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What happens if I do not tip my waiter in the U.S.?

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If I don't come back to that place as a tourist, of course.

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Tony Silva

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49 Answers



Xu Beixi, social animal.

Xu has 50+ answers in Manners and Etiquette.

Worst case scenario, **death**. Have you heard of [Mickey Finn](#) *?

Guests who tipped poorly were given "Mickey Finn powder" in their food or drinks.[10] [11] [12] [13] [14] [15] [16] Chemical analysis showed that it contained [antimony potassium tartrate](#) ,[12]

[Mickey Finn \(drugs\) - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia](#)

And more: "Jean Crones... was believed to be responsible for poisoning over 100 people at a Chicago University Club banquet at which *three people died*. [19] [20] "

Therefore, I urge you to rethink this.

Besides, even if nothing happens, you will carry a weight on your conscience. Not worth it for a few bucks, in my estimation. Being frugal is great, being cheap is not.

*not the comedian.

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8,112 views • 41 upvotes • Written 6 Feb, 2015



Scott Danzig, I'm a life-long United States citizen and voter

You can be pushed out the door by a crying waitress like I was.

If you don't tip the waiter, it's true that usually nothing will happen, to you. But the waiter will suffer. They'll be sad about their situation, and worried even more so about financial difficulties they may be struggling with. But... in other situations, something COULD happen.

In Manhattan's Little Italy, I asked for change, because I wanted to tip, then asked where the restroom was. After settling my business, I forgot to settle the tip and was walking straight out the door. As I stepped on the threshold, the waitress asked me, with her voice erratic and shaky, in a thick Italian accent, if there was something... anything... wrong with the service. It took a while for me to get what she was asking, and then it dawned on me that I completely forgot about the tip and I felt guilty, immediately starting to reach for my wallet, intending to be very generous.

But NO! She actually rushed toward me and shook her head. NO! She did not want me to leave a tip. I'm not sure if it was due to shame, or spite, but she was physically pushing me out the door, silently looking through me with her teary eyes, just wanting me out of her restaurant, and out of her life. I felt like crap, but what was I to do? I left.

I don't think I've ever forgotten to tip since, that place included.

8,159 views • 87 upvotes • Written 8 Feb, 2015

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Melanie Haselmayer, startup founder and strategist.

I am a former bartender and waitress, I have worked in bars, restaurants and hotels in the US, France, Austria, England and in all countries that host a Formula 1 Grand Prix.

What happens if you don't tip and never come back? In that instance, nothing really unless you have a waiter who's used to tourists trying to be smart about tipping ("oh sorry, we didn't know" BS). I've told people in their face before that 'tipping was not a city in China'.

You're being damn cheap about a few bucks (which, overall essentially make up for 80% of my monthly income). You annoy me to the point of no end, and you create a much bigger problem:

You Tip	You Don't Tip
The waiter is happy	The waiter is grumpy
(He might even give you a free shot)	He might bring you a free shot (that he spit in before bringing it to you)
You leave the establishment satisfied	You leave the establishment with a wrong sense of victory
Staff chats and says, "See, people from x have good manners."	The staff talks about you and labels your entire country as idiots
The waiter feels appreciated	Next time the waiter has guests from your country he gives them shitty service because he thinks they are like you!
EVERYBODY IS HAPPY	These guests are unhappy and leave without tipping
	One day you travel again to another city and get shitty service because word got out that some day some idiot didn't want to tip and created a chain reaction

You see, what goes around comes back around.

I'd like to add that I think it's absolutely non-sense for staff to be paid a ridiculous minimum wage, and making it the guests responsibility to pay people's lives (in the US). **A tip should be a token of appreciation, not a forced pre-determined portion of a check.**

1,153 views • 8 upvotes • Written 17 Feb

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Lee Thé, native Californian; BA Sociology UCLA; backgrounds in advertising, school tea...

Lee has 160+ answers in The United States of America.

If you come from a country where tipping waiters is not customary, you will think you have applied your country's logical customs to our country--only that's not true. In countries where it isn't customary to tip, waiters are paid probably a comparable wage to what waiters make in America if you combine their wages with their tips.

