

Tipping Tips

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What exactly is a tip? Who decided on the rules that go with how much and for what? Why are the rules different for each kind of service? And why do the rules for tipping vary by region, culture, and country?

As you might image, the ambiguous world of tipping is a bit perplexing to kids. Take tipping in a restaurant. Has your child ever gone back to the table to grab the change you left for the wait staff because they thought you forgot your money? How can you help your kids learn the general principles of tipping—and that tips need to be considered in the cost of certain activities such as eating in a restaurant?



When To Do

Dining out

What To Do

Next time you get ready to pay the bill in a restaurant, get your kids involved in determining the tip.

If you have never involved them, start here

- Let your kids know that the people who have served your food earn a living (in part) from tips, the money that diners voluntarily give above the cost of the meal.
- Let your kids know that it's normal to leave a certain amount, about 10-15% of the cost of the check; although, a person may choose to leave more or less, depending on their satisfaction with the service and personal preferences (or values).

When at the restaurant

- Teach your kids how you determine the tip amount.
 - Share why you chose the amount you did.
 - Make it very clear what your criteria is for the current tip's calculation.
 - Ask if they agree or disagree with your decision.
- Calculate the amount based on your decisions.
 - Because young kids won't be able to figure percentages in their heads, you may want to bring a calculator along for this purpose.
- Have your kids help you count out the tip money to leave on the table.

Things to try at home:

- Put your kids in charge of rating service and calculating tips as part of their contribution to the family.
- You can also practice with your kids at home. Have them serve you a meal and present a bill, so you can calculate and give the tip. Or reverse the game to find out how your kids value your service!

FAST FACT

People leave bigger tips at restaurants on sunny days than on cloudy days.

What You'll Need

Calculator
Paper and pencil (to create "restaurant bill")

Talk About It

Talk about other services that typically include a tip, for instance, room service in a hotel, or a haircut. Do you use the same percentage tip rule for these other services? Why or why not?