Project Pitch

Recipe Manager

Problem

As people with active lives do not have ample time to leisurely approach the complicated process of learning to cook, they need a system to help them integrate cooking into their lives in a more organized fashion.

Simply surfing the web and bookmarking recipes may not scale well for those looking to be long-term cooks as there will be a loss of what distinguishes your favorite recipes, whether it be nutrition, difficulty, or the severity of the food coma! The mix of complex and simple recipes on the internet may be discouraging for those looking to start cooking as well. In general, the internet is not a friendly place for health-conscious individuals looking to weed out the healthier recipes from the indulgent ones with so many options and differences between recipe sites. Ultimately, without a centralized platform for tracking the progress of your cooking journey, you might feel lost and helpless as a cook.

Target Audience

Demographic | 3

- Younger (20's), more active people
- Working a job, have money (not a lot, but comfortable)
- Beginner to intermediate cooking levels

Identifiers | 4

- High energy
- Health-conscious
- Social
- Active - low idle time

Motivations | 4

- Nutrition
- Convenience
- Planning (meal prep)
- Learning cooking simple recipes

Persona: Fresher Cory

Profile

Corey is an international student as well as the fresher in the University, this means it's his first time to leave his hometown and parents, and he needs to be independent and learn how to take care of himself.

Motivation

- Learn how to cook to help him survive in his college life
- Learn some traditional food that fits his cultural background to impress his parents

Goals

- Learn easy recipe that can help him to prepare for a meal in a short period of time
- Learn some traditional food according to Corey's cultural background to impress his parents

Frustrations

- He's new to the city so it will be tough for him to collect all the ingredients
- He's totally new to cooking so he does not know where to start

Persona: Stylist Stacy

Profile

Full-time UI/UX Designer for Apple working and living in the Bay Area. Has been in the Bay Area for four years since starting.

Motivation

- Usually eats at company cafeteria or orders take out
- Not the best at cooking but very interested in learning
- Wants to have a few dishes down so she can cook for friends

Goals

- Learn to cook easy meals as an alternative to take out
- Create dishes from what she has in her fridge and doesn't want to buy more as she wouldn't end up using everything

Frustrations

- Other applications require too many ingredients that she doesn't have
- Hard to tell the difficulty / actual time commitment for recipes

Persona: Athlete Jason

Profile

He is a student athlete and he wants to get into a nutritious meal plan for his athlete career. Most of his days are spent away from home at class or practicing/competing in his sports.

Motivation

- Wants to partake on a healthy and consistent diet to keep in top shape for sports.
- Wants to be able to meal prep to maintain healthy meals away from home

Goals

- Learn some great recipes to cook on a consistent basis
- Stick to a consistent meal prep schedule with healthy meals throughout the day
- Lose fat and gain muscle

Frustrations

- He spends a lot of time training, so he don't have much time to cook many of the recipes online
- Hard to tell the nutritional facts of online recipes to see if they are healthy
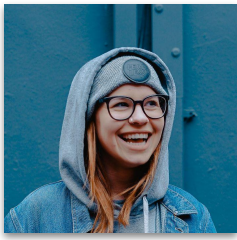
Persona: Mid-20's Mindy

Profile

Used to working full-time in LA and is tired of eating takeout so often. Has a well managed schedule so that she is productive while still having a decent amount of free time.

Motivation

- Wants to take on cooking as a hobby to fill up some of her free time
- Wants to explore the flavors of other cultures through authentic homemade meals

Goals

- Perfecting some solid recipes from different cuisines
- Being able to cook consistently and in a timely manner throughout the week

Frustrations

- Hard to find which recipes and dishes to try from the many different options online
- Hard to organizing recipes from different cuisines just by browser bookmarks
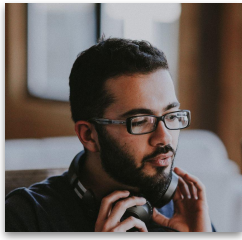
Persona: New Grad Nick

Profile

Nick just started his first job out of college on a stable salary. He is adjusting to the 40 hour work week while trying to stay healthy, fit, and financially stable. Doesn't have a ton of time outside of his work hours on the weekdays.

