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# BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

## The English We Speak

### Dabble in



*This is not a word-for-word transcript.*

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#### **Feifei**

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak, where we explain phrases used by fluent English speakers so that you can use them too. I'm Feifei.

#### **Phil**

And I'm Phil.

#### **Feifei**

And why have you got such a big bag with you, Phil?

#### **Phil**

Ah well, I've been dabbling in painting recently. I've bought some paints and brushes.

#### **Feifei**

Paints and brushes? You've just said that you're dabbling in painting, so let's learn that phrase. If you dabble in something, it means that you are not doing it very seriously – you're just having fun.

#### **Phil**

Yes. We often use it to talk about hobbies, particularly creative ones. I dabble in writing sometimes – I'd love to write a book one day. Is there anything you dabble in, Feifei?

#### **Feifei**

Well, sometimes I dabble in playing the piano, but I've never been very good at it. Let's listen to some other people using this expression.

#### **Examples**

I've always loved painting, but I've never dabbled in sculpture, so I think I'm going to give that a try.

I love all kinds of music, but I've never dabbled in jazz. I think it's time.

I really love cooking, and I think I want to dabble in baking for the first time too.

**Feifei**

We've been learning the expression 'dabble in'.

**Phil**

We said that 'dabble in' usually means to do something casually and not take it too seriously. However, people sometimes use 'dabble in' to talk about things that they do at work.

**Feifei**

Yes. If you dabble in something at work, it doesn't mean that you're doing it casually. It might be because it's just a small part of your job or you might be saying it because you're trying to be modest.

**Phil**

I could say that I dabble in a bit of web design at work, but that's because I'm not a web designer.

**Feifei**

Ah Phil, are you being modest? Well, we hope you're not dabbling in English – if you want to take it seriously, come back next time for a new expression. See you then!

**Phil**

Bye.

**Feifei**

Bye.