



## Etiquette for Tipping

*Yes, there is such a thing as proper manners for tipping!*

A friend told me a story about going out to a nice restaurant in Hawaii with a small group of eight people traveling together. It was one of those boutique restaurants that dot Lahaina on Maui's island. There was lots of ambiance, great food, and – according to my friend – really excellent service.

My friend said they had such a great time largely due to their server, who had terrific suggestions from a menu filled with dishes that were a little unfamiliar. After a wonderful dinner, they got their bill, paid it, and left.

Out in the parking lot, my friend suddenly realized they forgot to include a tip. A few of her friends struck an “Oh well” attitude and were ready to leave. But my friend – being the kind of person she is – demanded that everyone contribute a “nice” tip, which everyone agreed the server certainly earned. She collected it from everyone, went back inside, and handed it to the server herself.

She looked at me and said, “How on Earth could I let that sit on my conscience?”

Not everyone is as militant about tips as we are. We all know people who would have been perfectly fine with “getting away” with not tipping the server.

Our attitude about tipping might be because my friend and I both have long professional experiences as restauranteurs. I owned restaurants for 20+ years and can tell you – with absolute certainty – that your server depends on their tips. The very nature of the restaurant business is a cooperative one. The server is the frontline ambassador in any restaurant, doing whatever is necessary to ensure you have a great time. Moreover, servers’ actual paychecks are very tiny (most of which goes to taxes), and they use their tips to pay their bills. It’s a big chunk of what they take home.

Some states have laws that calculate tips as part of the server’s minimum wage. California, where I live, isn’t one of them. But, no matter your state, tipping etiquette stays the same. Think only of how the server has helped make your meal entertaining and enjoyable. That being said, the tip amount you offer should depend on the service received.

The only thing that’s missing for you to figure out is what’s the proper amount to tip. On that note, it’ll be easier to pare this down to a few simple points.

If you’re at a coffee/fast food spot (what we call “quick service”) where you stand in line and take your beverage/food to a table or out the door - tip about a \$1 for the counter person.

If you’re at a bar, some slightly different rules apply. The bartender depends on their tips just as much as a server does. It is acceptable to leave two dollars per drink as a tip. If the bartender has been particularly great or you had them jumping around making complicated cocktails, then it is good to add a bit extra. The bartender always remembers a customer who tips well!

If you’re at a sit-down restaurant and the service was as good as you hoped, the tip should be about 20%. If the service wasn’t so great, you can take the tip down to 15% or even lower. But remember, if you have a service issue – let the manager know. It’s probably the only way they will know and trust me, the feedback (assuming the complaint is warranted) will be appreciated.

Tips are very easy to calculate. Just look for the total amount – before tax (don’t calculate your tip on the tax) – and move the decimal point to the left once. So, if the bill is “\$120”, now you have “12.0.” That’s 10%. Double that for 20%, and you have \$24.00 for a tip!



SAMPLE BLOG POST  
For Fran Berger, Lifestyle

Some people think that you don't need to tip on the wine or other alcohol you've consumed at your table. To be perfectly honest, I have no idea where anyone ever got that idea. You absolutely do tip drinks and bottles. And that birthday dessert the server brought over? You should tip as if you were paying for the dessert itself. Just sayin.

Think about it this way: The server took your orders, brought your beverages, poured the wine, and made the celebration (if that's why you went) all the merrier – and that's called service.

Photo by [Jessie McCall](#) on [Unsplash](#)



Portfolio Sample

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