Motivation

- Wants to remain healthy and not get too complacent with takeout nearby
- Wants to keep cooking quick & cheap - starting simple & easy while he is still adjusting to the work expectations

Goals

- Get better at cooking as independent adult life approaches
- Nail down affordable & reliable recipes for staying healthy
- Get used to a consistent cooking schedule in between work obligations

Frustrations

- Grocery shopping can be unorganized and wasteful without organized planning
- Not enough time to distinguish the fancy vs. beginner recipes online

Appetite

Our time is fixed to only a few weeks - how does that constrain our solution & inform our approach?

- A focus on the core features of a recipe manager - organization & convenience
- Limit add-on features to a few crucial ones for our target audience
  - Nutritional information
  - Meal prep calendar
  - Grocery list
- Prioritize thorough functionality over refined styling & customization
- Accessible and minimalistic UI
- Basic tech stack - HTML/JS/CSS, lightweight frameworks

Ultimately, simplicity done well over unfinished complexity!

Solution

Statement of Purpose

We aim to create a recipe manager that provides personalization and organization to keep cooking efficient and productive for newer cooks & active and health-conscious individuals. The recipe manager is designed to help users on their mission to improve their long-term diet in favor of homemade meals rather than takeout & junk food through the week. In addition, the recipe manager addresses important micro-level concerns like following a recipe's ingredients & steps while cooking, tracking necessary ingredients for recipes in a grocery list, and easily performing CRUD operations on recipes.
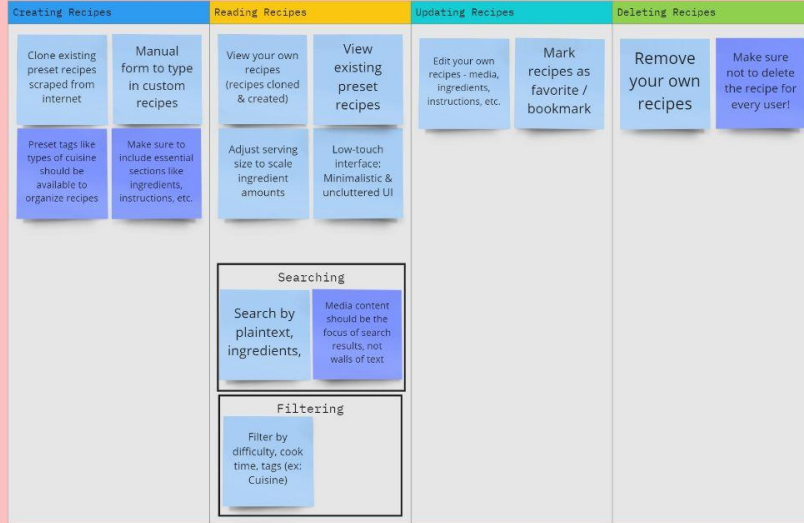
Features

Core
- Creating recipes
  - + Preset recipes tailored to the beginner level & time commitment of target audience
- Reading recipes
  - + User-friendly & low-touch interface
- Editing recipes
- Deleting recipes

Add-on
- Nutritional information
- Meal prep calendar
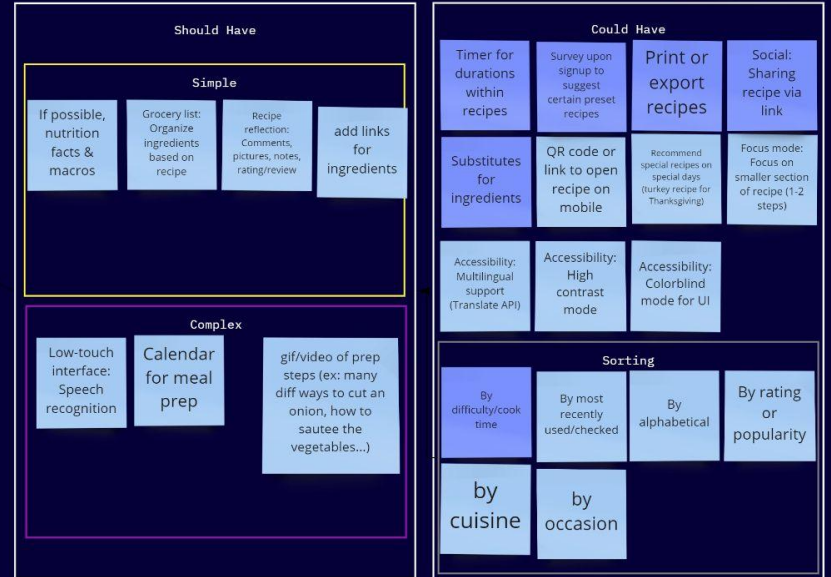- Grocery list

Feature Breakdown

CORE Features

Creating Recipes

- Clone existing preset recipes scraped from internet
- Manual form to type in custom recipes
- Preset tags like types of cuisine should be available to organize recipes
- Make sure to include essential sections like ingredients, instructions, etc.