So apart from legal consequences, ethically you're doing the same as if I went to a restaurant in your country, got a \$20 bill for the meal, gave the waiter \$15, and left.

What you would think of me in that situation is what I would think of you in this one.

On the other hand, I benefit from your desire to cheat waiters if you think you can get away with it.

You see, I'm a scuba diver, and I dive in places like Indonesia that get a lot of Europeans and divers from some Asian countries that generally don't tip.

As a consequence, Indonesians like Americans better than Europeans and those from other non-tipping countries, and give us Americans preferential treatment in many ways large and small.

This is especially significant for scuba divers, just because of the intimate personal service often needed for doing something as potentially dangerous/adventurous as diving. And extra-especially on liveboards.

Indonesians also prefer American tourists because we're friendlier to them--we don't just treat them like "the help." We inquire about their lives and their families, and generally treat them as equals.

So by all means continue to degrade your country's reputation when you travel. I profit from your mean-spiritedness.



Me and other divers being helped by the Indonesian crew at the start of a night dive off Rinca Island near Komodo, Indonesia. Photo taken by my wife. An example of the kind of service that earns good tips--at least from Americans.

1,122 views • 6 upvotes • Written 18 Feb

Upvote 6 Downvote Comments 2 Share



Adrian Hsiah

In most places, wait staff really have no recourse if you decide not to tip them. They will just call you names behind your back and probably have a poorer image of people from your country but otherwise, there is very little they will do to you.

In some rare cases, question why a tip wasn't left or chase after you. I've seen wait staff run after customers questioning the customers why they left such a small tip. Even rarer, some wait staff may get angry and/or aggressive. I've seen waiters chase after customers and curse and threaten them before. However, many restaurants have policies for their wait staff against confronting customers over tips.

So really nothing will happen to YOU.

But after you're gone, your server will have worked to provide you service for which they have been paid very little money. In many cases, your server will end up paying out of their own pocket to the host, bartender, kitchen staff, busboy, etc and lose money.

So what happens? Your waiter ends up suffering for the privilege of serving you.

1,230 views • 1 upvote • Written 5 Feb, 2015

Upvote 1 Downvote Comments 2+ Share



John Savidge, Attempting to unscrew the inscrutable since 1963

Upvoted by Nick Malik, proud to be American

Nothing will happen in all likelihood.

But consider this, remember that American tourist you saw in your country? The one who assumed the whole world did it "The 'Murican Way". The one who ignored your culture and traditions. The one people thought was rude, arrogant and ignorant?

Yeah, don't be that guy.

9,065 views • 120 upvotes • Updated 21 Feb

Upvote 120 Downvote Comments 1+ Share 1



Yihwan Kim, I study politics, write about miles, and work in 3D printing.

The waiter will hate you and think you are the worst.

Speaking as a former server, please tip the waiter in the United States. If you don't, you'll be the worst.

Edit

Others have mentioned "tip out" policies that require servers to pay a portion of their total sales to bussers, hosts, bartenders, and anyone else who worked for your dining experience. In such cases, you will essentially be forcing the server to pay for a part of your meal.

So yeah, you really would be the WORST.

1,160 views • 9 upvotes • Written 8 Feb, 2015

Upvote 9 Downvote Comment Share



Matthew Handy, I lived in NH for 3 years. I've visited around 30 states.

Wow. There are a lot of angry, aggressive posts on this thread.

Why isn't that anger directed towards the ridiculous tipping system. Americans are notorious for being ignorant of the customs of other countries. Why do they assume – no, *demand* – that the rest of the world should have a complete grasp of theirs?

What's wrong with fair, transparent pricing?

(As it happens I always tip in US restaurants, unless the service was really bad, because I am aware of the system. I did once fail to tip a guy in a hotel who carried my bag the six feet from the storage cupboard to the front desk. He followed me out of the hotel and lectured me on the subject of his income.

What a ridiculous way to run a business.)

