

Have a Little Patience

Superheroes we ain't.

No one likes standing in line. It's inconvenient and killer on the feet and legs. But it's something we all have to do—unless you're King or Queen Shit and are above the rest of us peons...in which case I give you the single digit salute; “you ain't more speshul than me.”

During a store's peak business hours, you may wait in line a little longer than normal. But no matter how long you wait in line at a store like mine, I can guarantee your checkout time will *still* be faster than waiting in line at Wal-Mart.

In smaller stores, there is not always going to be a cashier just waiting for you. They usually have other things they're doing while keeping an eye on the register. When they see you're ready to check out, they're supposed to drop what they're doing and tend to you immediately. If they are in plain sight and you know they saw you and they still aren't helping you, it is your right to get angry and inform the Manager of these shenanigans.

However, it is *not* okay to transform into Mr. or Mrs. Attitude if you've only waited ten seconds, or even thirty.

When I was a cashier and I had another project to work on while keeping an eye on the register, if the register was not in plain sight, I would count to 30, step out into a main aisle to check the register, and if no one was there waiting to check out, I would go back to whatever I was working on, and wait another 30 seconds. I think 30 seconds is reasonable.

It's not always guaranteed though. If a cashier is struggling with something—putting out some heavy stock, or setting up a display—they may have to wait a little longer than 30 seconds to check on their register due to the possibility of being crushed by a huge box of Halloween candy that they must lift above their heads to put on the shelf. Some of us have noodle arms and no Sidekicks to help us in our superhero achievements.

If you've been waiting a while and you think someone has abandoned their post, feel free to have a look around, but **do not do the following** (it annoys us to the point of wanting to throw a box of macaroni at your head):

- Pound on the counter while saying “yoo hoo!”
- Whistle like you’re calling a dog.
- Start coughing loudly like you’re not being impatient; you just have a bad cold—yeah right.

And, unless you have waited a fairly long time—like 45 seconds to a minute or more—**do not** walk away from the register. *Stay at the register*; most of the time you will receive faster service this way. Think about it, if the cashier is counting to a certain number in her head and peeking at the register every half minute or so, if you’re not there, she’s not going to know to come up there. Think she’ll see your stuff on the counter and assume you’re ready to check out?

Think again.

First of all, depending on her view of the register, she might not be able to see your things there, ready to be rung up—especially if she’s short

Second, we get a lot—and I mean a lot—of annoying people who like to use our checkout counter as their shopping cart. Don't ever do this, even if the cashier says it's okay; she's probably lying because she's been "programmed" to give into anything reasonable. In her mind, though, she's thinking you're a lazy bastard.

It's inconvenient to the people who *are* ready to check out; they don't want to have to move your stuff out of the way. Not only that, but the cashier won't know where theirs ends and yours begins if there's no divider (my store doesn't have dividers at all because the counter is so small), and if the customer isn't paying attention to what's being rung up.

Stop being lazy and get a shopping cart or a carrying basket.

Maybe My Evil Glare and Very Angry Hand on My Hip Will Bully You into Helping Me

When you make it up to the register and realize there's not a cashier, be patient.

After working at my store for almost two years, I demoted myself to a stocker. I only worked two days a week, on average about ten hours (five hours each day). I was putting out some food one day and the rolltainer I was unloading sat in the middle of a main aisle where you could look towards the front of the store and see the first cash register.

I was doing my thing, not even really paying attention to the cash register area because, hey, it wasn't my problem. I knew a customer was up there waiting, but I figured the cashier lady was on her way to ring up the customer. I continued with my work, not paying attention. As I grabbed another box from the rolltainer, I happened to look up at the register again. And there stood a woman with an attitude-hand on her hip, looking directly at me with squinty eyes of rage.

Whoa! What the hell, lady? Did someone piss in your orange juice this morning? Seriously, the look she was giving me silently said she wished to kill

me...or at least bash my head mercilessly into the floor until I bled.

Evil worker! Evil! How dare you work on those boxes instead of rushing to my aid—I've waited twenty seconds!

With fear-filled eyes, I hollered the name of the cashier to let her know she now had a line of three people waiting to be checked out.

Oh, the joys of only being a stocker—I didn't even have to look at that evil lady after that, much less deal with her crummy attitude.

Moral of the story? Don't get all pissy and angry at a worker unless you know they're at fault. It wasn't my job to ring up customers (I'm not a cashier, and even if I was, we're not allowed to run on another cashier's till), therefore she had no right to give me the look of death. Sure, she had a right to be annoyed that she had to wait twenty seconds before her stuff was rung up since she's obviously super important and does not deserve to wait for anything, but she shouldn't have assumed she knew who to shoot her daggers at.