Reading Recipes

- View your own recipes (recipes cloned & created)
- View existing preset recipes
- Adjust serving size to scale ingredient amounts
- Low-touch interface: Minimalistic & uncluttered UI

Searching

- Search by plaintext, ingredients,
- Media content should be the focus of search results, not walls of text

Filtering

- Filter by difficulty, cook time, tags (ex: Cuisine)

Updating Recipes

- Edit your own recipes - media, ingredients, instructions, etc.
- Mark recipes as favorite / bookmark

Deleting Recipes

- Remove your own recipes
- Make sure not to delete the recipe for every user!

Add-on features

Could Have Section Key

Unnecessary or Extra	Feasible or Has Potential

Should Have

Simple

- If possible, nutrition facts & macros
- Grocery list: Organize ingredients based on recipe
- Recipe reflection: Comments, pictures, notes, rating/review
- add links for ingredients

Complex

- Low-touch interface: Speech recognition
- Calendar for meal prep
- gif/video of prep steps (ex: many diff ways to cut an onion, how to sautee the vegetables...)

Could Have

- Timer for durations within recipes
- Survey upon signup to suggest certain preset recipes
- Print or export recipes
- Social: Sharing recipe via link
- Substitutes for ingredients
- QR code or link to open recipe on mobile
- Recommend special recipes on special days (turkey recipe for Thanksgiving)
- Focus mode: Focus on smaller section of recipe (1-2 steps)
- Accessibility: Multilingual support (Translate API)
- Accessibility: High contrast mode
- Accessibility: Colorblind mode for UI

