

“The Custom of Tipping”
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Before you read:

1. Do people tip in your home country? If no, why not? If yes, how much?
2. Are you sometimes not sure if you should tip or how much to tip here in the U.S.? Give an example of your experience.
3. If you “do it wrong” (pay too much or too little) in the U.S., what do you worry about? How do you feel?
4. Why do you think people tip here in the U.S.? Do you think tipping is a good idea? Why or why not?

After you read:

1. If I take a taxi in Japan, should I give a tip? What do you think will happen if I do give a tip?

2. What did the writer (Shiho) decide to do when she went to New York? Why do you think she did this?

3. Does the writer (Shiho) understand the custom of tipping here in the U.S.? What doesn't she understand?

4. What two questions did she ask herself when she went to the hair salon?

5. How did she solve her problem? What would you do?

6. Why do American service workers need tips?

7. According to the writer (Shiho), what do we “express” when we leave a tip? Why do you think this may be especially important for internationals?

8. In what ways do you think the writer was brave? Can you learn from her experience? Explain.

9. Check your knowledge of tipping customs. For each situation, decide if you would tip or not tip. If you would tip, how much and when would you tip?

a. restaurant: _____

b. fast food place: _____

c. buffet restaurant: _____

d. taxi: _____

e. hairdresser: _____

f. shampooer: _____

g. barber: _____

h. hotel chambermaid: _____

i. mover: _____

j. furniture/appliance installer: _____

k. tow truck: _____

l. auto mechanic: _____

m. pizza delivery: _____

Now check your answers with the answers 10 teachers and staff at ALC gave for each of these situations. What does this tell you about tipping in the U.S.?
