



*Dear Abby*

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. It is the most popular and widely syndicated column in the world -- known for its uncommon common sense and youthful perspective.

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## HAIRDRESSERS GET CLIPPED BY CLIENTS WHO DON'T TIP

DEAR ABBY: I'm writing in response to "Curly in Chesterfield, Mo.," who asked for guidelines on tipping hairdressers who rent their stations and keep 100 percent of the fees they charge. "Curly" was of the opinion that tipping is only for people who work on commission.

You correctly advised her to ask her hairdresser if tips are accepted -- and advised her that the usual amount is 15 to 20 percent of the bill.

Speaking as a hairstylist for the last 20 years, I cannot believe the number of people who don't know how to tip. Whether the stylist is an owner, manager or just a hairstylist, that person is still giving the customer a service. Many of my clients give more than that, and some still give nothing.

People should remember that when they give a tip, they are saying, "Thank you." -- STYLIST IN WISCONSIN


DEAR STYLIST: Not everyone agrees. Read on:


DEAR ABBY: I disagree with your reply to "Curly." My hairdresser rents her station from the salon owner. She sets her own prices and hours. I typically pay her \$100 for a cut, style and highlights, which takes her about 2 1/2 hours. The woman makes more per hour than I do, at a business she basically owns!

I only tip people who work for someone and earn minimum wage. I don't tip restaurant owners, and they don't expect it. They want my return business. --

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RENE IN SAN PEDRO

DEAR RENE: And that's your privilege. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: I am a self-employed hairstylist, and I'd like to respond to "Curly." We may take home 100 percent of our fees, but after we pay for rent, supplies, taxes and the salary of our shampoo girls, we keep only about 50 percent of what we make. I would love not to depend on tips, but in the town where I live, hairstylists can't command large fees. I am very grateful for my clients' generosity. -- M. IN VIRGINIA

DEAR M.: You are not the only person who wanted to explain the financial facts of life regarding the beauty business. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: Thank you so much for your response to "Curly." Customers think that because we pay rent, we pocket all our income. Wrong! People don't realize that on top of the rent we pay, we must also purchase all of our own tools, chemicals and products. Our scissors alone cost at least \$150 -- most of the time more. When they need sharpening, it costs \$25. We have no benefits. We must pay for 100 percent of our insurance. If our kids get sick and we can't work -- we don't get paid. We are considered self-employed, so we pay all of our Social Security. (When you are employed by someone else, the employer pays half.) When a customer stands us up, we are not only out the money, but we are also out the time we allocated for that customer.

It is amazing to me how those who have the most money are the stingiest tippers -- and the people who have little are so generous! I feel that when you treat customers with love and cater to their needs, a tip is their response to how well we are doing our job. -- MISS TRESS IN KANKAKEE, ILL.

DEAR MISS TRESS: And so do I.

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Angeles, CA 90069.

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