Sorting

- By difficulty/cook time
- By most recently used/checked
- By alphabetical
- By rating or popularity
- by cuisine
- by occasion
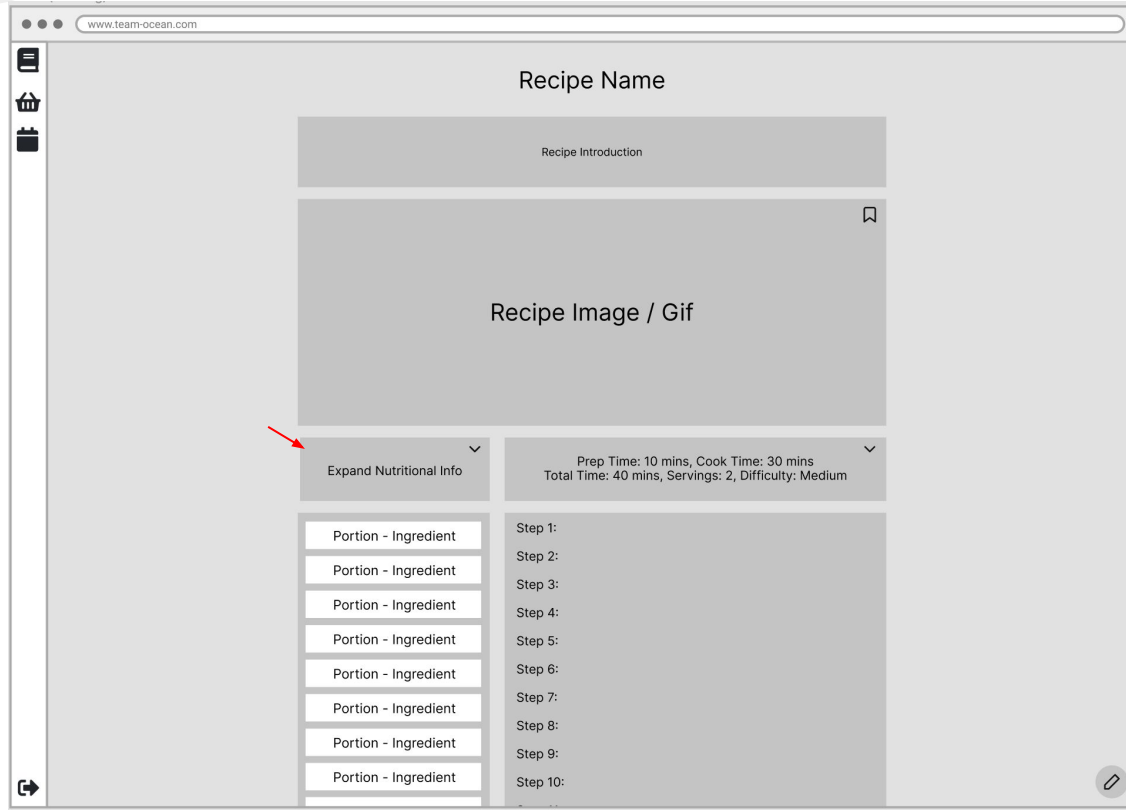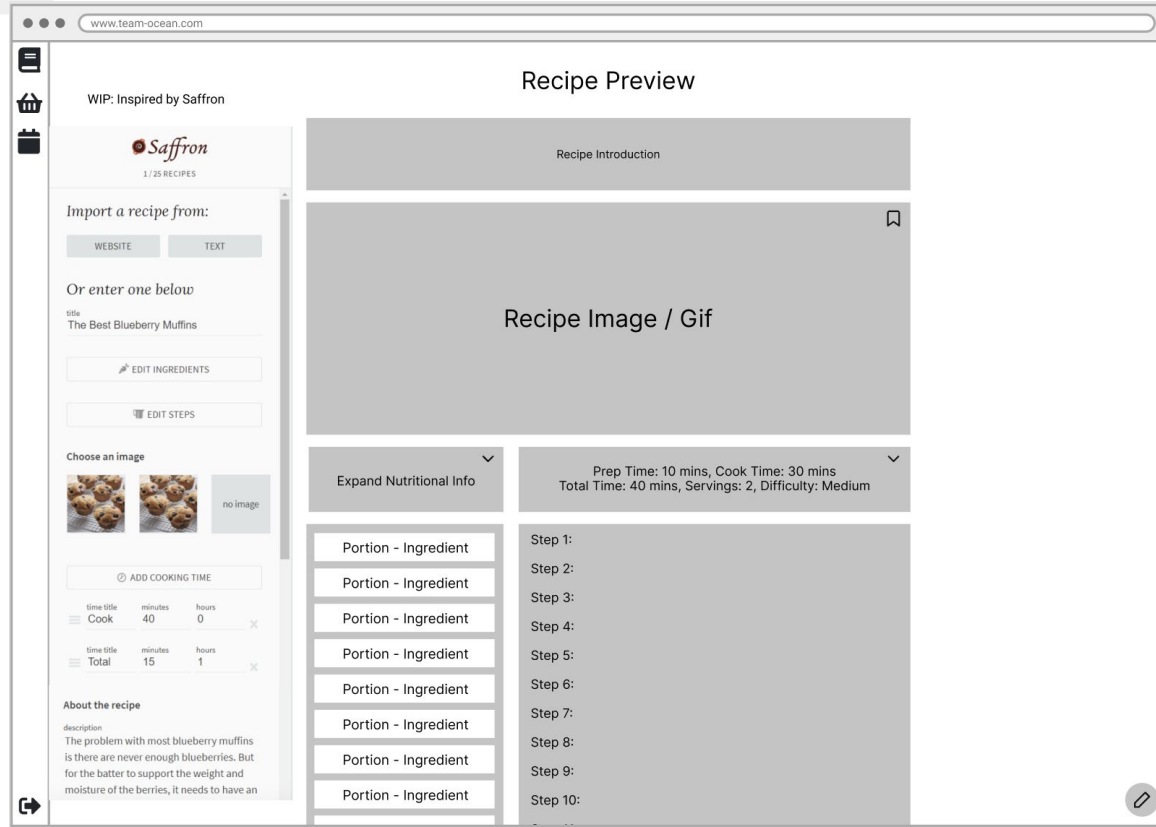
Wireframes