No Line Jumping!

Unless you want to be gut-punched.

Sometimes, while you're waiting in a long line, a new line will open to help with a rush of customers. If this happens, wait for the new cashier to yell something along the lines of "Next!" or "I can help someone!" and **do not**, under *any* circumstances line jump.

If a new lane opens, always see if the person ahead of you wants to go to that lane. He was waiting first. Just because a new line opened doesn't mean you should be able to cut in front of him. If he says "go ahead" then by all means, rush like they're giving away free Dr. Pepper, but do not assume that it's okay to go before him.

And don't be a "sneaky jumper" either. These people are the ones who hang around by the register, acting like they're still shopping until they see a new cashier open up her lane. Then, all of a sudden, their love for sluggish browsing disappears and they're moving like a cheetah after wounded prey towards the new register.

On the same note of a new lane opening up: don't start whining to the current cashier and asking if

there's "anyone to help check out" if there's only two or three people in line (unless each person ahead of you has a cart-full).

You're not a speshul snowflake, and the other employees usually have something else they're doing—there's a reason they're only called "back up cashiers."

Stand IN Line; Not to the Side

D'oh! Can't reach ya over there LOL

There's a reason it's a line. Staying in line helps keep order and breaks down confusion as to who is next. Do not stand off to the side and then scoff and get angry if someone doesn't realize you're in line and tries to go before you.



Need Something? Wait Your Turn

I'm helping this guy out...

There have been so many times when I'm ringing up a customer, have another in line, and someone else decides to push their way in to ask me for something, then when I just give directions instead of showing them where the item is at, they give me a look of disgust "liek omg! You should drop what you're doing and ignore that less-than-speshul-person to help me, a beautiful snowflake, out!"

Seriously, folks. Get over yourselves and wait your turn.

Politeness and Its Many Fails

“Hello, customer!”

We love it when we give you a greeting upon your arrival and you, not only don't respond, but give us a look resembling this:



scoff!

“Eff off, corporate slave!”

Geez, who farted in your mouth?

By the way, saying we “love it” when you do this, is sarcasm. We hate it. We want to stab you with an umbrella when you do this.

Don't worry too much, though; once you're out of earshot we usually add a subtle “asshole” to your greeting.

Rage!

Anger can strike at any time.

You're already having a bad day. You stubbed your toe, the shower water ran cold after only three minutes, and your dog peed on the carpet. We all have bad days, and we sympathize.

But don't blame us. And don't get **rage-tastic** right off the bat when something goes wrong. Analyze the situation first and kindly explain your problem. Most of the time, your concerns can be fixed in little or no time, or at the very least explained.

For example, if something rings up a different price—higher—than what you saw on a sign, kindly tell the cashier this. Don't start yelling "That was only supposed to be 1.50! Why's it ringing up at 1.75? You're trying to pull one over on me aren't you?!"

No, we are not "trying to pull one over on you." The cashiers couldn't care less what you pay for something. Whether you pay 1.50 or 1.75 doesn't mean jack doodie to them; they get paid the same amount either way—it's not like they're on commission, and even they are and are just scanning the items and not punching in prices, odds are they

have no control over how much the item rings up—so there's no reason for them to “charge you more.”

We do not set the prices. No one in a corporate store sets prices, not even the manager, and unless given special directions, we are not allowed to change the price to suit you or our self. Prices are all done and connected to the main corporate office, which could be states away.

Merchandise Left Behind

Don't you love your gallon of milk? Why don't you take it with you?

I have had a number of people be nice as pie at the register and then call the store a half hour later, whining with the attitude of a spoiled, fifteen-year-old girl who didn't get her way, about not getting all their stuff home.

It happens at least once a day: *someone* will leave an item or a sack behind. Usually we notice in time to go runnin,' huffin' and puffin' out the door after them just to scare the crap out of them when we yell “Hey Mister! You forgot a bag!” They're usually

grateful if you can catch them in the parking lot or before they make it out the door.

But Deity forbid they have to drive *back* to get something.

It *is* annoying to get home and realize you left behind your box of Twinkies. Having to drive all the way back and waste gas (especially in today's economy) is a pain in the bum. But, it is *not* always the cashier's fault, and therefore you shouldn't be a grump upon your return to claim your favorite, left behind snack.

