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# BUBBLE TECH 2.31

Bubbles are whimsical, playful, and capable of far more than most people think. A bubble show satisfies educators and parents by teaching the real-world science of air pressure, surface tension and shapes, while wowing adults and children alike with their surprising and unbelievable bubble properties. Learn how you can stack, sculpt, penetrate and stretch bubbles with just a little practice and the right tools and add something magical to your show.

## Overview

### Intro / Why Include Bubbles in your Show?

- **Universal appeal:** Bubbles are enjoyable and magical for a wide range of ages, cultures and genders. They can be made to fit any occasion or season with the right framing. You can do a bubble show for a roomful of three-year-olds and, with just a few tweaks, do a show with the same props for ten-year-olds later the same day.
- **Can be done silently:** Because a bubble show is highly visual and very easy to follow, it can be done entirely silent, making it perfect for international, ESL or hearing-impaired audiences. I personally can do my bubble show in English and French even though my French is limited, because so much of the show can be done to music.
- **Create multiple products:** Bubble Shows, Bubble Playshops, Bubble Stations and Bubble kits (Party and Pro kits) – you can package bubbles in a variety of different ways to appeal to clients with different needs. I even have a five minute bubble act for gala shows with just my best effect.
- **Bubble shows are inexpensive to create, highly portable, and play big.** These are the big three when it comes to ideals in entertainment. Bubble shows are so inexpensive to create, I can land in a new city, pick up

everything I need for the show for under \$100, and do the show that night.

- Add variety to your repertoire. If you learn a new magic trick, you can add it to your existing magic show. But if you learn bubble work, you can add it to your show *or* create a second product to widen your scope in your market.

### Cautions for future Bubble-smiths

- Bubbles are finicky: If you are going to be a bubble-smith, you need to learn to go with the flow and stay cool in the heat of the moment. Sometimes the bubbles just don't want to cooperate, and tricks just won't work the way you'd hoped. You need to be able to move on or turn that into a gag without getting flustered. Don't worry, I'll help you with that as well. Just remember, bubble artistry is like jazz, you need to riff and jam with your bubbles.
- Your hands will need some TLC: Working with water and bubble solution on your bare hands will start to dry them out over time. Make sure to keep a little bit of your favorite lotion in your gig kit and take care of your skin. [George's Cream](#) is my preferred option, it's a non-greasy intensive care moisturizer that is ideal for this sort of drying. Surgical gloves, which are available in a variety of colors, are also a good alternative.

### What You'll Need

- Your Basic Kit should include: Traditional bubble-blowers/wands in a variety of shapes and sizes, straws and/or plastic pipettes, funnels, a couple of trays (plastic trays, not glass), bubble solution, and a spray bottle distilled water.
- Your Kid in a Bubble Kit: a floor mat for overspray mess, a hula hoop wrapped tightly in [paracord](#), small step to play in the center for kids to stand on, and a large tray to hold all that bubble solution. To get the right size for your setup simply add one foot to the average circumference of the largest children you will putting in a bubble to get your ideal diameter of hoop and container. Many people find it hard to get trays that are the right size for "Kid in a Bubble" and get

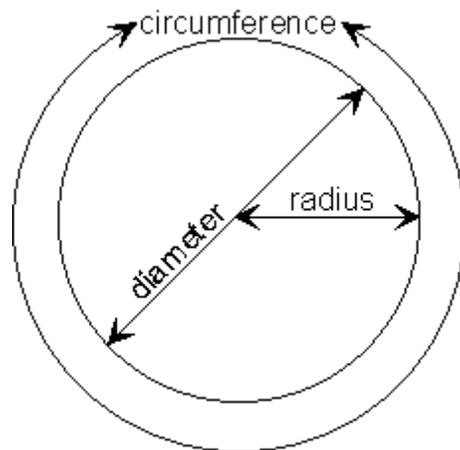
stuck. Here are a few suggestions you should be able to track down at your local hardware store.