4,389 views • 89 upvotes • Written 9 Feb, 2015

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Frank James Wilson, Born here, live here now, spent all but six months of the time between here.

Probably nothing, except that some servers that you'll never see again, and *you*, whom you will see in the mirror every day for the rest of your life, will know that you are a jerk. The minimum wage for waiters is set lower than for other people based on the assumption that they get tips. That's the system---waiters are presumed to get tips, and they can be taxed on the income they are presumed to have gotten.. I don't like this system, but I don't get to make it, and neither did your waiter. It's unethical to not tip when tipping is absolutely part of his basic compensation just because you can.

1,230 views • 4 upvotes • Written 7 Feb, 2015

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Claire McCabe, I have both.
Claire has 4 endorsements in American Culture, Habits, and Behavior.

It's important to remember when traveling to foreign countries, that you might be the *only* person from that country your server, taxi driver, porter, coat-check person has ever met. This is more likely true in less cosmopolitan cities/towns in the USA, which is my country.

As a visitor, YOU are an "ambassador". No, you don't get a fancy license plate, or carte blanche to indulge in bad behavior. You are the person by whom all your fellow countrymen and women will be viewed/judged.

Isn't it wiser to act according to the customs of the country you visit? The presidents, premiers, prime ministers of each country go through a training period during which they are given instructions on proper etiquette for greeting their counterparts.

It behooves each of us to render the same consideration of the country which plays our host. I did considerable research before going abroad about customs and habits, so that I wouldn't appear rude, ignorant, or arrogant.

Not leaving a tip is a personal choice, without a doubt, based on your own feeling of whether the server was attentive, well versed in the offerings, prompt, and accurate in their recall of who ordered what dish.

Not leaving a tip lowers the opinion of your fellow countrymen in the view of the wait staff. Is that fair?

1,189 views • 10 upvotes • Updated 14 Feb

Upvote 10 Downvote Comment Share



Bonan Wang, I care about what other people think, or I wouldn't be on Quora.

Probably nothing tangible will happen, but COME ON NOW!

The other day I went out for brunch, my bill after sales tax came out to be about **\$20 USD**. That means:

- 15% tip is \$3
- 20% tip is \$4
- 25% tip is \$5

If I don't tip, then what I'm saying is, I can afford to blow \$20 on one meal, but \$23-24??? Oh no NOW I'm breaking the bank. If my financial margin is really

that tight, down to the \$3-4 bucks extra, then people would rightfully tell me that I just need to stay the heck home and make my own goddamned scrambled eggs.

Think of it another way: for \$3 you're an average tipper. But if you spend \$2 more to tip \$5, you will be remembered as a good tipper. **\$2 is a very cheap** way to buy someone's good opinion of you...

By the way, I know Asians (drunk Japanese businessmen and Chinese tourists in Vegas aside) have a reputation for being cheap tipppers. I am doing my best to overturn that image. If you are Asian, please stop giving us a bad name. I don't want to walk into a restaurant and have waiters be cold to me because they assume I tip like you.

1,645 views • 20 upvotes • Written 7 Feb, 2015

Upvote 20 Downvote Comments 5+ Share



Jim Gordon, iconoclast, thinker outside of boxes, seeker of novelty, bibliophile, gastronome

Jim has 140+ answers in The United States of America.

Not tipping the waiter won't have any direct effect on you.

It WILL have an indirect effect on you and tourism in general, and on the US economy. There's going to be a chain reaction:

1. A waiter who provides good service but doesn't receive a reasonable reward will display the expected economic behavior: changing to a job that pays better or moving to an area where wages are better.
2. Future patrons of the restaurant will find less competent waiters, service will suffer, and the restaurant's reputation will suffer.
3. The restaurant will not prosper or maybe go out of business. The community, the state and the country lose tax revenues.
4. The district will become less attractive to restaurateurs and to diners. Property values will decline.
5. Potential patrons and residents will avoid the district. The community will suffer, maybe losing tax revenues or having to spend money to make the area more attractive.
6. The city will become less attractive as a tourist destination. The attractive retailers will look elsewhere. The tourist attractions won't be maintained as well. The hotels will suffer and decline in their quality.
7. The local and regional economy will decline. People from your home country (and other countries) won't want to live in the region, or maybe in the country, and other tourists won't want to visit.
8. US businesses and the US government will suffer as their revenues decline. They're not going to be able to hire engineers and technical people from your country, and less immigration from your country will be permitted. Those engineers and technical people aren't going to earn good incomes and support the home economy with remittances and investments.
9. The world economy will spiral downward into depression.

