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# If you've never made your own pizza, you're missing out.

Not only is homemade pizza almost always tastier than delivery, but it's also loads more fun. Making a pizza from scratch (or from close to scratch) gives you the opportunity to personalize your pie to your tastes. You'll no longer be limited to the options available on the menu – your only limits will be your imagination. Well, that and what's edible.

Whether you're looking to make your crust thick or thin, your sauce traditional or alternative, and your toppings typical or adventurous, this eBook can help you figure out the best method. Here's your primer on pizza!

#### THIN CRUST

Thin-crust pizza is the quintessential pizza experience. The trick to making this kind of pizza perfectly is not overcooking it. Thicker crusts offer a little bit more wiggle room, since it takes them longer to reach "too done." Thin crusts can go from "perfect" to "burnt" in a short span of time.

ip: Remember, things cook a little longer once you take them out of the oven, so it's usually best to respect the cook time. You can always return it to the oven if it's underbaked, but you can't unbake it.



Follow your recipe's cook time closely, and keep an eye on the pizza.



### THICK AND STUFFED CRUSTS

For thicker crusts, press the dough directly into the pan.

Thicker crusts offer a doughier eating experience, and you can use them to make deepdish Chicago-style pizzas. You can make this kind of pie one of two ways: either by using dough made specifically for a thicker crust or using a regular pizza dough but not stretching it as thin. The first method is more effective for deep-dish pizzas, but the second will work perfectly if you just want a more substantial crust.

Stuffed crusts are

surprisingly easy, and always make for a nice touch. Simply stretch out your dough as you usually would, then roll up pieces of string or cubed cheese around the edges. Press the dough firmly into itself so it doesn't pop back up, and bake normally.

For stuffed crusts, roll the edges of dough around pieces of cheese.



#### **DOUGH TIPS AND SHORTCUTS**

Though you can roll out pizza dough, stretching it is your best option. Rolling pushes air out of the crust, and can reduce your final product's overall fluffiness.

While you're preparing your dough, pay close attention to details like water temperature and rise times. Since pizza crust recipes typically include yeast, these details will make a big difference in the chemical processes happening during the rise and bake.

Tip: If you need dough quickly, you can use a mix like our <u>Pizza Crust Mix</u>. These typically have a much shorter rise time, so you'll have your dough sooner. You can also use a pre-made dough from the grocery store.



#### **SAUCES**

The typical pizza comes with tomato sauce, but your creation doesn't have to be average. Consider using alternative sauces on your pizza, like:

You can also make a no-sauce pizza by coating your dough in an olive oil-garlic mixture.









PESTO

BARBEQUE

**ALFREDO** 

OLIVE OIL / GARLIC

Of course, there's nothing wrong with going for the standard. If you make a sauce from scratch, taste it along the way to make sure you like the blend of spices, and feel free to tweak it if you think it could use a little something extra.

Using a different sauce opens up a whole new world for toppings – something like dried figs would likely clash with red sauce, but would taste wonderfully on a white-sauce pizza. Take "odd" sauces as an opportunity to get creative.

#### **TOPPINGS**

If you have a favorite toppings combo you're used to getting at your local pizza place, try your hand at making the same pie at home!

If you're looking to try something even newer, experiment with different topping combinations. Think about flavor combos that work well together, like sweet and salty, and try to focus on balance.

Tip: A lot of strong ingredients on a single pizza could lead to flavor overload. Focus on one shining-star topping and choose the rest based on that ingredient's flavor.



*Quick note*: Pre-cook meat toppings, as most won't reach a safe temperature

#### **COOKING**

Follow the temperature and time recommendations on your dough recipe, and pre-heat your oven well in advance of cook time (at least 30 minutes). Dough needs to go into an already-hot oven for it to bake light and airy.

If you're worried about gas bubbles in your crust, turn the oven light on, keep an eye on the dough, and quickly pop them as they form.

The best way to cook your pizza in the oven is on a <u>pizza stone</u>. However, the oven isn't the only way to cook a pie: Consider grilling your pizza for a thoroughly new experience. Put your pizza on our <u>Rockcrok® Grill Stone</u> and stick it right on the barbecue!



#### **STORAGE**

Pizzas are usually fairly big, so there's always a chance you'll end up with leftovers. Homemade pizza can last for three to four days in the refrigerator. Wrap it up or keep it in an airtight container to preserve freshness.

Making your own pizza is the perfect way to practice your dough skills, try out creative ideas, and figure out what tastes great together. The best part is, on your way to figuring out the perfect pizza, you'll get to eat plenty of near-perfect pizzas!

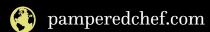
Need to keep your pizza longer? You can store it in the freezer for up to two months.

However, airtight storage is even more important in cooler temperatures, so make sure it's wrapped up tight to prevent freezer burn.

## pampered chef









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