

What To Tip For The Holidays? Westchester Expert Offers Advice

by Jeanne Muchnick Lifestyle 12/17/14



Mamaroneck resident and etiquette expert Melissa Leonard offers advice on holiday tipping. Photo Credit: *Melissa Leonard*

WESTCHESTER COUNTY, N.Y. -- Finding the right holiday gift for friends and family can be stressful. Just as taxing: Figuring out who -- and what -- to tip. According to Melissa Leonard, an etiquette and protocol expert and the owner of Mamaroneck-based EstablishYourselfNY.com, anyone who provides a service should be tipped. That includes the postman, sanitation workers, dog walker, hairdresser, personal trainer, UPS/FedEx driver, and so on. Cash is king though gift cards are a nice alternative.

Here's a brief rundown of tipping suggestions:

Sanitation: The rule of thumb is usually \$10 to 20 per person on the truck, but Leonard suggests \$20 per person. "All of a sudden the 'unacceptable' garbage is gone!" she said.

Postman: \$25 to \$50 dollars. "Government employees are not allowed to accept cash gifts, but it is done, so no worries; just be discreet," she advised.

UPS: \$20 plus. "If you don't tip and they know what you can afford, by all those J. Crew and Pottery Barn packages that arrive on a weekly basis, only you come out looking like a Scrooge," she said.

Housecleaner: An extra 20 percent if you have them come every month or more or one week's pay.

Nanny: \$50 to one month's pay, plus a thank you gift from your children.

Babysitter: \$20 plus along with a small token of appreciation, if they babysit a three to five times a month.

Dog Walker: One week's salary.

Super: Take into account whether or not you tip throughout the year for various tasks. If so, you can make small adjustments, but the suggested etiquette is between \$50 to \$200.

Bus Driver: \$5 to \$20 with a thank you note from your child.

Nail Salon: Extra 20 percent tip or \$20 in cash, depending if you give the holiday tip when you are in for services.

Hairdresser: An extra 15 to 20 percent on top of the tip for that haircut. If you get your hair cut and colored on a regular basis, give the price of one haircut or color as a tip.

Caregivers/Teachers: Show the ones that care for those we love (children, elderly parents, sick relatives), how truly grateful you are for their dedication and service. It can be anything from \$20 to hundreds, along with a handwritten thank you note.

Bottom line: Do what you can afford ... in the end any amount will be appreciated.

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