



Looking for that fool-proof, flaky, buttery goodness? Follow these tips for the perfect crust...

## Tips for cooking with pastry

Whether homemade or store-bought, pastry can be a tricky ingredient to master. Undercook it and you'll lose that buttery texture we've all come to know and love. Too much heat and your dough will become sticky and lose its form. How do the chefs find that perfect balance?

The secret, we believe, is in both the preparation and the oven settings. And with the right tools and techniques, it's a whole lot easier than you think.

Here in the NEFF kitchen, we're big fans of a soft, buttery pastry – whether that's a golden puff pastry casing for a [beef and mushroom pie](#), or a sweet pastry case for an [apricot danish](#). It's a sure way to up your home cooking game and impress your guests.

Follow our secret hacks and habits to improve your pastry handling, and put your NEFF appliances to good use:

### Room temperature is the only temperature

Pastry is very sensitive to changes in heat – whether it's shortcrust for your [apple pie](#) or puff pastry for a [homemade chicken and mushroom pie](#). Make sure you're keeping it cool when not in use, and handling it at room temperature until baking time. The key for lamination with puff pastry or defined layers of butter, so if you handle your pastry while it is too warm you risk melting the butter before it gets a chance to bake.

### Brush the surface with egg

A pale pastry never did anyone any good – especially if it's a buttery puff pastry wrapped around a classic [sausage roll](#). Don't forget to whisk an egg and brush your pastries in the golden glaze before placing in the oven. The egg will help crisp the top layer of pastry and give your dough a smooth golden finish.

### Try out NEFF's top/bottom heating function

One of the trickiest things when it comes to the perfect pastry is an even finish. Often, the edges end up overcooked while the base of the dish remains soggy and sticky. Never fear – your NEFF oven is fitted with a top/bottom heating function that distributes the heat of the oven to all sides of the dish. Try out our [French onion quiche with gruyere](#) to see it in action.

## Use your [CircoTherm](#) setting for the perfect finish

Not sure how to 'blind bake' your pastry cases or ensure that your dishes hold their form? Leave the hardest part of your pastry process to your NEFF oven. Your Circotherm intensive function removes any complicated blind baking steps and gives your pies and pastries an even, consistent heat throughout the cooking time. Your [lemon meringue pie](#) has never looked easier...

Ready to ditch store-bought pastry and make your own? Try our recipe for Sour Cream Pastry.

### Sour Cream Pastry

#### Ingredients

- 1 cup flour
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 125 g butter, chilled, finely chopped
- 1/4 cup sour cream

#### Method

Place flour, salt and butter in a food processor or large bowl and whizz, or rub between your fingertips, until mixture resembles crumbs. Add sour cream and continue to blend until the dough starts to incorporate into a ball. Check consistency – if it is still crumbly and does not come together, add a little cold water or more sour cream.

Tip dough onto a sheet of baking paper, pressing it together into a disk or log shape.

Wrap and chill for at least 20 minutes before use. If not using within a week, freeze until needed.