

# Apple Pie with Crumb Topping

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If it's at all possible to improve on a great apple pie, this is the way: Pile on a thick layer of nutty, crumbly topping made with pecans, brown sugar, flour, and butter. If I had to pick favorites among all the pies in this book, this would be it. It's like the best of apple crisp and apple pie all in one delicious package.

**Apple Notes:** In any pie recipe, I'll always recommend firm apples, preferably a mix of tarter and sweeter varieties (see page 30). As with the Oatmeal-Topped Apple Crisp on page 187, you'll do especially well with apples that have a spicier profile, such as Baldwin, Goldrush, Ginger Gold, and Suncrisp.

**Make-ahead tip:** You can prepare the crust through step 1 and refrigerate for up to five days. You can also freeze the dough for up to three months. Defrost overnight in the refrigerator before using.

**Equipment:** Parchment paper; 9-inch deep-dish pie plate (preferably glass); baking sheet (any size)

Makes: 8 servings • **Active time:** 60 minutes • **Total time:** 2 hours

## For the crust

**1¼ cups (180 g) all-purpose flour**

**1 tablespoon granulated sugar**

**½ teaspoon kosher salt**

**9 tablespoons (128 g) chilled unsalted butter, cut into small cubes**

**3 to 4 tablespoons (45 to 60 ml) ice water**

## For the filling

**1½ pounds (680 g, or about 3 large) firm-tart apples (see Apple Notes) peeled, cored, and cut into ¼-inch-thick wedges or slices**

**1½ pounds (680 g; or about 3 large) firm-sweet apples, peeled, cored, and cut into ¼-inch-thick wedges or slices**

**¼ cup (55 g) granulated sugar**

**2 tablespoons firmly packed light brown sugar**

**2 tablespoons cornstarch**

**1 tablespoon lemon juice**

**¼ teaspoon kosher salt**

### For the streusel topping

**½ cup (55 g) pecan halves, chopped fine**

**1 cup (145 g) all-purpose flour**

**½ cup (115 g) packed light brown sugar**

**¼ teaspoon kosher salt**

**7 tablespoons (100 g) salted butter, melted**

1• First, make the crust: In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, sugar, and salt until well combined (for instructions on making crust in a food processor, see page 67). Sprinkle the butter cubes on top and use your fingers to work them in (you want to rub your thumb against your fingertips, smearing the butter as you do). Stop when the mixture looks like cornmeal with some pea-sized bits of butter remaining.

Sprinkle 3 tablespoons ice water on top and stir with a fork until the dough begins to come together. If needed, add a tablespoon more of ice water. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface and knead three times. Gather into a ball, then press into a disk and wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.

2• Meanwhile, prepare the filling: In a large bowl, toss the apples with the sugar, brown sugar, cornstarch, lemon juice, and salt. Set aside.

3• Preheat the oven to 400°F and set a rack to the lowest position. Make the streusel topping: Stir together the pecans, flour, brown sugar, and salt in a small bowl. Add the butter and stir with a fork until small clumps form. Set aside.

4• Unwrap the dough and put it in the center of a large sheet of parchment paper. Cover with a second piece of parchment. Roll out, working from the center, to a 13-inch circle. Peel off the top piece of parchment and transfer the dough to a pie plate, peeled side down. Peel off the remaining parchment and press the crust into the sides of the plate. Trim the crust so it hangs about ½ inch over the edge, then tuck under and crimp. If you don't have a favorite decorative crimping technique, you can always simply pinch the crust between your thumb and forefinger at regular intervals around the crust, but I like to make a scalloped edge by holding my right thumb and forefinger in a "U" shape, then poking the crust between them using my left forefinger. Fill the crust with the apple mixture, then top evenly with the streusel (press down a bit to make the topping as even as possible).

5• Put the pie on a baking sheet and bake on the bottom rack for 15 minutes. Reduce

the heat to 350°F and bake until the topping is golden brown and juices are bubbling, 50 to 60 minutes. Let cool on a rack for at least 45 minutes before serving—the apples stay very hot for quite a while and the pie slices better if you give it a chance to set up. However, if you can't bear to wait, be my guest.