



CLIP AND SAVE: REAL SIMPLE TO GO

REALSIMPLE | BOOKMARK

REALSIMPLE | PRACTICAL WISDOM

trust the experts

A roundup of this issue's smartest tips, courtesy of *Real Simple's* go-to sources.

BEAUTY

If nail biting is your *bête noire*, try a salon gel manicure, which is harder and longer-lasting than ordinary polish.

The expert grooming will make you less likely to bite. Plus, the manicure lasts about three weeks—enough time to help you kick the habit.

—Dana Stern, dermatologist and nail specialist in New York City

HEALTH

To keep yourself from crying, contemplate the lines in your hands. If you can disconnect from the source that is causing your tears for even 60 seconds, you're probably going to be OK.

—Melissa Smith, conservatory director of the American Conservatory Theater, in San Francisco

WORK

When requesting someone's feedback on your work, don't ask for a general verdict. Instead, ask the person to respond to your specific behavior on a given occasion. Then try not to be defensive if she gives a critical answer.

—Erica Fox, director of people development at Google

ENTERTAINING

Creating a cheese plate for your holiday party? About five different cheeses are ideal for any size gathering. Just remember: You need an ounce of each cheese for every guest.

—Rob Kaufelt, owner of Murray's Cheese, in New York City

Reprinted from REALSIMPLE® November 2013 © Time Inc. All rights reserved.

REALSIMPLE | FOOD

basic flaky piecrust

HANDS-ON TIME: 10 MINUTES
TOTAL TIME: 1 HOUR, 10 MINUTES
MAKES ONE 9-INCH PIECRUST

- 1¼ cups all-purpose flour, spooned and leveled, plus more for rolling
- ½ cup (1 stick) cold unsalted butter, cut into small pieces
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- 2 to 4 tablespoons ice water



► In a food processor, pulse the flour, butter, sugar, and salt until the mixture resembles coarse meal, with a few pea-size clumps of butter remaining.

► Add 2 tablespoons of the water. Pulse until the mixture just holds together when squeezed. (Add more water as necessary; do not overprocess.)

► Place the mixture on a sheet of plastic wrap. Shape it into a 1-inch-thick disk, wrap tightly, and chill until firm, at least 1 hour and up to 3 days.

The recipe for this cranberry custard pie is on page 201.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSÉ PICAYO

REALSIMPLE® November 2013 © Time Inc. All rights reserved.

REALSIMPLE | FASHION

your jeans problems, solved

From fit to fixes, this chart has you covered.

PROBLEM	SOLUTION
too long	Shop stores that offer in-store tailoring, like Banana Republic, Club Monaco, J.Crew, Neiman Marcus, Nordstrom, and Saks Fifth Avenue. Or head to a tailor and bring along the type of shoes that you plan to wear with the jeans, and ask for the original hems to be reattached.
gaping waistband	Look for a contoured waistband (higher in the back than in the front), which has an angled seam along the top and sides so it fits your curves. Choosing midrise to high-rise jeans could also help.
holes	Ship them to Denim Therapy (denimtherapy.com) for repairs. Prices start at \$4.
stretched out	When buying, look for at least 2 percent Lycra, spandex, or elastane. Choose a pair that is snug but that doesn't leave imprints on your skin. Next, try this dressing-room test: Do a few deep knee bends. If the fabric expands more than a half inch, the jeans will probably bag out more with further wear.

Reprinted from REALSIMPLE® November 2013 © Time Inc. All rights reserved.



11/13



PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID MEREDITH

...dessert in the living room

Relocating for sweets and coffee lets guests stretch their legs and switch up conversation partners.

abandon the mess Walk away from the dinner detritus with everyone else. It makes guests feel relaxed and lets you seem chill, even if you're not.

build a framework Set up your dessert infrastructure—plates, napkins, forks—on a side table before the party. In the kitchen, stash a filled creamer in the fridge and have the coffeemaker ready for action. Serving only decaf saves a lot of trouble and makes most everyone happy.

cheer at the finish line At the holidays, Champagne after the meal is a nice surprise. It's one

of those delightful little touches that people remember.

make minis Fend off "just a sliver" requests (and unwanted diet banter) with smallish desserts—cupcakes, brownies, or cookies—that guests can serve themselves, without comment or cajoling. (They're also a natural choice after a big feast.)

pretreat To really spoil guests, set out a warm-up to the dessert course—fancy chocolates or salted caramels—while you ready the baked goods. (Don't forget the desserts that guests brought!) Sweet cheeses and nuts with a dessert wine provide the right coda for the sugar-averse.

"Instead of asking who wants coffee, it's nice to just bring out a tray of small, pre-poured cups. Demitasse cups are a good size and don't require the commitment of a full mug."

—Peter Callahan, New York City caterer

Toscana two-tier centerpiece, \$790, tabulatua.com. Spheres creamer with wicker handle, \$49; Domus French-press coffeepot with large wicker handle, \$155; and Spheres sugar bowl with wicker handle and spoon, \$55; shophorne.com. Tourron mug in lemon (similar to shown), \$30, michaelcfina.com. Festival cocktail napkins in mustard, \$23 for four, sferra.com.

psst—save big on entertaining essentials! Real Simple has teamed up with Gilt.com to offer discounts on everything you need for hosting in style (tableware, serving pieces, glasses, and more), handpicked by Real Simple's home editors. The sale starts at 12 P.M. EST on October 10 and runs through 12 P.M. EST on October 13. New Gilt customers will get 20 percent off their first home-goods purchase. To access the sale, go to gilt.com/realsimple. And look out for another RS-Gilt sale as the holidays near!





...moving to the Dinner table...

"If you have a rectangular table, station yourself at the head—others might feel stranded there. It also lets you gracefully slip away if you need to, without leaving a big hole in the party."

—Mary Giuliani, New York City event planner

Spirited conversation is a dinner party's bread and butter, but sometimes it needs a nudge.

manage moods At holiday time, people tend to arrive hungry (and ready to indulge), so don't make them wait too long for the main event.

make a scene For easy ooh factor, use a white tablecloth, white dishes, and just one or two rich accent colors (say, cranberry and amber). Flowers and centerpieces should be tall enough to talk under or short enough to talk over.

a place (card) for everyone Seating plans may seem formal, but they actually make guests more comfortable. Think about who would benefit from particular placement: small children (seat near a parent), couples (split

them up to encourage mixing), and hearing-impaired guests (reserve a quiet corner chair or seat them front and center, depending on personality). Then fill in the blanks.

set the sideboard Turn a console into a convenient, arm's-reach refilling station. Load it with wine, carafes of water, and spare utensils to eliminate supply runs.

be present Each time you get up to fetch something, you essentially abandon your guests. A host's primary duty isn't to feed people (really!) but to spend time with them. Serve family-style, and forget cleaning up mid-event. Carrying plates to the kitchen is one thing; but once you turn on a tap, you've doused the festivity.

Welcome red-wine glass in gray (on sideboard), \$15, crateandbarrel.com. Goblet water glass in amber, \$20, billycotton.com. Stonewashed Belgian linen tablecloth, \$89, rh.com. Spruce candelabra (on sideboard), \$885, thefutureperfect.com. Tall cylindrical ceramic vase in red (similar to shown), \$95, atwestend.com. Match Convivio soup and pasta bowl, \$107, gracioushome.com. Pomegranate place cards, \$45 for 12, mrsstrong.com. Molten pitcher, \$199, michaelaram.com.