**Kid in a Bubble Tray Ideas**

[Washing Machine Drain Pans](#)

[Water Heater Drainage Pans](#) with a valve cover for the opening

[Extra Large heavy Duty Plant Saucers](#)



Formula to get the circumference of a circle is  $C=2\pi r$  or

Circumference = 2 X pi(3.14159265359) X the radius

- **Bubble Playshop: 2-4 bubble areas with different activities at each.**

**Station 1: Make bubbles with your hands**

- make a circle with one hand
- use two hands to make a bubble
- catching bubbles with your hands

**Station 2: Make giant bubbles (rings and loops of paracord and large bubble wands)**

**Station 3: Make your own bubble wand (kinetics building toys allow kids to build shapes and blow bubbles with them, wires and straws)**

**Station 4: Stacking and Sculpting Bubbles (bubble blowers in a variety of shapes and sizes)**

**Station 5: Bubble Painting - Instructions are recipes available later in the notes.**

**For Best Results**

- **Ideal environment:** indoors, limited air-conditioning, humid (or at least not overly dry) and minimal dust or other air particles. If you want to get ahead of any trouble with a potentially dry environment, bring a humidifier and set it up thirty minutes prior to your show.
- **Where you can't do your show:** Outside on a windy day, you will be unable to do your typical show. However, you can still do a playshop with bubble races in which children run to try to catch large bubbles.
- **What about the mess?** If you're doing this right, the mess will stay on the table or on your mat. Bring brightly colored towels to clean up any extra mess. Brightly colored matching towels look professional and playful and will not accidentally get mixed up with those of the host or preschool.

# Dee Dee's Perfect Stir-&-Go Mix

What is so great about this solution is that, unlike most good bubble mixes, you can make it the day of your show and even continue to tweak the mix on-site as necessary. If you feel the bubbles lack cohesion, you can add a little of the Dawn detergent liquid; if they feel it's a little thin, add a little of the secret mix. This mix creates a non greasy, hypoallergenic, easy to clean, stir and go solution that is non-toxic and dries with minima residu. This is the mix you've been waiting for.

Recipe yields a little over a 1/2 Gallon (Enough for most shows, you'll need a full gallon to do "kid in a bubble")

- 4 Cups of HOT tap water
- 4 Cups of COLD tap water
- 1/2 cup of Dawn Dishwashing Liquid (the blue stuff; overseas it's Joy)
- 1/2 Teaspoon of Dee Dee Darling's Super Secret Bubble Mix

How do you make Dee Dee Darling's Super Secret Bubble Mix? Well I will tell you. It is:

- 1 Part baking soda
- 1 Part powdered sugar (also known as confectioners sugar)

- 4 Parts [J-Lube](#), a concentrated powdered industrial obstetrical lubricant

I recommend premixing at least a 1/2 cup at a time to make your life a little easier.

#### Instructions:

1. Fill your container with 4 cups of hot tap water. (Pro Tip: Mark your container at the 4 cup level for future mixes so you can fill directly from the tap without messing next time).
2. Sprinkle in 1/2 a teaspoon of the Secret Mix slowly to avoid clumping while stirring constantly for about a minute.
3. Add 4 cups of cold tap water.
4. Pour in 1/2 Cup of Dawn and let it settle on the bottom of the bucket without stirring to avoid getting any air into the mix.
5. Stir gently until the solution is well mixed.
6. Enjoy

The bubble mix will keep for months so long as you avoid introducing too much dirt and oils from the hands of tiny children.

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# Bubble Science

A bubble has three layers: two layers of soap molecules with a layer of water molecules sandwiched in between. Each soap molecule is oriented so its polar

(hydrophilic) head faces the water, while its hydrophobic hydrocarbon tail extends away from the water layer.

Bubbles pop when the layer of water molecules evaporates in one or more places, causing the bubble's shape to collapse.

# The Show & The Tricks

## Intro - Meeting the bubble-smith

What are you going to call yourself? Bubble-lady? Bubble-guy? Bubble-smith? Bubble artist? Bubbleologist? There are lots of options to choose from, but I do recommend you stay consistent throughout the show and in your advertising and website. This way, when the kids talk about what they saw, their parents will be able to look you up. Everyone knows what a magician is, but you are likely the first bubble worker they have ever met, so tell them how to find you.

*Hi everyone! Who's excited for the show? Me too!*

*Does anyone know what I am?*

*Well I'm - Names*

*And I am a bubble-ologist, which means I know everything there is to know about bubbles, and today we are going to do some impossi-bubble things.*

*If you wanna see that say yay!!*

- Using bubbles to establish behavioral expectations for children: If you establish that bubbles are shy and fragile, you can get the children to encourage the bubbles in fun ways when they inevitably pop unexpectedly. The kids will be itching to stand up and pop the bubbles so it is important to establish that they need to stay put for the bubble magic to work.

