

Despite what you've been told, tipping is not mandatory. Of course, every hotel patron who is ready to check out is made to feel that the maid is a grossly underpaid single mother with eight children and caring for a senile grandfather in a wheelchair. You shouldn't let that possibility ... which could be true ... influence your choice of whether to leave a tip, and if so, how much.

A tip ... the cliché original meaning is To Insure Promptness ... should be based solely on service. Is the room cleaned early each morning? Do you have adequate towels? If you have kids with you, has the maid taken extra steps to make the kids comfortable?



We travel frequently, and for a two- or three-night or more stay, we leave at least two dollars for each night. If the maid has been particularly inefficient, we leave less. At one hotel, we woke up to bedbugs, and we quickly checked out without paying for the room nor tipping. Sorry if she had eight kids and senile grandpa at home, but we were so upset, we just had to flee the fleabag!

On the other hand, if a maid has been particularly good to us, maybe with extra towels, a bunch of flowers or some extra candy on the pillows in the evening, we tip three dollars a night or more. On several occasions, we were bumped up to a suite in a very nice hotel. We left the maid five dollars for each night.