

# DAILY NEWS

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## HOLIDAY TIPPING

How much is  
good service  
worth to you?  
Try our guide

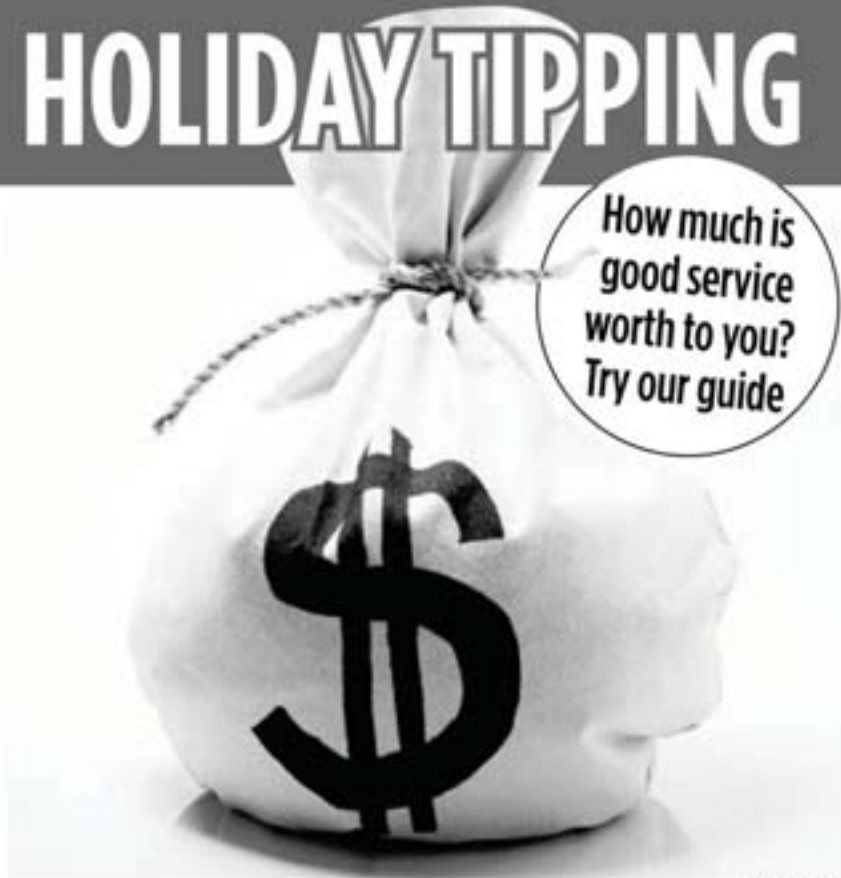


IMAGE SOURCE

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DAILY NEWS FEATURE WRITER

It's hard enough deciding what to give your loved ones, let alone how much you should tip all of the service people in your life.

"Tips stands for 'To insure proper service,'" explains etiquette expert Carly Drum of Drum Associates. "So if the person is providing you with proper or above average service, you should be thanking them and rewarding them."

But if the Elmo T.M.X. for your tot and gaming system for your teen are already hurting your wallet, there are other ways to show your appreciation.

"If you are unable to do what the going rate would dictate, put some thought behind the gesture and think outside the box," says Samantha von Sperling, who owns Polished Social Image Consultants.

"You can bake some cookies, put them in little plastic bags, tie big silk ribbons around them and write a little note to say thank you."

Can't decide whether your doorman gets cookies or cash, or if your baby-sitter deserves more than your hairdresser? We asked New York experts what the standards are this holiday season.

### BABY-SITTER

**VON SPERLING:** If this is a weekly affair, or more than once a week, the equivalent of an evening sitting is appropriate. If it's a once-in-a-while thing, \$20 is appropriate.

**DRUM:** This is one of the areas where you always want to be generous rather than cheap. For someone who is a regular, a nice thoughtful gift as well as one week's salary is appropriate. If it's a baby-sitter that comes once a week, a gift is nice and/or one evening's pay.

### DOORMAN

**VON SPERLING:** \$20. If there are 10 doormen and you were to tip them appropriately, that might take a big chunk out of your Christmas budget. If you go online to a wholesale wine cellar, and you buy three cases at \$5 a bottle, you can give a \$20 gift because you bought it wholesale.

**DRUM:** Definitely give your doorman cash. If there's one, I've been known to give anywhere between \$50 and \$80 because they're doing more work — they're collecting your packages, letting people in for you. If there are multiple doormen, anywhere between \$15-\$30.

### DOG-WALKER

**VON SPERLING:** If you rely on them heavily and they do extra things like take care of your dog while you're away, then take the hourly rate and multiply it by eight hours.

**DRUM:** Minimally, one week's pay. But if you want to get a gift, that's great too — something personal.

### HAIRDRESSER

**VON SPERLING:** If you go to them all the time, they squeeze you in, they'll stay open late for you, then the equivalent of a haircut is the minimum. If you cannot afford that, give something like a bottle of scotch or wine.

**DRUM:** Give them either a gift or cash that's the cost of a haircut. Then I would also take the cut cost and split it among the people who work there often: who wash your hair or help with highlights.