*Now I know that bubbles are very exciting, and during the show you are gonna wanna just jump onstage and pop aaaaaall the bubbles.*

*BUT! If you do that, the bubbles will get shy and they won't come out to play.*

*So everyone raise you right hand, now grab your invisible glue, put that glue all over you hand, now put all that glue on your butt, and stick your butt to the ground!*

*Is everyone stuck?*

*Good! Now everyone has to stay sitting criss-cross-applesauce till the very end and we'll all get to do something very cool, deal?*

- Bubbles don't like when it's dry: Keeping the air humid with your spray bottle can make all the difference in your show. You can be easily make this into a bit by telling the kids that bubbles don't like things that are dry, then looking at them suspiciously, and then spraying the kids with the water. Or spray around to prep for the bubble and "accidentally" spray kids in the face.
- Shape of a Bubble: circle, square, star. Teaching about the scientific method, challenging assumptions, and the science of air pressure and surface area. Ask the children what shape a circle bubble-blower will blow, then ask again for the square and the star shapes. By the end, the children will be excited to have figured out that bubbles are always round.

*Does anyone know what shape a bubble is? (They will will say a circle, if one kid says sphere, make sure to notice and validate that answer.)*

*What about a circle in three dimensions? (One kids should say sphere.)*

*You guys are soooooo smart.*

*So that is our theory. We are gonna test it. I have my handy dandy circle bubble blower and we're gonna see what shape it makes.*

*Who thinks it will be a circle? Who thinks something else? Who this it'll be an ELEPHANT!*

*Okay, let's find out together.*

(Make a big show of getting ready to blow this bubble and then blow hard enough to pop it, act shocked and then do it as many more times as the kids can take – guaranteed big laughs. Now scoop the air to make a bubble and catch it on the wand to display it.)

*Yay! Who was right? You guys are so smart.*

*Hmm, okay, well if a circle bubble blower blows a circle bubble, what shape will a heart-shaped blower blow?*

*Who thinks heart? Who thinks it will still be a circle? WHO THINKS ELEPHANT?!*

*Okay, let's find out.*

(Do the blow through and pop the bubble bit again; it's even more fun the second time.)

*It was a circle! Who was right?*

*Well, maybe the heart is too similar to a circle. Hmm...*

*If a circle bubble blower blows a circle bubble, a heart bubble blower blows a circle bubble, what shape will a star-shaped blower blow?*

*Who thinks star? Who thinks circle? WHO THINKS ELEPHANT?!*

*Okay, let's see who is right.*

*Oh, cool, it was a circle! Who was right?*

*That is so cool. You guys came up with a theory, a hypothesis, and we tested it and figured out that bubbles are always a circle.*

- **Air Blaster:** You can use an air blaster to knock a playing card off a child's hand or head from across a room with just air. It's a fun thing to have the birthday boy/girl assist with, and it teaches about air pressure and why the force of the air in the bubble makes the bubble round.

*Does anyone know why bubbles are always a circle? Because inside the bubble there is air trying to push out in all the directions at the same time. And if I push in all the directions, I make a...?*

*(The kids will say circle.)*

*Yes! And in three dimensions, that's a...?*

*(The kids will say sphere.)*

*Yes! Do you guys believe that air can push stuff?*

*Well, let's prove it with the use of my handy dandy Air Blaster! Everyone say ooooooo. Everyone say ahhh. Everyone say blaiaaaah!*

*I'll need the help of someone brave! Someone smart! Someone sitting still and being very good. You! Excellent, what is your name? Sam! Sam is the third best name! Are you good at standing still? Show me!*

*Okay, perfect. Hold you hand out flat. I'm going to fold this card in half and place it on your hand. Now DON'T MOVE A MUSCLE! I'm going to blow that card off you hand in 3, 2, 1 – ta-da!*

*No no no, wait wait wait! I can do better than that. Sam, stay very still! I'm gonna balance this card on your head, and I want you to stay very still. Sam, now I'm going to try to blow the card off your head without blowing your head off your body. Okay? Sam, you ready? Audience you ready? 3, 2, 1 – ta-da!*

*Big round of applause for SAM!*

- **Bubble in a Bubble:** Blow a large bubble in the air or on your presentation tray and then gently blow a bubble into it. It takes a little practice. If you are finding it too challenging to do with bubbles in the air, you can catch the bubble with your wand first or use a wet straw to blow a second, third, and even fourth bubble into the one of your presentation tray.

When blowing a smaller bubble into your bubble in the air, you want to find the balance of short quick breaths that with pierce the wall of the

large bubble just enough to form the skin of the internal bubble, but not so much as to poke the main bubble. It takes practice, but once you have it, you have it forever.

When you have a bubble inside a bubble resting on your wand or on your presentation tray, cover one of your hands in bubble solution and attempt to gently reach through the outer bubble and remove the inner one. If your solution is properly mixed, it should be easier than you think.

