

Egg Custard

A silky stirred custard that turns a surplus of yolks into dessert

DIFFICULTY Medium

COURSE Dessert

CUISINE British



PREP
10 min



COOK
15 min



TOTAL
25 min



SERVES
6



FREEZES WELL
No

01 Ingredients

- 500ml full-cream milk
- 250ml pure cream
- 6 egg yolks
- 80g caster sugar
- 1 tbsp corn flour
- 2 tsp vanilla extract

02 Method

1. Heat the milk and cream in a saucepan over medium heat until steaming and just starting to bubble at the edges. Do not let it boil.
2. While it heats, whisk the egg yolks, sugar and corn flour together in a large heatproof bowl until pale and thick.
3. Pour about a third of the hot milk onto the yolks in a thin stream, whisking constantly, then whisk in the rest.
4. Pour everything back into the saucepan and cook over low heat, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon, for 8-10 minutes until it thickens enough to coat the back of the spoon.
5. Take off the heat, stir in the vanilla, and strain through a sieve into a jug to catch any lumps. Serve warm, or cover the surface with baking paper and chill.

04 Common mistakes

- **Heating too fast** — high heat scrambles the yolks into lumps; keep the heat low and stir the whole time.
- **Not tempering the yolks** — pouring all the hot milk in at once cooks the eggs on contact; add it slowly while whisking.
- **Walking away from the pan** — custard goes from smooth to curdled in seconds once it gets too hot; stay at the stove.
- **Skipping the sieve** — even a good custard can carry a few lumps; straining gives a silky result.

03 Notes & substitutions

- Use the leftover egg whites for meringues, pavlova, or an omelette - they freeze well in a container.
- Make a thicker custard for pies or trifle by adding another tablespoon of corn flour.
- Split a vanilla bean into the milk instead of using extract, and scrape the seeds in.
- Stir through a little melted dark chocolate, or a spoonful of instant coffee, for a flavoured custard.
- Serve over apple crumble, stewed fruit, sponge or sticky date pudding.

05 Storage & leftovers

FRIDGE	Covered with baking paper on the surface, up to 3 days. Keep it cold, since egg-based desserts spoil quickly.
FREEZER	Not recommended - it separates and turns grainy on thawing. Use it to make ice cream instead.
REHEATING	Warm gently in a saucepan over low heat, stirring, or in the microwave in short bursts.