All because you're a cheapskate and left a lousy tip for a waiter.

2,304 views • 37 upvotes • Written 5 Feb, 2015

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Peter Flom, I live here

Peter has 450+ answers in The United States of America.

There are websites where waiters can describe people like you. The waiter may have taken your picture and can surely describe you. If you used a charge card,

they have your name. And other waiters read WaiterRant.

In addition, the manager or host may run after you on the street and tell you you forgot to tip. This can happen even if you are out with friends or a date. And it gives the staff another chance to photograph you.

So, never eat out again in the USA. Or your soup may spill in your lap.

Not tipping is not an option.

24,651 views • 387 upvotes • Written 6 Feb, 2015

Upvote 387 Downvote Comments 35+ Share 2



Jonathan Thomas

Nothing happens to you at all. But it's bad for the waiter. In the USA, restaurants are exempt from the minimum wage because the logic is that waiters will make it up in tips. So, if you don't tip the waiter for serving you, they basically don't get paid. In theory the restaurant is supposed to 'top up' their wages in this instance but in practice this never occurs. Is the US tipping system stupid? Yes it is. Is it going anywhere? No it's not so when in Rome, do as the Romans do and tip your waitstaff. You're spending thousands of dollars on your American adventure and it's too much to tip \$5 for service in a restaurant? That said I love traveling in Europe and not tipping. We need to pay people a living wage. But this is America and that's not likely to ever change.

289 views • 1 upvote • Written Thu

Upvote 1 Downvote Comment Share 1



Kent Fung

Kent has 70+ answers in Manners and Etiquette.

- The waiter ends up with a lower standard of living than he/she deserves.
- In New York City, some restaurant managers will chase you down outside and publicly shame you. I've seen it happen on multiple occasions.
- You're (correctly) thought of as an asshole. Sometimes, they'll think other people from your country are assholes too, if your national origin can be identified. That's unfair to other people from your country, but you contributed to that.

8,704 views • 183 upvotes • Written 6 Feb, 2015

Upvote 183 Downvote Share



Duane Yaiser

I just want to address some of the answers here: while the person is suggesting something than is offensive to many, that doesn't mean he does it. It is a "what if" question and nothing more. You don't need to address him as if he never tips.

My answer to the question is this: there are no legal ramifications for not tipping. Just know that you are cheating the servers and staff from their income. In my opinion it's a terrible system that shouldn't even exist. Studies have shown that tips do not in fact reflect the quality of service received and statistically are practically random. I feel that their wages should be drastically increased and tipping should truly be optional where it may contribute to a 5%-10% "bonus" to their wage. Until that system changes however, we are stuck as costumers to pick up the owners' slack. No, the paradigm shift will not begin with you refusing to tip, so pay your server.

560 views • 4 upvotes • Written 9 Feb, 2015

Upvote 4 Downvote Comments 1+ Share



Oz Childs

We tip in the USA if we are served at the bar or at a table, but not always if we carry fast food to a table at a place like McDonalds or KFC. The standard tip used to be 10% or 15% of the bill, before sales tax. Now it's 20%. Even more if the service was exceptionally good.

But I suspect the person who had a bad experience in France was not yelled at because the waiter thought he might not leave a good tip. He was yelled out for being rude. No one is expected to leave a tip in France. A service charge is included in the bill, so the most a French server can hope for from another Frenchman is an extra Euro or two, left as a token or respect for good service -- literally a *pourboire*, enough to buy a beer or glass of wine at the end of the server's shift. Yet the service in France is almost always professional and correct, and sometimes quite friendly.