- **Bubble in Bubble tower:** Another fun way to do the bubble in a bubble is to build a stack of dishes, saucers and cups that diminish in size. After dousing the whole thing in bubble solution you can blow a bubble that encases the whole thing and then smaller ones at each level.
- **Coving your bubble butt:** At some point, usually around the time when you're making a bubble in a bubble, the bubbles with stop cooperating for a moment. Here's a way to make this into an enjoyable interaction with the kids, and it's a fun bit that you can do throughout the show.

*You guys, it's a bubble secret, but I'm gonna tell you anyway. Most bubbles – are shy. Yup. Sometimes they are too scared to come out onstage with us and play.*

*So let's try to make the bubbles more comfortable. Everybody say "Bubble, Bubble Come Out and Play."*

- **Bubble stretching and pulling:** If you get both your hands nice and goopy with bubble solution, you can blow a bubble onto your hand, place your other hand on top, and proceed to stretch the bubble out and manipulate it in fun ways. Experiment with this principle and have fun.
- **World's biggest bubble?** Use a number of different-sized straws, wands and hoops to make bigger and bigger bubbles. Have the children shout "bigger" after each one to put them in control of the action.

*I know you didn't come here for any fancy pants science lesson; you came here to see THE WORLDS! BIGGEST! BUBBLE!*

*Okay, you guys ready? (Grab the smallest bubble wand or straw.)*

*Drumroll please! (Blow a tiny bubble and throw your hands up in the air as if you performed an astonishing feat.)*

*What? It's tiny? No, it's huge! You're all just really far away! (You can do this bit a few more times with other tiny wands before bringing out the big one.)*

- **Sculpting bubbles:** This will likely be the most technical part of your show, so if your bubbles are not cooperating, it's good to just skip this. However, bubble sculpting is a huge crowd-pleaser. The three shapes you are going to focus on are the caterpillar (or bubble chain), the cube, and the carousel. You are going to need a different bubble mix, a special mix that's not suited to your other bubble work. I recommend a mixture of 1 part corn syrup, 1 part Dawn, and 1 part water. Let it stand for 24 hours before using it.
- **The Caterpillar:** You'll need a small bubble wand and a straw. Blow through the straw and into the film on the bubble wand. Use gravity to pull the bubble down as each new bubble is added above, just under the bubble wand. Here is a perfect example:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R7TB3NcNQhU>
- **Bubble Chain hack:** simply nest two straws inside a larger straw and blow. This video demonstrates it very well:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mFiaZF7ltR4>
- **Bubble Cube:** Blow six bubbles of equal size, oriented with one on top, one on the bottom, and four forming a cluster in the middle. With a wet straw, blow a seventh bubble into the very center. The exterior bubbles with force the center bubble into a cube shape.
- **Bubble Carousel:** Very similar to the cube, you want a mid-sized bubble on the top and bottom, with several smaller bubbles clustered around the center. With a wet straw, blow a bubble into the very center. The exterior bubbles with force the center bubble into a flat carousel shape. If you blow on the row of bubbles from the side gently through a straw, you can make it spin.
- **Vacuum bubble:** Blow a larger bubble so there is still a film on the wand, catch the bubble in the wand, and have the kids make the sound of a vacuum cleaner as the bubble gets sucked up.

- **Inside Out Bubble:** Blow a bubble and then catch it on the wand. Touch the wall of the bubble visible through the wand with a dry finger, and watch the wand suck the bubble back up. Rotate the bubble wand 180 degrees and blow yourself an inside out bubble.
- **Vapor Bubbles:** Filling bubbles with water vapor provides increased visibility for shapes and sculptures. Use water vapor to make caterpillar shapes, bubble squares and carousels more visible in your bubble sculpting. You can also make a very cool bubble volcano.

*Not only am I an amazing bubble-ologist, I am also a bubble artist!*

*How about this – I will draw a picture with bubbles, and you guys guess what it is? Yeah?* (Blow a small bubble on your tray, and a large vapor bubble behind it. The kids will guess igloo.)

*Yes! You guys are so smart!*

*Now, what is the opposite of an igloo? Oh, a volcano!* (Take a small wet bubble wand, and stick it to the top surface of the vapor bubble.)

*Before an eruption, there is an earthquake.* (Shake the bubble a little.) *And then, all at once...* (Use a dry finger to pop the little part of the bubble wall that is inside the bubble wand, and watch as the vapor escapes straight up through that hole.)