Reading a Recipe (WIP) - Figma
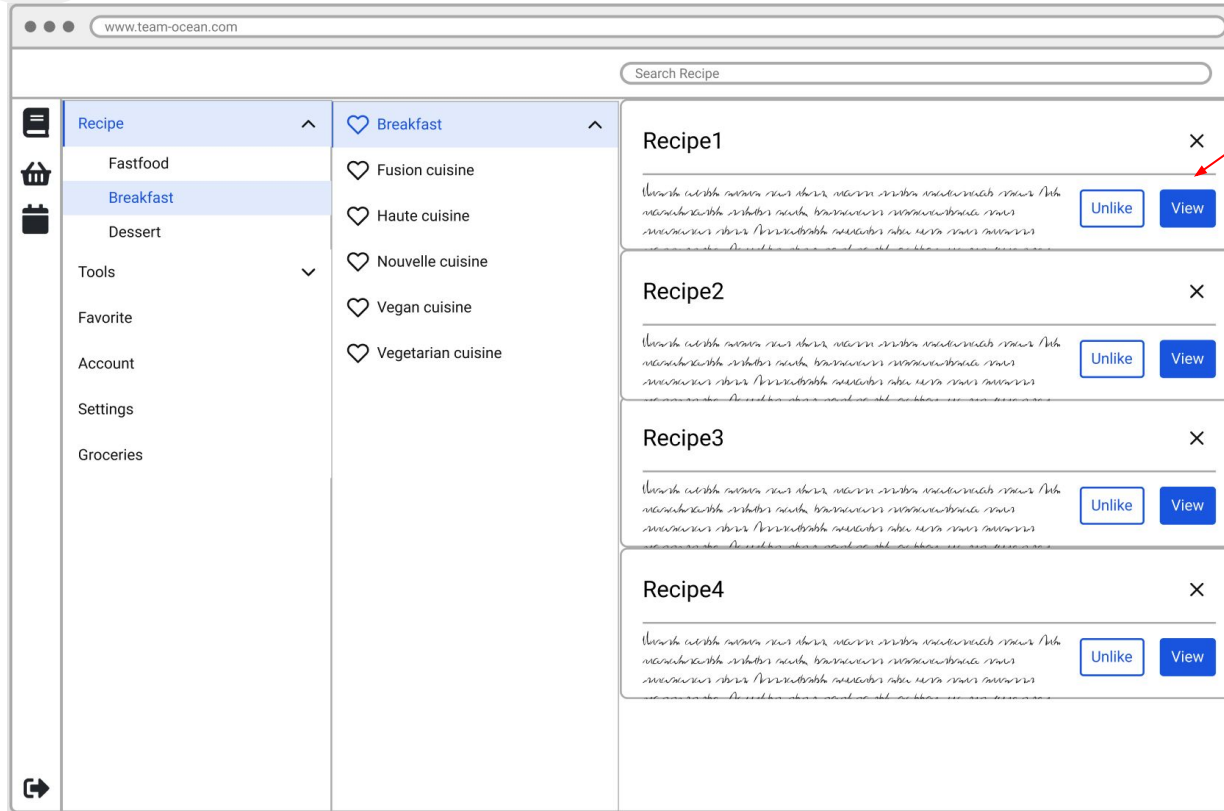
Note: Inspired by Paprika & Saffron

