

I like to think I'm pretty handy in that I can do a number of things around the house. I can change a light fixture, paint the kitchen, replace my toilet, put in a new vanity, lay some tile, prune the trees, and change the filters in my furnace.

I can do these things because I take a casual interest in them. This, by definition, is dabbling, and the key words in the definition are 'casual interest'; and this kind of interest can be so fleeting. Deep it is not.

Since I haven't dedicated a great deal of my time in discerning the difference between the merits of using two by fours rather than two by sixes for framing my new basement; or the perils of using regular nails as compared to framing nails for the same task, it's safe to assume I don't have a deep interest in framing.

I probably shouldn't be doing it.

However, if I did decide to undertake the task of framing my new basement the learning curve for me to do it right would be much greater than for someone who is considered an expert. If memory serves, chances are an activity such as this would take no time at all in becoming a temporal black hole. My time would be getting eaten up by all the little things I may have overlooked, and I would find myself wishing the day had 36 hours instead of 24. Now, instead of relaxing after a grueling eight-hour workday, I come home to call my father-in-law in the hopes that he can lend me his miter saw . . . again, so I can get the baseboards right this time.

What I'm trying to say is that there are some things that dabblers shouldn't do. A dabbler shouldn't dabble in explosives, or dabble with the preparation of puffer fish. Someone who dabbles in mechanics probably shouldn't take apart the family car; a dabbler that's afraid of water would be wise not to dabble with water sports. The list of don't dabble for dabblers can be exhaustive, and I'll stop it there before it becomes dabble babble.

The point is that there are so many details when it comes to something with multiple steps that it would be hard for me to keep track of all of them, so I leave it in the hands of an expert. I call a demolition expert if I need something blown up (legally, of course); I go to one of maybe four Japanese chefs that know how to prepare fugu without poisoning their clientele; I take my car to a mechanic when it needs work, and I get my brother-in-law to take swim lessons before he tries water skiing.

Getting more to the point, what I'm still trying to say is that rather than running out to Chapters and picking up "Selling Your Home for Dummies" when I want to buy or sell property I shop around for a Realtor that makes a good impression on me and I talk with them before committing myself; and, in the end, I save more of my time to dabble on other things, and the job gets done right. This gives me peace of mind knowing that when I acquire the services of a Realtor I'm getting someone that has a deeper understanding of the myriad of steps involved in any real estate transaction than I do.

Finally, when it comes to buying or selling a home dabbling is fine if you have the resources (ie. time, money, marketing experience, connections – you get the picture), but if you don't why not leave it to someone that does, getting what you want for your home takes more than dabbling.