezer

Line foil tins and freeze them raw. They are ready to fill and bake straight from the freezer. This is a good way to use up offcuts. Foil tins stack easily and can go in the oven.

INGREDIENTS (4 CASES)

2	batches of plain shortcrust, defrosted (above)
4	foil tart tins, 20 cm
1 tbsp	plain flour, for rolling
1	egg, beaten

1. Roll each batch to 3 mm and cut rounds about 5 cm wider than the tins. Line each tin, pressing into the corners.
2. Trim the edges, prick the bases with a fork and freeze on a tray for **1 hour** until solid.
3. Wrap each tin in cling film, stack in a freezer bag and label. To bake from frozen, line with foil and beans and bake at 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6) for 20 minutes, then fill.

> **RAW DOUGH AND HOT OVEN**
>
> **Raw dough and raw flour:** raw flour and raw egg can carry germs, so don't taste raw pastry or filling that contains raw egg or raw meat. Wash hands, bowls and the worktop afterwards, and keep tasting for the cooked result.
>
> **Hot oven and hot trays:** ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.

LEVEL 2 · LUNCH

A lunch of two tarts and a salad

1 hour 15 minutes | 6 portions | timing a meal around chilling and baking

A relaxed lunch for six from the day's work: a tomato and mustard tart, an onion and cheese tart and a green salad with a vinaigrette. Bake the cases while the onions cook, and fill and bake both tarts together. See Cooking Skills: Pastry 1, chapter 3 for the tarts and Cooking Skills: Sauces 1, chapter 7 for the dressing.

INGREDIENTS (6 PORTIONS)

2	blind-baked cases (chapter 2)
4	ripe tomatoes, sliced
3	onions, thinly sliced
100 g	Gruyère or Cheddar, grated
2 tbsp	Dijon mustard
2 tsp	fresh thyme leaves
150 g	salad leaves
6 tbsp	vinaigrette (Sauces 1)

1. Bake the cases from the freezer. While they bake, brown the onions slowly for **25 minutes** and salt and drain the tomato slices.
2. Spread mustard in each case, fill one with tomato and half the cheese, and the other with onions and the rest of the cheese. Add thyme.
3. Bake both at 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6) for **20 minutes.** Rest for 10 minutes and serve with the leaves dressed in the vinaigrette.

> **HOT OVEN AND ALLERGENS**
>
> **Hot oven and hot trays:** ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.
>
> **Allergens:** pastry contains gluten (flour) and milk (butter); egg washes contain egg. Use a plant block fat for a dairy-free version, and note that gluten-free flour needs a different method.

Allergens: contains milk, mustard and gluten.

LEVEL 3 · SIGNATURE

Your signature pie

1 hour 15 minutes | 4 to 6 portions | designing a pie from a template

Use the template to design a pie of your own. Choose a cooked main (meat, fish or vegetables), a thick sauce (white sauce, velouté or gravy from Cooking Skills: Sauces 1) and a pastry (shortcrust from the freezer). Write what you made, because a signature pie is one you can repeat.

INGREDIENTS (4 TO 6 PORTIONS)

1	batch of plain shortcrust, defrosted
400 g	cooked main (chicken, ham, vegetables or fish), in chunks
300 ml	thick sauce (white sauce, velouté or gravy)
1	onion or leek, softened
2 tbsp	chopped herbs
1	egg, beaten, to glaze

1. Mix the main, sauce, onion and herbs; taste, season and cool completely.
2. Fill a dish, add a lid as in Cooking Skills: Pastry 1, chapter 4, and vent and glaze.
3. Bake at 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6) for **30 to 35 minutes** until golden. Rest for 10 minutes and note your recipe.

HOT OVEN, STEAM AND LEFTOVERS

Hot oven and hot trays: ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.

Steam from a hot pie: a pie keeps hot steam and boiling filling inside the crust. Rest it for 10 minutes before cutting, cut from the side with the pie held steady, and keep your face back when you break the lid.

Keeping and freezing: raw pastry keeps in the fridge for about 2 days wrapped tightly, and freezes for about 3 months (general guidance). Cooked pies and tarts keep for about 2 days

> chilled; reheat pies until steaming hot all the way through, and freeze cooked pies for no more than about 2 to 3 months.

Experiments

EXPERIMENT

A timed pastry session

Planning.

1. Make two batches of pastry, line two tins, bake one case and write down how long each task took.

Look for: You will see how much time is spent chilling, not working. Plan other tasks into the chill time.

EXPERIMENT

Swapping fillings

Flexibility.

1. Bake the same case with three fillings from earlier chapters, one savoury, one sweet and one cheese.

Look for: A good case works with anything. Note which fillings your family liked.

EXPERIMENT

A signature pie

Making it yours.

1. Design a pie on the template, write the recipe and make it twice, adjusting once.

Look for: The second version is always better. A signature pie is repeated and refined.

EXPERIMENT

Defrosting pastry

Fridge or worktop.

1. Defrost one frozen disc in the fridge overnight and another on the worktop for 2 hours, then roll both.

Look for: The fridge disc rolls evenly; the worktop one is sticky outside and hard inside. Always defrost in the fridge.

Tasting notes

WHAT I TRIED	METHOD OR AMOUNT	WHAT I SAW	WHAT I THOUGHT	WILL I DO IT AGAIN?
Freezer pastry batch				
Freezer-ready cases				
Two-tart lunch				
Signature pie				
A timed pastry session				
Swapping fillings				
A signature pie				
Defrosting pastry				

Troubleshooting

PROBLEM	LIKELY CAUSE	WHAT TO DO
Frozen pastry cracks	Rolled while too cold	Let it stand for 10 to 15 minutes until pliable
Freezer-burned pastry	Poor wrapping	Wrap in cling film and a bag; use within 3 months

PROBLEM	LIKELY CAUSE	WHAT TO DO
Defrosted pastry sticky	Defrosted too warm	Chill again before rolling
Frozen case shrinks	Not chilled or pre-baked	Line with foil and beans and bake from frozen
Pies soggy after reheating	Microwaved	Reheat in the oven until steaming hot and crisp
Lunch not ready together	Poor timing	Write the plan backwards from the time you want to eat

FREEZING, REHEATING AND LEFTOVERS

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Steam from a hot pie: a pie keeps hot steam and boiling filling inside the crust. Rest it for 10 minutes before cutting, cut from the side with the pie held steady, and keep your face back when you break the lid.

Hot oven and hot trays: ovens, trays and tins are hot enough to burn badly. Use dry oven gloves (a damp cloth conducts heat), pull the shelf out a little before lifting a tray, put hot things on a heatproof surface and keep children away from the oven door.

CHECKPOINT: CAN YOU DO THIS NOW?

- ☐ I can make several batches of pastry in one session.
- ☐ I can wrap and freeze pastry safely.
- ☐ I can bake a case from frozen.
- ☐ I can plan a meal around chilling times.
- ☐ I have a signature pie I can repeat.

NEXT CHAPTER

Congratulations: you have finished Cooking Skills: Pastry 1. Pastry 2 is planned for choux, filo, rough puff and laminated doughs, and hot-water crust.