- **Wonder Bubble:** Blow a medium-sized bubble, then attach a vapor bubble of the same size to the bottom of the first bubble. Now if you take a thin straw, cover it in solution, and gently slide it in between the two bubbles, you will be able to pop the barrier between the two bubbles by inhaling with one sharp breath, combining the two into one large bubble with a spiraling mist swirling inside of it.
- **The anticipation of a pop:** When you are about to pop a bubble on your tray or in your hand, you can really build the suspense before doing it and create a playful moment. Try building that suspense and then just walking away from it, saying “I can’t, I can’t,” and watch the kids go wild.
- **Bubble Sword:** If you cover the blade of the sword in solution, you can have a child (or you can do it) pass the blade through and out of the

top of a bubble without popping it. I call it “sword in the stone” and then knight the child as a way of celebrating the moment. If you don’t have a sword, you can use a straw or a pen.

- **Bubble Magic:** Wonder Bubble trick (\$10), Multiplying Bubbles (w/DVD) by Fantasma Magic (\$15), Bubble Zombie by Losander (\$150) – all of these tricks are wonderful additions to any bubble show and are all in regular use in mine.
- **Flowering Bubble:** If you cut a flower out of a sheet of foil, a circle in the middle with petals coming out, you can blow a bubble in the middle of it and the petals will be attracted to the wall of the bubble. Now you can add or remove air from the bubble using a straw or pipet to make it bloom and close.
- **Touchable Bubbles:** If you take your standard solution and add 2 level teaspoon of sugar, you can make touchable bubbles. I will say that the solution I’ve made is never as strong as the store-bought stuff, so it’s up to you if you want to just jump on Amazon.com and purchase some in bulk. I love breaking out the touchable bubble halfway through the show as a way of getting the kids up and playing together. Stand in the middle and blow the bubbles upward so the kids have to wait for them to fall down; this gives them time to catch them. Ask the kids to count how many they can catch (for younger kids) and how big a tower of bubbles they can make (for slightly older kids).
- **Kid in a Bubble:** This is a great way to finale strong and include the birthday girl/boy in your act. Help the child step in and out to prevent any slipping, and use a small step in the middle to prevent their shoes from getting wet and make them stand in place. Have the child put on a set of safety goggles and cross their arms across their chest. It might take a couple of tries, but you should be able to pull the hoop up around them and have the child fully inside the bubble for three full seconds. I find the setup for this stunt to be a great time to infuse comedy into the show and get them roaring with laughter right before the end.
- **Bubble Dance Party:** Bubble machines are perfect for ending your show with a Bubble Dance Party. Put on a couple of fun dance songs for the kids, activate a bubble machine or two in the room, and reward them for

being so good during the show by letting them pop a thousand bubbles. Put a large hula hoop or a safety rope around the machine and tell the children it's a restricted area to prevent them from popping the bubbles as soon as they come out of the machine.

# Bubble Activity: Bubble Painting

1. Lay out a cover or newspapers to protect the workspace.
2. Put a half cup of your preferred dish soap in a bowl.
3. Stir in a tablespoons of washable [tempera paint](#) into one of the bowl.
4. Do the same to mix one or two more complimentary colors

Get the kids to blow bubbled into the paint bowl carefully with a straw, you won't have to work too hard to convince them.

Please a sheet of paper over a bowl of bubbles, so the bubbles stick. Once the bubbles have adhered to the paper, lift it gently, and place the sheet with the bubble side up. Simply watch the bubbles pop and as they do they will push the paint into beautiful and interesting shapes on the page.

The kids can place the paper on the multiple bowls of different color paint before setting them down to make the paintings more interesting. Be aware that kids will often want to make more than one so bring enough gear.

## TYPICAL ISSUES

### Children Want To Pop Them SO BAD!

As the show progresses, children get very excited about the prospect of popping or touching the bubbles. Usually, I like to do a Playshop or Bubble Dance Party right after the show, to give the children the opportunity to touch and play. If you let the children know up front that they'll get the chance to play with bubbles themselves at the end, it can help keep them under control and give you something to take away as a behavioral control.

### When the Bubbles Hate You

Some days, nothing is working. Turn the problem of bubbles continually popping into something fun by making it a silly thing that is being done to you by the

children. When a bubble pops unexpectedly, point to a child and say “Did you say pickle? Don’t, that makes the bubbles pop – you popped it!” If you keep coming back to this, you can get a good couple of minutes of silly fun, and your mess up looks like a rehearsed bit.

# The Real Secret

Bubbles are fun: As you play and experiment, you will figure out even more amazing things bubbles are capable of, and you will have a great time doing it. I can honestly say I come home from every single bubble show in happy disbelief. I just can’t believe bubbles are such a big part of how I make a living. So, have fun and remember to keep it light; bubbles don’t like to be taken too seriously.

Happy Bubbling!

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**Living notes available at:**

**<http://www.carisahendrix.com/living-notes-bubbles-221/>**



