Packaging project

Choose a physically small product, real or imagined, for example a tube of Signal toothpaste, and (re-) design and mock up its packaging — that is design the box in which the product is placed.

The product should be small because you do not have access to large format printing and you will need to print your design in order to produce a mockup (although you could decide to do a scaled mockup).

You should use an online packaging production portal like pack.ly to get an InDesign template for the configuration and dimensions of your chosen packaging.

And you must do a design (using InDesign), print the result, and cut out, fold and glue — so as to make a packaging mockup which you will present to the class.

To explain your work, you should make a PowerPoint type presentation of three or four pages, giving a background to the product you are packaging, and explaining your choices. The cover page of your presentation should include your name (obviously) and a title for your project. The last page should include a showing of the template file that you uploaded to the portal.

The presentation (1) must include a photo of your mockup — so you will need to photograph your result; (2) optionally you can also augment this using a Photoshop PSD template if you can find one; (3) optionally you could also choose to show your work using a 3D application like Adobe Dimension, or by sketching this using any other application. And very cool: (4) the pack.ly platform shows an interactive screen rendering when you upload the final PDF — optionally you could take a screenshot of this.

For the lesson before you need to hand in your presentation, I will try to reserve the Project Room which has a professional photography space (lighting and green background), but you are not obliged to use this.

What is obligatory is that you build your own physical mockup, and photograph it. You must show your mockup to the class; you must include a photo of the mockup in your presentation. If you use your smartphone for photographing, and have a pixelised result because of digital zoom-cropping, you will not be penalised for this. In the real world you would have access to a professional high-quality camera.

Just like when you design a poster or brochure, your packaging result should adhere to a hierarchy of information and the result should be visually attractive, impactful and compelling. Unique to packaging: you should give thought to the direction of the text on every face; you should consider what the result might look like when packaged products are placed next to each other on a shelf — you might want to simulate this (packed-togetherness) for your presentation.
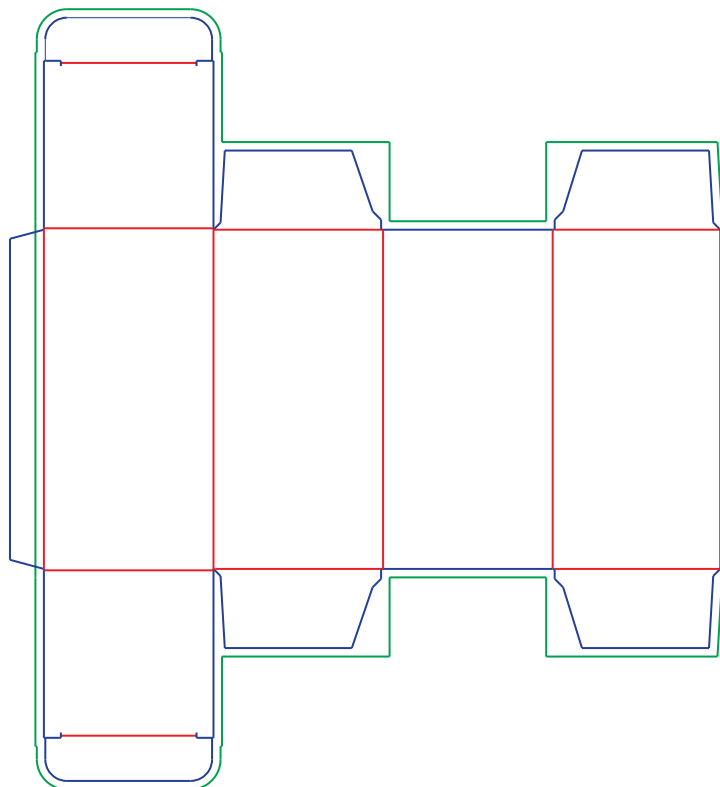
Timing and submission
The deadline is as shown on my website. For the submission, your should upload your presentation as a PDF to the Assignment space on Microsoft Teams, with file name packaging_SURNAME_firstname.pdf. And, you should be ready to give a 4-5 minute presentation on this work where you will also show your packaging mockup.

Packaging project notes

This is how you generate and get an InDesign PDF template (a template here is called a *dieline*):

■ First you need to create an account at pack.ly

■ on this website, choose a suitable packaging configuration and its dimensions

■ download a PDF template by clicking on "Download template" (note that you have only three initial template downloads for free per month)

■ then follow these instructions
— in these instructions, point 4 *Resize the artboard* is not obvious: you should select the entire image; note the width and height; then go » File » Document setup and key in the noted dimensions

■ if the background (the dieline image) appears too faint for your liking, then open the dieline PDF in Illustrator: select all and increase the stroke somewhat.

Here is an example of a packaging dieline, in this case for a box…

INSTRUCTIONS:
https://www.pack.ly/guide

Obviously, in the dieline image above: green is bleed; red is fold; blue is where you cut.

Look at real packaging to get obligatory texts where applicable, for example food packaging needs to have information like ingredients and country of origin.

When designed, print your dieline then cut out the packaging along the cutout lines, then fold and stick with glue and/or tape to make the mockup. If the page size is more than A4 and you have only an A4 printer, in the print dialog box in » Setup activate Tile, with no overlap. Or you can make a scaled mockup.