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Tipping advice offered

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Savvy Shopper

Having worked in the food and beverage industry for a spell and having gone out to dinner on occasion, I know both sides of tipping. With a base salary far less than minimum wage, I counted on tips to make it worth it.

While most people know to tip for services, some don't know how much is appropriate or if a tip is expected.

Cindy Grosso, founder of Charleston School of Protocol & Etiquette Inc., offers these guidelines for when and how much to tip. She stresses that tipping is not a requirement. It's an appreciation for service well done, and says you can always tip more than these suggestions.

Restaurants

The tip is based on the bill before the tax (don't tip on tax). Standard tip is 10 to 20 percent, however Grosso says to tip 15 to 20 percent. Tip more than the guidelines if the server is exceptional. Leave a tip even if you receive poor service, just tip on the lower end.

Sushi: Tip on your bill. Note that the tip is typically divided.

Tip jars on counters/takeout: Totally optional. However, if they bring your order to you, tip 10 percent.

Sommelier: 10 to 20 percent of the cost of the bottle of wine. Tip is usually capped at \$20.

Coat check: \$1-\$2 per coat.

Musicians: \$2 to \$3 for special requests.



Salon/spas

The general guideline is 10 to 20 percent of the cost of service (manicure, facial, etc.) and for massage therapists and hairstylists/barbers. Tip shampoo person \$2-\$5.

Hotels

Hotel porter: \$1-\$2 per bag for bringing luggage to room. If they prepare the room for you, then \$5-\$10.

Room service with gratuity included on the bill: If the tip is on the bill, you don't have to tip extra. If it's not included, then it's 15 to 20 percent.

Room service/toiletry/towel delivery: \$1-\$5 (if you are asking for extra services, tip more).

Doorman: \$1 or \$2 per time for calling a cab. You can tip all at once at the end of your stay or each time.

Concierge: \$5 to \$10 for special services.

Housekeeping: Depends on the type of hotel, but \$1 to \$5 per night (every day because staff changes). Put it in a clearly marked, sealed envelope in an obvious place.

Miscellaneous

Cruise cabin steward: \$3 per person per day.

Tour guide: 10 to 15 percent of tour price.

Pet groomer: 10 to 20 percent.

Shoe shine: \$2 per pair of shoes.

Airport curbside check-in: \$1-\$2 per bag.

Airport shuttle bus drivers: \$1-\$2 per person or \$4-\$5 per party, but add \$1 per bag if they help with luggage.

Limousine drivers: 15 to 20 percent total fare.