What you must understand about France is that you do not walk up to someone and demand a menu, or anything else. You walk in and when the host looks at you, you say, "bon jour" or "bon soir" even if that is all the French you know. You will be greeted in return, and then, and only then, do you state your request, in French if possible but English will work too. You probably are requesting a meal and will be shown to the table. If you really did need to see a menu (but why? A menu is usually posted outside the door), you could ask to see one. If you so, say "please" (*s'il vous plait*) and "thank you" (*merci* or "*merci bien*" when it is handed to you.

Finally, as you leave, tell the owner or other person in charge "good night" or "good bye" or if you plan to come back in the next day or two, add, "a bientot" (see you soon), which is a clear sign you were pleased.

507 views • 2 upvotes • Written Wed

Upvote 2

Downvote Comment Share



David Jensen

David has 30+ answers in American Culture, Habits, and Behavior.

You are rewarding a selfish restaurant owner for refusing to pay fair wages and punishing the staff (waiters generally share tips with some others in the restaurant) for working in a business that has tipping as a custom. It's a vile custom, but it is the one we have and it is hardly ethical to leave the poor workers without pay.

1,500 views • 17 upvotes • Written 7 Feb, 2015

Upvote 17

Downvote Comments 2+ Share



John Wong

I wonder if you actually know how this tipping and waiter income works in the U.S. or just asking this question for fun.

For the benefit of other people who do not know. The situation is like this:

1. It is customary in the U.S. to leave a reasonable amount of tip for the waiter. (*This varies according to the places, in general, the higher prices places has the higher% and like the McDonald's, KFC's you don't tip.*)
2. Because of this the tip is actually a part of the waiter's overall income, then by not giving the reasonable tip, you are underpaying the waiter who served you. Think about the bonus you discussed with your boss when you get the job: 30% of your 'package' is bonus, and your boss pay 0% bonus for no reason (i.e. you did not do anything wrong etc) then how would you think? Imagine the % is not 30% but... 40%,50%,60% and imagine how your feeling might change!

- 3. Why? The salary of the waiter is determined by the 'market', so for different restaurants, the base pay and 'bonus' ratio would be different, and so are the quality of the waiters.

So, what happens would be what the other people who answered this question had said, some focused on the legal circumstances, some on the physical circumstance, some touched on the morality ...

I think at the end of the day, to most waiters, you like a rare case and this person will not suffer so much. For those waiters who would have stronger reactions, they are likely to be "less well off" also you are probably hurting them more i.e. they do get that much anyway and you are in a way 'taking away money from the needy' ... that's not nice!

943 views • 3 upvotes • Written 5 Feb, 2015

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Justin Chapman

Well, in the U.S. people try to work for a tip. Sometimes they go about it in the wrong way by affecting an attitude that is obviously put on, but generally when they are extra nice it is to try to make the service better. To recognize their efforts, and those are the easy ones, we tip them for a job well done, versus just saying "thanks, bye," since that is already part of the leaving salutation in the American culture as it is. No, really if a person does a good job they should be tipped no matter where they are in the world. Tips that are already "included in the service fare" don't make any sense because then the waiter can be a complete ass and still be tipped for it. As it happens, in a lot of countries, say here in France where I have lived for the past fifteen years, that is often exactly what happens. For example about a year and a half ago I was on my way to the restroom and a young 22 or so year old guy who was the waiter on the floor was headed my way, and I asked him politely for the menu and he responded in a very hostile way like he was challenging me to a fight. Instead of saying, "sure let me get that for you sir, I'm just a bit busy right now, it'll only be a moment," he responded, "YEAH DUDE CAN'T YOU SEE I'M BUSY HERE, I'VE ONLY GOT TWO HANDS!!" Of course that is a translation from French to English, more or less, but you get the point. His tone and mode were way, way out of line. Granted, he was only 22 and maybe a little, inexperienced, say. Nonetheless, similar behavior in Paris is expected and you may have to wait and wait and wait and wait for service. As well, don't bother with any pleases or thank you's or anything. Just, "I'll take a beer." "Bye." Even if you say "thanks," a lot of the time there won't be any manners shown back. Just, "bye." In the U.S., our culture is much, much different. People usually look at you in the eyes, serve you pretty fast if possible, apologize if it takes a long time, say please and thank you at the very minimum, and since they will be rewarded for a good job, find a way to treat you with respect. I have to say, I like the American way, même si je comprends bien les autres cultures maintenant. ;) So, in general, if you don't tip people that you notice do a good job, you are creating a problem for those people and being rude to them. You can expect rudeness in return.

