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Peggy Post's Holiday Etiquette: Who Gets a Tip?

Etiquette Expert Offers Solutions for Most Popular Holiday Conundrum

BURLINGTON, VT— Of all the holiday traditions, none is as confusing as tipping. Who gets a tip? How much? Etiquette expert Peggy Post has the answers. Straight from her new book, *Excuse Me, But I Was Next ... How to Handle the Top 100 Manners Dilemmas* (Collins; Oct. 24, 2006, \$19.95) Peggy comes to the rescue with an indispensable guide to holiday tipping.

So, who gets your hard-earned cash during the holidays? “First and foremost, stick to your budget,” says Post. “Set aside a portion for tips. Then, select the two or three service providers who have delivered outstanding, consistent service throughout the year—those that you couldn’t imagine surviving without. These are the people that deserve recognition,” says Peggy. Always accompany a tip with a hand-written note of thanks—that makes it more personal and is one of the best ways to express appreciation.

It’s also acceptable to give a small gift in lieu of, or in addition to, cash. Says Post, “With a name that says thank you, merci® Finest Assortment of European Chocolates is a great accompaniment to a cash tip during the holiday season. It’s also the perfect gift for occasions when a gift is more appropriate than a tip. Merci is packaged in a sophisticated box and is one of the sweetest ways to say thank you at the holidays.”

Peggy Post's Holiday Tip List

During the holiday season it's customary to thank the people, seen and unseen, who help your life run smoothly throughout the year. That "thank you" usually comes in the form of cash. Who should get a tip, and how much? The answer varies, depending on:

- the quality and frequency of the service
- your relationship with the service person
- where you live (amounts are usually higher in large cities)
- how long you've worked together
- your budget
- regional customs

If you always tip at the time of service, you can skip the holiday tip or cut back on the amount. When selecting gifts for teachers, day care providers, nannies, and babysitters, have your child write the card, help pick out the gift, or deliver it. It's an excellent way to teach kids about expressing appreciation. The tip amounts below are merely guidelines—every situation is different, so let your common sense and holiday spirit be your guide.

Au pair	One-week's pay, plus a small gift from your child
Babysitter, regular	One evening's pay, plus a small gift from your child
Barber	Cost of one haircut, plus possibly a small gift
Beauty salon staff	\$10 to \$60 each, giving the most to those who do the most for you, plus possibly a small gift
Child's teacher	Gift, not cash; check school's policy. Possibilities: gift certificate for coffee shop or book store, classroom supplies,

book, picture frame, fruit basket or gourmet food item, or
joint gift with other parents and children

Day care providers \$25 to \$70 each, plus a small gift from your child. If
only one or two providers, consider higher range amount.

Dog walker One week's pay

Fitness trainer, personal Cost of one session

Garage attendants \$10 to \$30 each, given to and distributed by manager

Housekeeper/cleaner One day's pay

Letter carriers U.S. government regulations permit carriers to accept gifts
worth up to \$20 each

Massage therapist One session's fee

Nanny One week's to one month's salary based on tenure and
customs in your area, plus a small gift from your child

Newspaper deliverer \$10 to \$30

Nurse, private Gift, not cash

Nursing home employees Gift, not cash

Pool cleaner Cost of one cleaning

Package deliverer Small gift if you receive deliveries regularly (most delivery
companies prohibit cash gifts)

Residential building personnel:

Superintendent \$20 to \$80

Doorman \$10 to \$80

Elevator operator \$15 to \$40

Handyman \$15 to \$40

Trash/recycling collectors \$10 to \$20 each, for private service

Yard and garden worker \$20 to \$50

From “Excuse Me, But I Was Next: How to Handle the Top 100 Manners Dilemmas,” by Peggy Post, \$19.95, available wherever books are sold.

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About the Author

PEGGY POST has written ten books on etiquette. She is a nationally recognized authority on etiquette, and millions seek her advice through her monthly columns in *Good Housekeeping* and *Parents* magazines. Peggy conducts speeches and seminars across the country and teaches table manners classes to children of all ages. She has appeared on *Dr. Phil*, *Oprah*, *Live with Regis & Kelly*, *The Today Show*, and *Good Morning, America*.



Excuse Me, But I Was Next...

How to Handle the Top 100 Manners Dilemmas

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