



GARAGE / LAUNDRY

The garage is really just a storage closet for the car. Many communities, do not have back alleys and so the garage is located at the front of the house. The result is that this car storage closet takes away valuable sunlight, air and views from the rooms at the front of the house. In some situations this means that bedrooms, kitchens and living spaces have only limited side yard windows. A poorly located, supersized garage can have a very significant negative impact on the livability of the rest of the house.

In a fast house, a laundry room is usually a falsely labeled space because it is more than just a storage closet for two appliances. It is critical to have room in front of the machines to stand and move around, a counter to work on, and ideally a fair bit of storage. Most fast houses, however, only consider the location of the machines and not how they might best be used. The result is that the onerous task of “doing the laundry” often becomes even more unpleasant and difficult. Laundry facilities can readily exist in either a dedicated room, a room that shares another function, or perhaps just a closet. The key in all of these situations, however, is to make sure that there is adequate space in front of the machines to set down your clothes hamper and work without causing a traffic jam.

Garage / Laundry

Slow Home: Rules of Thumb



LIVABILITY

- Garage meets minimum interior dimensions for parking and access.
- Garage does not significantly reduce the usability of the rear yard.
- Laundry has sufficient floor area for machines and is not obstructed with other uses or circulation.
- Laundry is not a falsely labeled or residual space.

ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT

- Minimize the number of parking spaces (ideally less than 2).
- Garage does not limit light into principal rooms.
- Avoid supersized laundry rooms with wasted space.
- Avoid excessive number of laundry appliances or multiple laundry rooms.

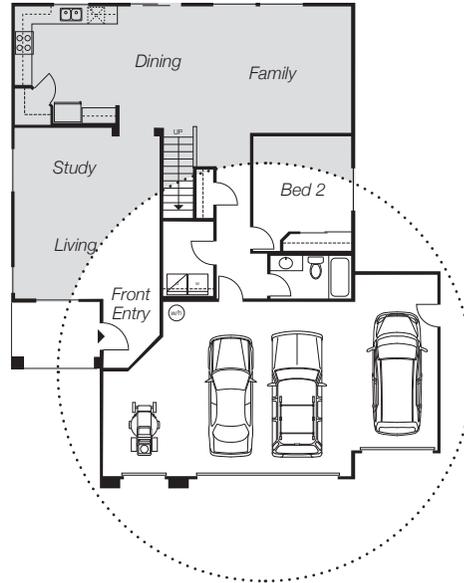
Garage/Laundry:

FAST HOUSE COMMON PITFALLS

1 Too many parking spaces

This house has an excessive number of parking spaces. The three and a half car garage takes up more than one third of the total footprint of the house. The result is a house with a large environmental footprint because of the excessive number of vehicles.

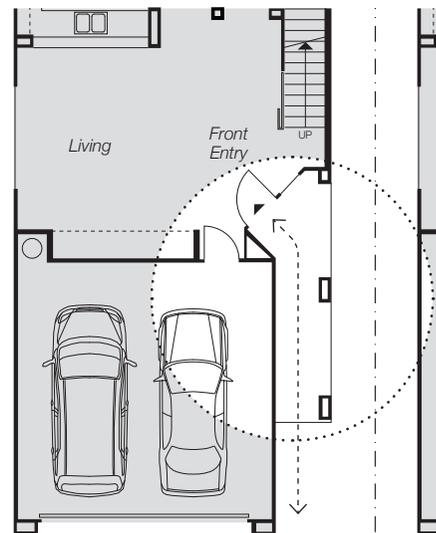
(2560 sq ft single family house, Utah)



2 Attached front drive garages obscures front entry

In this house the front facade is almost completely taken up by the front drive garage. This creates an angled front entry that is located on the side of the house. It is too far from the street and difficult to find.

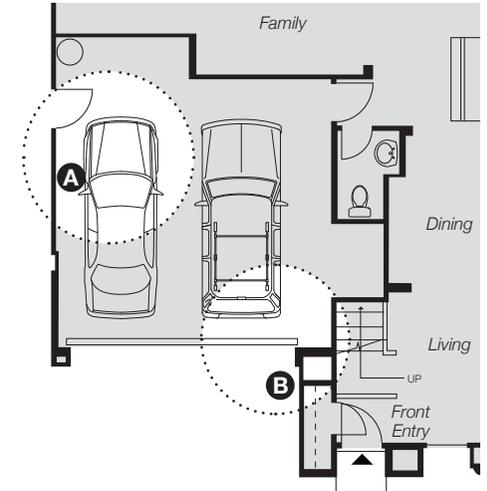
(1850 sq ft single family house, Ontario)



3 Inadequate clearance

This garage has two clearance problems. The first is the less than minimum 2' of interior circulation space on the left side. **A** This will make it very difficult to open the door of the vehicle without hitting the wall. The second issue is outside the garage. The lack of a minimum 3' clearance on the right side of the door **B** will make backing in or out of the garage quite difficult.

