

Online magazine: [Regency Recipes Main Dishes](#)

## Pigeons in a Hole

### Pigeons in a Hole



This warm and homey dish is the precursor to "Toad in a Hole". While "Toad in a Hole" was created first sometime in the mid 1700's no one is sure exactly when or how it got it's name. This dish is very like it, and, as Hannah Glasse wrote in *The Art of Cookery, Made Plain and Easy*, in 1747, "It is a good dish".

Made up of pigeons or other small game birds baked in a yorkshire pudding crust, it could also be made with chicken, or, as in classic "Toad in a Hole", sausages. Pigeons were easily come by in Regency England, with many houses retaining a Pigeon Coop or Dovecote for the purpose of having easily caught birds close at hand. These young pigeons were called squab, when served.

During the Victorian era, "Toad in a Hole" became known as a poor person's dish, as it was made with whatever left over scraps of meat

could be purchased cheaply from the butcher. All in all, the result must have been appealing, since it was quickly adapted to the Master's table, by supplementing the scraps for sausages (which, after all, are left over scraps of meat...) Today "Toad in a Hole" retains its popularity as a quick to make comfort food, perfect for a cold November evening.

### Pigeons in a Hole

*Pick, draw, and wash four young pigeons, stick their legs into their belly*

*as you do boiled pigeons. Season them with pepper, salt, and beaten mace, put into the belly of every pigeon a lump of butter the size of a walnut. Lay your pigeons in a pie dish, pour over them a batter made of three eggs, two spoonfuls of flour and a half a pint of good milk. Bake in a moderate oven and serve them to table in the same dish." --- The Experienced English Housekeeper, Elizabeth Raffald, 1769*

The basic recipe for "Toad in a Hole" couldn't be easier-- cook several sausages, place them in the bottom of your baking pan, pour a batch of [Yorkshire Pudding](#) batter over the whole thing and bake. If you'd like to follow the pigeon recipe, use small game hens or pullets. Season to taste, add a bit of butter to each and pour on the batter.

### Basic Yorkshire Pudding with Sausage:

- 6 medium sized sausagelinks
- 1 c. flour
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 2 eggs
- 1 c. milk
- 4 tbsp. oil

1. Cook your sausages in a skillet over medium heat, stirring occasionally until cooked through.
2. Blend flour, salt, eggs, milk together until very smooth, scraping bowl occasionally (a blender also works well for this).
3. Heat oven to 450 degrees.
4. Measure oil into 8 x 8 x 2 inch square Pyrex pan. Heat for 2 minutes.
5. Add sausages to oil in bottom of pan (be careful-- the oil may spit)
6. Pour batter into pan and bake for 20-30 minutes. Do not open door. Serve immediately, with gravy if desired.

