

Tipping in restaurants – a waiter's guide

Knowing how to tip in restaurants can be a nightmare, especially on holiday. A waiter tells you what to do...

Is there anywhere where people never tip?

In Japan. **You mustn't** do it there. The Japanese think that tipping someone means treating them like a servant. The price is the price.

Where should you tip?

Everywhere else. As a waiter, I find it hard to imagine anyone being upset with extra cash. You should never feel embarrassed to leave a tip on the table. In fact, in countries where **you don't have to** tip, it's even more appreciated.

Do you need to tip if service is already included?

In countries like France and Australia, service is always included in the prices. The service charge is often shared with the kitchen staff as well – which is a good thing, helping everyone to earn a bit more. When **you have to** pay a service charge, of course, **you needn't** add an extra tip unless you really want to. If you do tip, check that the money is going to the waiter and not to the restaurant owner, and if in doubt, leave cash.

How much should you tip?

The standard service charge is 12.5% of the bill in Britain, so if your bill doesn't include service, **you should** tip about 10% (the USA and Canada are another story – there's no upper limit!). But – and this is important – if you're leaving a good tip, don't make a big thing about it and expect the waiter to look at you adoringly. Do it discreetly and enjoy the feel-good factor instead.

When shouldn't you tip?

The only circumstances when I think **you shouldn't** tip are when the service is really really bad, for example, if you ask for things that never arrive, or if staff are extremely unfriendly. But remember that what many people think of as 'slow service' is often more the kitchen's fault than the waiter's.



- c Match the **highlighted** phrases to their meaning. What other verbs could you use for 1, 4, and 5?

- 1 It's an obligation / necessity.
- 2 It isn't an obligation / necessity.
- 3 Don't do it! It's prohibited / dangerous / wrong.
- 4 It's a good idea.
- 5 It isn't a good idea.

- d **p.142 Grammar Bank 6A**

- e In pairs, **circle** the correct answer.

- 1 You **shouldn't** / You **ought to** speak rudely to waiters.
- 2 You **mustn't** / You **don't have to** order food containing nuts if you have a serious nut allergy.
- 3 You **ought to** / You **oughtn't to** send something back just because you don't like it.
- 4 You **have to** / You **needn't** book a table in advance at really popular restaurants.
- 5 You **don't need to** / You **shouldn't** order things which aren't on the menu.
- 6 You **mustn't** / You **don't have to** finish everything on your plate.
- 7 You **needn't** / You **should** leave a tip if the service was mediocre.