

## Food Photography & Recipe



***For this assignment, you will be shooting a flat lay image of food. Later, we will add a recipe to your image to create the look of a cookbook.***

### EASY PUFF PASTRY




1. Place the flour and salt in a large bowl and whisk to combine.
2. Cut the cold butter into 1/4-inch slices and add to the flour mixture, tossing to coat.
3. Stir in the cold water until a thick dough forms.
4. Gather the dough into a ball, flatten it into a disk shape, and wrap in plastic wrap.
5. Chill for 1 hour in the fridge, or 20 to 30 minutes in the freezer.
6. Unwrap the dough, dust the work surface with flour, and roll the dough into a rough rectangle shape.
7. Fold the dough in thirds, like a letter.
8. Turn 90 degrees, roll and fold again.
9. Repeat about 2 to 4 times, wrap the dough in plastic wrap, and chill for 2 hours or overnight.

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### CLASSIC CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

Ingredients	DIRECTIONS
1/2 cup butter	1. Preheat the oven to 350 F.
1/2 cup granulated sugar	2. Microwave the butter for about 40 seconds. Butter should be completely melted but shouldn't be hot.
1/4 cup brown sugar (packed)	3. In a large bowl, mix butter with the sugars until well-combined.
2 teaspoons vanilla extract	4. Stir in vanilla and egg until incorporated.
1 large egg	5. Add the flour, baking soda, and salt.
1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour	6. Mix dough until just combined. Dough should be soft and a little sticky but not overly sticky.
1/2 teaspoon baking soda	7. Stir in chocolate chips.
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt	8. Scoop out 1.5 tablespoons of dough (medium cookie scoop) and place 2 inches apart on baking sheet.
1 cup semisweet chocolate chips	9. Bake for 7-10 minutes, or until cookies are set. They will be puffy and still look a little underbaked in the middle.



**What is due:** 10 flat lay images of your chosen food, taken from a variety of angles. Write down the steps/recipe to your food.

**What is a Flat Lay?** It is a photo of several objects laid out in an aesthetically pleasing theme. They can be used to sell an outfit, what to pack for a trip, what you would use for a craft, or in this case, a recipe.

**Ideas:** Choose a food or recipe to photograph. It can be sweet or savory, a meal or a snack. If you don't know how to cook, you can use something like a bag of chips, arrange your composition and then look up a recipe for homemade chips. You could also do a drink, like a specific kind of tea, hot chocolate, coffee, etc.

You can shoot the recipe in progress, with ingredients and utensils around, or you can shoot the finished product. You can also do a compilation of both. (We'll look at examples of each type in a slideshow in a bit).

- **Shoot from Above**

- Make sure you are shooting from directly above your plate/set up.

- Zoom in enough to eliminate things beyond the edges of your composition



- **Pick out your Accessories/Plates/Background**

- Be mindful of the plate/pan/surface you are putting your food on. Does it distract from your food or complement it?
- Choose accessories that make sense. What silverware would you use to eat it? You can have pieces of food that are used in the recipe to decorate your space.
- What will you use for your background? Things that work well are:
  - Wood (wood floor or a wood table close enough to a window to use natural light)
  - Chalkboard
  - Fabrics
  - Scrapbooking paper that has a texture or pattern that complements your food (you can find these at Michaels, Target, Walmart)



- **Shoot from a Variety of Angles**

- Play with the placement of your plate, food and accessories
- Will you have the plate angled, and going off the edge of the composition or will the entire plate be visible?
- How will you set up your elements to help the viewer's eye travel across the composition?



- **Shoot in Natural Light**

- Light is the key to creating beautiful still life photos. Always shoot your food pictures in natural daylight rather than under artificial lighting. This will ensure the color of your food, plates and accessories are accurate.
- If you illuminate your food with an artificial light such as a lamp, it's likely to create an ugly orange or yellow color cast in your photo.
- The best kind of light for food photography is soft, diffused, natural daylight. You can get this effect shooting inside by a window, or outside.
- Overcast days are perfect for food photography because the clouds act like a giant diffuser, creating a soft light with more subtle shadows.



- **Pay Attention to Shadows**

- In most cases, you should try to avoid harsh shadows in still life and food photography. Soft shadows are much more flattering to the subject, creating subtle depth and dimension without dominating the scene.
- To avoid harsh shadows in your food photos, shoot on an overcast day or move your subject into a lightly shaded area.
- If you're shooting indoors and the sun is shining brightly through the window, use a semi-transparent white curtain to diffuse the light.
- Alternatively, you could try moving the food further away from the window, or use a different window on the other side of the house.



- **Use a Neutral Background**

- When shooting a food photo, the background is very important. If the background is too messy or colorful, the viewer's attention will be drawn away from the food.
- Using a fairly neutral background allows you to place maximum emphasis on the food in the scene. A neutral background doesn't mean that it has to be

completely plain, but it should complement the subject rather than distract from it.

- There are many objects that you can use as your background. A wooden table makes a great backdrop, particularly if it's near a window so that you can make use of the natural light.
- Tea towels and tablecloths also work well. White fabric tends to work best, but bright colors can work well with some foods. A subtle pattern, such as the vintage floral print shown below, can also look good sometimes.
- Other backgrounds you could try include a black chalkboard, a carpet or rug, tiles, baking paper, a baking tray or a newspaper. You could look for cheap scrapbooking paper at Target, Walmart, or Michaels that has a picture of your desired surface.



- **Arrange Your Food Neatly**

- Always arrange your food in a neat or unique way to create visual interest and balance.
- It's fun to play around with fruits and vegetables because you can cut them into similar shapes and create patterns on your plate or baking tray.
- After creating your arrangement on the plate, make sure you haven't spilled any food or sauce on the edge of the plate or the background.



- If there are any spillages, clean them up before you take the photo. There shouldn't be any unnecessary mess in your picture.
- Think about your use of color. You can have similar colors, complementary colors (Red & Green, Blue & Orange, Yellow & Purple), high contrast colors, etc.



## ● **Don't Crowd the Composition**

- When composing your food photos, consider leaving some breathing space around the plate so that it doesn't fill the entire frame.
- While some close-up food shots can look great, leaving some empty negative space will often create a more pleasing composition and place more emphasis on the shapes of your subjects.
- Including some empty space when you have a dark background emphasizes the darkness within the scene, whereas a light background helps to make the image look brighter.
- Experiment with the position of the subjects within the space. Maybe the plate of food would look better in the center of the frame, or perhaps it would look better positioned to one side.
- It's often a good idea to take several shots with the subject placed in different positions within the space. That way you can look at the photos after taking them, and decide which one creates the most balanced composition.



- **Decorate the Scene**

- Brainstorm what accessories and design elements will look good and make sense with your food. Silverware, chopsticks, pieces of the ingredients used in the recipe, fabrics, leaves, etc.