340 views • 1 upvote • Written 12 Feb, 2015

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Andy Micone, Futures adviser for TechCast Global.

I think one of the reasons business people tip well, besides the fact we have expense accounts, is that a business person understands just as the wait staff understand that pretty much everything is about relationships. Will not tipping hurt you in any direct way? No it won't. However, another adage you'll hear among businessmen is "you never know who somebody knows." Being unkind to a waitperson can hurt you indirectly in ways you might never know, and

more's the pity because you could have saved yourself the trouble for a few bucks. You would be very surprised at some of the ways word gets around through waitstaff.

223 views • 1 upvote • Written 1 May

Upvote 1 Downvote Comment Share



Donald Macleay

The only certain thing that happens is that the waiter does not get properly paid. Our insufficient labor protections allow employers to pay wait staff below the minimum wage because of estimated tip income.

Waiters retaliating against you is colorful, but uncommon. Most restaurants are understaffed, and the waiter often does not see your tip, or lack of tip, until after you leave. Usually they are too busy to remember you or use any high tech to track you. Those are exceptions in a world of service staff working hard to have time for such games.

By the way. The worst American tippers? The affluent.

91 views • 1 upvote • Written Thu

Upvote 1 Downvote Comment 1 Share



Krishanu Karmakar, Gourmand, Researcher of Fiscal Policy, Arm chair bound social reformer.

You will (unjustifiably) be singled out as the bad guy and probably shamed publicly.

You would be justifiably shamed if 'tipping compulsory' was written on the menu (not on the bill as 'suggested tip'). But till date I have not seen any such menu (not that I am saying there are no restaurants with such menu cards/boards). So as long as it is not clearly written on the menu card/board I would say you shall be 'unjustifiably' singled out and questions shall be asked about your moral upbringing. Interestingly no one raises the same questions about the restaurant owners. After all that the restaurant owners choose not to pay a decent wage to the waiters/waitresses is not something you should be held accountable for. But unfortunately that is what will happen - you will be the bad guy and people who look like you (if you have some obviously visual clues in your looks) will be vilified as 'bad tippers'.

652 views • 3 upvotes • Written 7 Feb, 2015

Upvote 3 Downvote Comments 1+ Share



Nick Malik, proud to be American
Nick has 1,170+ answers in The United States of America.

Do you understand that in most American restaurants, the tip is up to 90% of the waiter's income?

What would happen? You'd be a jerk. Other people would see you be a jerk and they will treat you (and your countrymen) as a jerk. You are spreading ill will, and it will come back to you. Karma's a bitch.

5,212 views • 73 upvotes • Written 7 Feb, 2015

Upvote 73 Downvote Comments 5+ Share



Irene Colthurst, American isolationist, Clayite Whig
Irene has 2,210+ answers in The United States of America.

If an American came to your country as a tourist and committed a rude act in a restaurant, would you feel that the fact that he or she would not come back to that restaurant to be a sufficient justification and excuse for the act?

Do unto others... Just because you don't understand it or like it, that isn't an excuse. Because the inverse could very likely be true in regard to your country's particular customs.

