

Clue 1: Bubble Diagram

Bubble diagrams are one of the most essential tools in the interior design process.

They help you think like a designer by mapping out *relationships*, *functions*, and *flow* before you ever draw a floor plan. They're fast, messy, conceptual, and incredibly powerful for clarifying how a space should work. It can be used for a **full home** design or an **individual room**.

A **bubble diagram** is a freehand, conceptual drawing that uses circles (“bubbles”) to represent:

- **Spaces** (e.g., kitchen, living room, bedroom)
- **Functions** (e.g., circulation, storage, collaboration)
- **Zones** (public vs. private, quiet vs. active)
- **Relationships** (adjacent, connected, separated)

It is **not** a floor plan. It's a thinking tool.

Why Designers Use Bubble Diagrams

Bubble diagrams help you:

1. Understand Spatial Relationships

- Which spaces need to be near each other?
- Which spaces should be separated?
- What needs direct access? (e.g., kitchen → dining)

2. Explore Circulation & Flow

- How people move through the space
- Where bottlenecks might occur
- How public → semi-public → private transitions happen

3. Think Functionally Before Formally

- You're solving *problems*, not decorating. Bubble diagrams force you to prioritize **function, adjacency, and purpose**.

4. Iterate Quickly

- Because they're loose and sketchy, you can explore many options fast.

How to Create a Dream Home Bubble Diagram (Step-by-Step)

Step 1: Identify All Required Spaces

Make a list of every space or function the project requires.

Example: Entry, living, dining, kitchen, pantry, bedroom 1, bedroom 2, bath, laundry.

Step 2: Assign Relative Sizes

Use **bubble size** to show importance or square footage.

Large bubble = large or high-priority space.

Step 3: Group Related Spaces

Cluster bubbles that belong together:

- Kitchen + dining
- Bedroom + bathroom
- Living + entry

Step 4: Show Adjacencies

Overlap or touch bubbles that need direct connection.

Separate bubbles that should not touch.

Step 5: Add Circulation Paths

Use arrows to show:

- How people move
- Where major transitions occur
- How spaces connect

Step 6: Consider Zoning

Place:

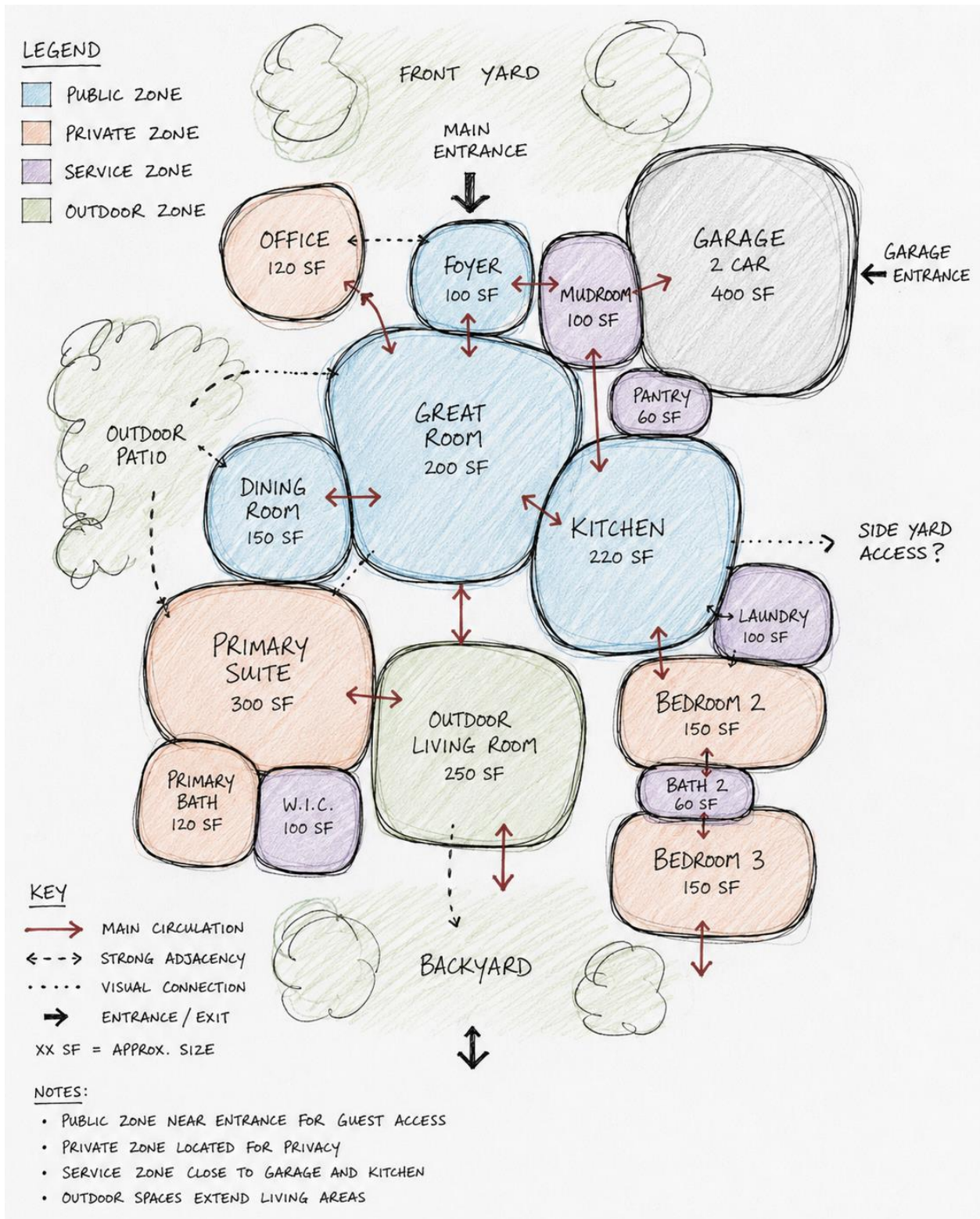
- Public spaces near entry
- Private spaces deeper in
- Noisy spaces away from quiet ones

What a Good Bubble Diagram Looks Like

A strong bubble diagram is:

- **Loose and sketchy** (not a floor plan)
- **Clear in hierarchy** (bubble size = room size)
- **Logical in adjacency**

- **Thoughtful in zoning**
- **Readable** (labels, arrows, grouping)
- **Iterative** (multiple options explored)



Mystery File

A notebook page reads:

"The rooms knew where they belonged, but no one determined how they should relate in space."

Problem

The renovation team skipped conceptual planning and moved directly to putting up the walls.

Student Task

Create a bubble diagram of your corrected layout showing **(may need to draw after other stations have been completed)**:

- Relative room sizes
- All areas from original "broken" floor plan
- Adjacencies
- Zones
- Circulation path arrows
- Exit and Entry Points