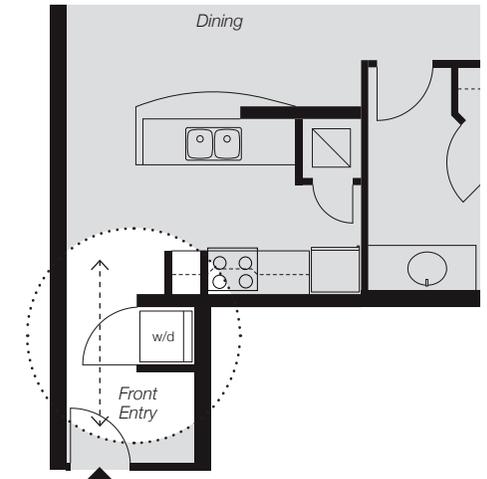
(2138 sq ft house double attach. garage, California)



4 The hallway laundry closet

In this multi-family unit, the laundry machines are located in a closet adjacent to the front entry. The space in front of this closet is too narrow to work effectively and there is a potential circulation conflict with the path to the front door.

(938 sq ft condominium, British Columbia)



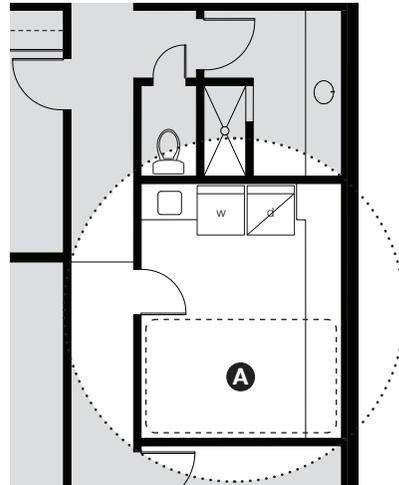
Garage/Laundry:

FAST HOUSE COMMON PITFALLS

5 The supersized laundry

This single family house has an supersized laundry room that is mostly made up of wasted floor space. **A**
 The actual area required for doing laundry could easily fit into a room one half the size.

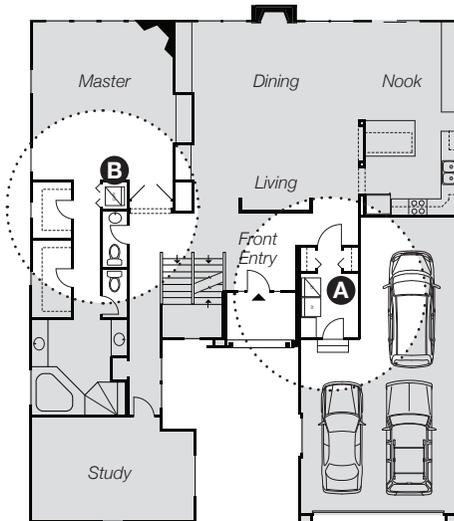
(2938 sq ft single family house, Nevada)



6 Multiple laundry rooms

An emerging trend in many houses is having more than one laundry room. In this 3417 square foot single family house there is a laundry in the back entry **A** and another set of laundry machines in the master bedroom. **B**
 Neither of these laundrys are very well designed and like an excessive number of kitchen appliances, contributes to a large environmental footprint.

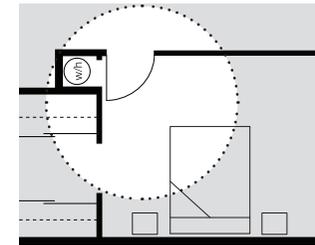
(3417 sq ft single family house, New York)



EVERY HOUSE HAS MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT— WHERE IS YOURS?

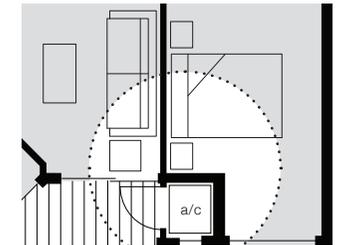
Many fast house plans do not indicate the location of these often large pieces of mechanical equipment that every house requires. This is particularly true in condominium units. Too often a great looking storage closet in the floor plan ends up having a large piece of machinery inside it when you move in. Surprises like this can have a significant impact on functionality, particularly in a modestly sized house. Particular attention should also be paid to the impact on adjacent rooms as many of these pieces of equipment can be quite noisy and generate excessive amounts of heat.

1 Water tank in bedroom



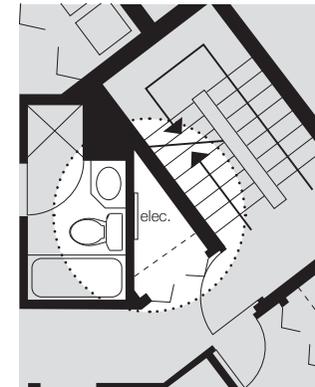
(665 sq ft condominium, British Columbia)

2 A/C unit obstructs bedroom



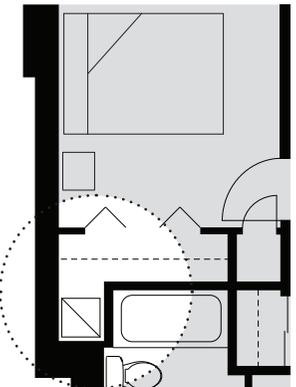
(1100 sq ft condominium, Ontario)

3 Electrical panel in closet



(1164 sq ft condominium, Washington)

4 Furnace in master closet



(624 sq ft condominium, New Jersey)