1,220 views • 9 upvotes • Written 6 Feb, 2015

Upvote 9 Downvote Comment 1 Share



Gerry Kavanagh

On a visit to NY (I am Irish) I accidentally *overtipped*. I was visiting a typical New York diner... something that was on my US visit bucket-list. A cultural right of passage sort of thing. Myself and my girlfriend (now wife) had obscenely large orders of burgers, fries and shakes - which were all amazing - for what to me seemed an obscenely small amount of money. I paid and we left... About 2 seconds later, a fairly beefy server comes chasing out the door after me, shouting "Sir! Sir!!". I wracked my brain to figure out what obscure social convention I had flouted, when I saw him waving a banknote. I was pretty sure I had left a reasonable tip... \$5 on a \$20 bill. I stopped and he caught up... "Sir," he said... "you left too much on the tip". "I did?" I replied. "Yes sir... you left \$20" We agreed to split the difference and I gave him \$10.

1,012 views • 6 upvotes • Written Wed

Upvote 6 Downvote Comment Share



Anonymous

I'm from India. I never went to U.S.A. But, my professor at my University went several times. Last week while he was giving a lecture on "Customer Relationship Management", he told all of us (students) about his experience. He told us that first time he went was way back in 1997 when he took a cab and after getting down at his destination, he gave the amount to the driver. But, to his surprise the driver was using foul language and said "Do you think I dropped you for this?". My professor told us that he couldn't understand what he meant by that. He told us that later he found out that we should pay tip to the cab drivers which is not a common phenomenon here in India.

671 views • 3 upvotes • Written 6 Feb, 2015

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Roxanne Constantin, IT Specialist

Here is a worst case scenario of what actually can happen.

You go into a restaurant where the waiter's wages are 2.50\$/h (like others have mentioned, this is a reality in positions where tipping is assumed).

Your waiter lives in Buttville on the edge of town. It costs 15\$ in gas for the trip.

For the sake of example, you happen to choose a restaurant and time of year where it's really dead.

You are the only customer that night. You order a 20\$ meal. Your tip comes up to about 5\$, but you don't pay it.

Your waiter works a 4 hour shift, earning 10\$. It's not enough to buy gas to get home. Her car breaks down in Schittville, 5 miles away from her house in Buttville. She is facing an hour's walk at night in a shady area.

The waiter abandons her car in Schittville and begins the lousy walk home, cursing your name.

On her way she gets accosted and intimidated by hoodlums who take away her purse with her keys in it.

Your waiter is now distraught and in tears. She runs the rest of the way home and breaks into her own home with the help of a next door neighbor.

In the meantime the hoodlums follow her home and later on that night, break into her house using her own keys...

...do you want me to keep going with this story or are you going to pay the damn tip now??

672 views • 6 upvotes • Written 12 Feb, 2015

Upvote 6 Downvote Comment Share



Chris Schene, Electrical Engineer

As an American I don't like the custom of tipping: I would rather that waiters are paid a fair wage and they build that wage value into the food price. However, for most American wait and service staff tips provide a large portion of their income and it is a very hard job: if they serve you well, why not provide them a decent amount to reward that good service?

If you tip badly or not at all when you have received good service, I would strongly advise you not to return to that restaurant or even a restaurant in the local area for news about you may well travel fast and you may find that someone pees on, blows snot on or spits on your food. Some wait staff work in more than one restaurant and probably know staff in nearby establishments and they may understandably be out to get you.

253 views • 2 upvotes • Written 7 Feb, 2015

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Giuseppe Vella, Med Student, Avid Reader, Patternophile, Boardgame Enthusiast

As teenagers in a language-studying trip, we were aware of the absurd tipping system.

Nonetheless, it often happened that we forgot to compute the extra money in our heads, so we didn't have enough change for both tips and taxes (what is your problem with knowing what to pay upfront?!) or we just forgot and paid the money written in the receipt, as we were accustomed.

Once, a taxi driver yelled at us and left without taking any money. We just didn't think there needed to be a tip for driving.

Another time, the waiter told us to f&#@ off after having smiled all dinner. I mean, I get that it's a tradition, but I guess that a person has to be sensible enough to understand who he/she is dealing with.

I maintain that they were rude and could have tried and explained or just be softer, considering age and provenience.