Wireframes

Editing a Recipe (WIP) - Figma

Wireframes

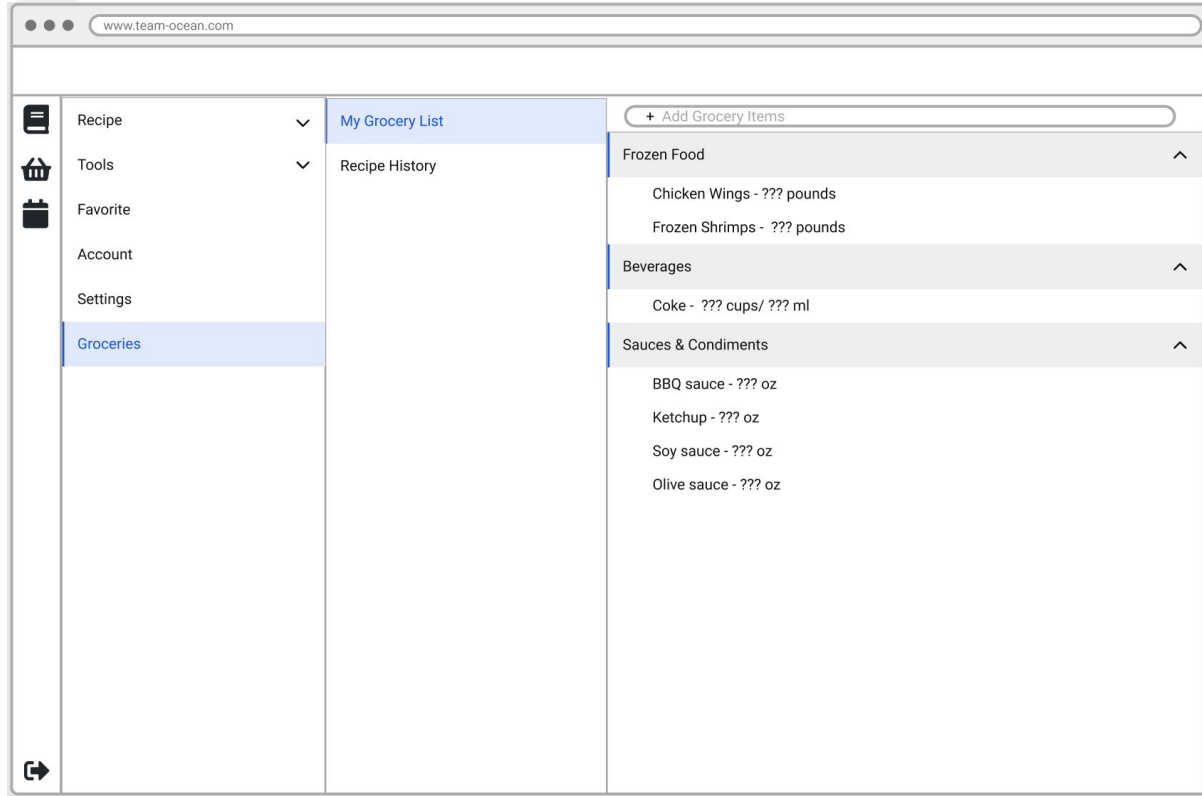Viewing Recipes (WIP) - Figma

TODO:
More
image-based
representation

Wireframes

Grocery List (WIP) - Figma

www.team-ocean.com

Recipe ⌄	My Grocery List	+ Add Grocery Items
Tools ⌄	Recipe History	Frozen Food ⌃
Favorite		Chicken Wings - ??? pounds
Account		Frozen Shrimps - ??? pounds
Settings		Beverages ⌃
Groceries		Coke - ??? cups/ ??? ml
		Sauces & Condiments ⌃
		BBQ sauce - ??? oz
		Ketchup - ??? oz
		Soy sauce - ??? oz
		Olive sauce - ??? oz

Wireframes

Meal Planner (WIP) - Figma

TODO:
More visual representation w/ calendar view

User Flowchart

Our Recipe Manager

Processes/Views:
- Signup/Login
- Reading a recipe
- Editing a recipe
- Viewing recipes (can filter between own & preset)
  - ex inputs: Can search, delete/hide, filter by tag
- Grocery list
- Meal prep calendar

Green = leave home
Orange = change view
= background update

Figma

Rabbit Holes

Tags
- Searching for recipes might always not be accurate due to different keywords used by different users - make sure to nail down preset tags & organization vs. customization
- Balancing an overwhelming abundance of tags vs. having the necessary tags

External Sources
- Scraping recipes from too many different sources could lead to inconsistencies that may confuse users
- Focusing too heavily on scraping nutrition information and using that for nutrition stats might be a heavy time investment for a small feature - use prototyping & exploratory code to test API's early
- May be difficult to ensure correctness when adding macronutrients/calorie count
- If we add external links then might have to keep them updated somehow

Personalization
- Make sure to keep design and features focused on the target audience
- Make sure to carefully pick the recommended recipes for users - not too many & not too different

No-gos

- Do not focus too deeply on the target audience - ensure that the core features are fleshed out before anything else

- No need to pursue a perfect appearance with super special CSS styles, functionality is the primary goal

- No need to have too many features such that we may need to trade off quality for each feature

    - Make sure to define the order & priority of features in user stories!

- No heavyweight frameworks or advanced technologies like ML/AI

If anything comes into question about feasibility or the scope of the project as defined by the course restrictions, contact Sanat ASAP!