

Deciding When to Do It Yourself



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Sometimes it can be hard to know when to do something yourself, and when to call in an expert. If you were to believe some of the things you can read on the Internet, it seems as though you can do just about everything. No matter what the project is, you can find ideas, tips, and recommendations for how to do it.

Sometimes, though, it really is better to call in a professional. In particular, you should probably call in an electrician whenever you need to have some work done on your electrical system. It's one thing to change a light bulb; it's another thing entirely to handle any major problem involving electricity. This is especially true if you are a complete amateur and have never done any electrical wiring before.

Electricians have been trained professionally. They should be licensed and insured. Many of them are also bonded. Their training and experience makes it possible for them to figure out the cause of a problem quickly, and then to solve that problem for you.

As a general rule, what you need to do is consider your knowledge and experience,

and also consider how difficult it would be to do whatever electrical work needs to be done. Are you prepared to research code requirements, learn how to do the work, and buy any necessary tools? Do you understand grounding? Could you be certain you had done the electrical work correctly? If the answer is no, then don't even start. The bigger the job to be done, and the more inexperienced you are, the more likely it is that you should call an electrician instead.

There are some cases, though, when you should just call an electrician on general principles. If you have a problem with electricity that needs to be fixed in a kitchen or a bathroom, then you have the potential for a particularly nasty accident. It can be extremely easy for water and electricity to come in contact with each other accidentally. Leave your tools alone and pick up a telephone instead. That way you won't end up getting electrocuted accidentally.

If you have a project where you need to install new or separate wirings, this would be another time when you should think seriously about hiring a professional electrician. A faulty wiring installation can cause an electrical fire, and it can also

cause you or someone else in your home to be burned. Your lack of experience could create a threat that might harm your family and your home.

Professional electricians are well-equipped to help you:

- They know what materials and tools are best for a particular job.
- They are keenly aware of the safety issues, and can take appropriate measures to protect themselves and your home.
- They can give you expert advice on how to avoid electrical damage and how to take care of any devices or wiring within your home.

Not all electricians are the same. As in other fields, they can specialize. Make sure that the electrician you hire has an appropriate background for the work you want to have done. If you have an older home, for example, then you would want to make sure that the electrician you hire has learned how to handle the electrical wiring in that kind of a home, and has had some experience doing just that. Many older homes have completely inadequate wiring that does not comply with current code requirements.