177 views • 1 upvote • Written 14 Feb

Upvote 1 Downvote Comment Share



Robert Larson Jr

Then you just committed restaurant theft. You procured the services of the

waiter and than only paid the food portion of the bill. Unfortunately that is perfect legal in the USA. However it does not change the reality that you purchased his services and then refused to pay him for that service.

1,527 views • 13 upvotes • Updated 12 Feb, 2015

Upvote 13 Downvote Comments 2 Share



Lei Zhang, Pretender

So people already mentioned what you will GET if you don't tip, let me tell you what you will MISS if you don't tip.

I tip generally in ranges of 18 - 25% for cheap to medium priced restaurants (sometimes 30% if I like the restaurant and comes back frequently). I get recognized immediately as I walk into the restaurant and gets mentioned by nickname. I get everything I need immediately, like water, tea, food and the waiter/waitress will come by and talk with me if I am bored eating alone.

I get extra portions and after certain point in time, always extra item for free (my tip will probably cover the extras + regular tip and more but still unexpected).

It's just feel like eating with family / friends even if I go alone. It's good to see people who stands on their feet all day (probably 10+ hours a day) get some extra help.

I do not recommend going back to a restaurant once you don't tip there (at least for a while). I tipped 1 cent once just to spite the waiter. It was 1 am (the restaurant closes at 2 am). There were 3 waiters and only 1 table occupied in the restaurant. We waited by the "please wait to be seated" sign for 10 minutes at an almost empty restaurant!!! Then a waiter finally comes and say "you need help with anything?"...ummm yeah I'm here to eat! He pointed to a table; we asked him if we can sit at the table near the window (6 seats instead of 4), he said no, it's reserved for larger groups (at 1:10 am with 4 other 6 seater tables near the window). So we sat down, and before we can say anything, he left. Came back in another 8 minutes with water and left again. The next time the waiter came back, he told us "we're closing in 30 minutes so you order now and eat fast."

Even though I feel like he deserved that tip, I wouldn't trust the waiters there to go back there again. Just in case they do something to my food for that tip.

163 views • 2 upvotes • Written 5h ago

Upvote 2 Downvote Comment Share



Kelly La Rue, Veteran, 30 year Master electrician, professional counselor

Kelly has 590+ answers in The United States of America.

Federal minimum wage for waiters is \$2.13/hr. It is more in some states.

Waiters count on your tips to make a living. I used to be a waiter. It is the hardest work I've ever done and I've worked construction. The only reason I did it is the tips brought my income up to a decent level and, believe me, I treated the customers well in order to earn a tip.

1,847 views • 29 upvotes • Updated 7 Feb, 2015

Upvote 29 Downvote Comments 2+ Share



Satyanarayana Shanmugam

Nothing will happen to you if you don't revisit. If you do, don't expect to receive good service if they remember you.

As for the waiter, their wages take into account that they will receive tips. So you're basically taking a discount at the expense of that waiter. You might put him in a bad mood for the day and that might affect the other customers.

If you can't afford the tip, please don't eat out.

614 views • 2 upvotes • Written 7 Feb, 2015

Upvote 2 Downvote Comment Share



Dianne Felder

I would not dream of not tipping a server unless that person deliberately did something obnoxious. I went to lunch with a woman once (separate checks, fortunately) who bragged about the fact she figures the tip on the before-tax total. This from a person who asked the server for special service twice! Oh, and she drives a Cadillac and owns two homes. Another person, this one a friend, leaves embarrassingly small tips. Because I like her, I make some excuse to return to the table and leave another dollar or two. My rule is, if you cannot afford to leave a decent tip, stay home.

518 views • 2 upvotes • Written Thu

Upvote 2 Downvote Comment Share



Paul Soister, I'm an average guy trying to learn a thing or two and not be an ass.

The fact is tipping is strictly voluntary. You are under no obligation moral or otherwise to tip sloppy, rude or lazy service. I feel for service people who make minimum wage or lower and depend on tips. That does not negate the fact that good service is still expected in order for a customer to leave money that is in no way required of them.

349 views • 2 upvotes • Written 7 Feb, 2015

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