

When Should I Tip?



Tipping can be too confusing for travelers, but it is important enough to learn because customs vary around the world. In the United States, tipping is the most common way to thank service workers. Waiters, taxi drivers, hotel staff, and even hairdressers expect tips. If you don't tip, it is too impolite because many workers earn the lowest wages and depend on tips. However, in countries like Japan or South Korea, tipping is the least expected because good service is standard. Some places even find tipping too strange or offensive! Before traveling, research local rules—some are simple enough to follow, while others are too different from what you know.

So, how much should you tip? In restaurants, 15-20% of the bill is the most usual amount. If the service is good enough, you can tip more. For small help, like a bellhop carrying bags, \$1 or \$2 is enough. But if a service charge is already included, an extra tip is unnecessary. The easiest way to decide is to watch locals or ask politely. Sometimes, prices are too high, and a big tip isn't needed. On the other hand, if someone helps you the most, like a tour guide, a bigger tip is kind. Remember, tipping is the best way to show gratitude, but only when it's part of the culture. If you're too unsure, it's safe enough to ask or follow what others do!

Practice: Reading Comprehension

1 True or False:

In the United States, many workers depend on tips because their wages are low.

2 Fill in the blank: In Japan, tipping is _____ because good service is already included.

- a) very common
- b) the least expected
- c) too expensive

3 Multiple Choice: How much is a normal tip in U.S. restaurants?

- a) 5%
- b) 15-20%
- c) 50%

4 Short Answer: What is **the easiest** way to know if you should tip in a

5 True or False: In some countries, tipping can be rude or strange.

6 Multiple Choice: For small services, like carrying bags, how much is **enough** to tip?

- a) \$10
- b) \$1 or \$2
- c) Nothing

7 Fill in the blank: If a service charge is already included, an extra tip is _____.

- a) very important
- b) unnecessary
- c) the most common

8 Short Answer: Why is tipping important in the U.S.?

9 True or False: You should always tip 20%, no matter where you are.

10 Multiple Choice: What is **the best** way to show appreciation for good service?

- a) Ignore the worker
- b) Tip (when it's expected)
- c) Complain