Here are some ways to avoid leaving a bag behind:

- Use your common sense: if you buy a gallon of milk and two liter bottles of green tea, you should realize it's not all going to fit in one bag. So don't get annoyed when you're in such a hurry you just grab one bag and leave only to get home and realize you forgot your milk.

- Check all bag slots to make sure there aren't any more bags with your purchased items in them.

- Ask a cashier if you got all of them. It's not always her job to make sure you do have all them (it's polite and common courtesy on her part, but it's still not her responsibility to make sure you get everything; it's your crap, remember?), but she will gladly tell you if you ask.

Demon Spawn

They're yours, not ours (thank God)

Your children are only cute to you. Okay, that's not entirely true. A lot of kids are adorable. But those "annoying" things they do, *that's* only cute to you.

All parents should teach their children how to behave in public. And if their child is too bullheaded to be taught and acts out in a public place, then it's the parents' responsibility to take the child out of the store. If there are two parents with the child, this should be done immediately by one parent while the other continues the shopping. If you're a single parent or the only one with the child at the time, please hurry through your shopping to get the belligerent child out of the store ASAP.

You may be used to the nails-on-a-blackboard screeching your child does and it no longer bothers you to hear it because you've mastered the "drowning out" skill, but other customers and the stores' employees have not. A screaming child, especially a stranger's child, is enough to make anyone go temporarily insane. Don't be surprised if you start getting shot at by rubber bands if you're just browsing

along while little Timmy screams at the top of his lungs. Either hurry the **eff** up, or take that kid to the car till he calms down.

Here are some other pet peeves that people let their kids get away with:

- **Running.** *Do not* let your kid run around the store like a bat out of hell. Ever. It's annoying to other shoppers, *and dangerous*. We are always busy (or we're supposed to be), setting up displays or stocking shelves, or doing something else. A lot of the time, when wheeling out merchandise to stock, we blindly go around corners because of how tall the containment carts are. If we're pushing a heavy **rolltainer** that's taller than we are, do you think we're going to see your kid running around like a chicken on speed? The parents who let their kids do this are always the ones quickest to threaten a law suit when their kid gets hurt, too. It's ridiculous. You can't blame someone else for *you* not watching your kid. And *never* is it the employees' responsibility to watch your child. We are *not* baby-sitters.

- **Make a Mess.** Too many people just let their kids go wild without any respect for the place of business, its employees, and other customers. Kids go to the toy aisle and play with every single toy, moving it from place to place, so that by the time they leave, the shelves are wrecked and there are plastic dinosaurs and play balls all over the floor. Don't be this kind of parent. Supervise, clean up any messes they make, and keep your kid with you at all times (they're less likely to be kidnapped if you keep them with you, too).

I especially love it when someone's letting their kid play with everything until they hear or see an employee approaching. Then it's "Amy, stop playing with that!" but they still don't do anything about it; they just continue browsing. Little Amy continues touching everything and throwing stuff on the floor. "Honey, stop it!" the mother says, glancing at me from the corner of her eye....

All words, no action (take the kid's hand away, lady and *make* her stop!).

Then when I leave, she doesn't say anything else to sweet little Amy, and when I return half an hour later, there's a mess.

- **Keep Them Away from the Register.** Too many times have I had to void something that was rung up twice due to someone's demon spawn trying to ring something up. Voids go against us, so yes, it is a big deal when they "accidentally" scan something that you're not buying.
 - **Keep them on your side of the counter.** Don't let your kid wander into my area. They're just in the way if they do this. I'm trying to speedily ring you up and bag your merchandise, I can't do that if I have to make sure I don't trip over a mini-you every ten seconds.

- **Bounce Balls in the Store.** To me, this is common sense; a no-brainer. Letting children bounce balls in a store is just plain stupid. There are all kinds of breakables in the store,

not to mention, *people*—other customers—who wouldn't appreciate being hit with a ball while they're trying to shop. Would you allow your children to do this in *your* home? Or better yet, someone else's home, where there are glass windows, lights, lamps, other breakables?

Yet, parents let their kids do this all the freakin' time. They browse and shop like morons while their children toss basketballs and bouncy balls eight feet into the air. And then, if something *does* break, the parent ignores it, or brings it up to the cashier and says "I found this like this" so they don't have to pay for their mistake.

We might go through the store and yell "please don't play with our balls!" but that would sound a little funny....



Remember, they're *your* kids—even if not biologically and you're just baby-sitting—they came in with *you*, they're *your* responsibility.

If your child breaks something, due to your lack of teaching him discipline and respect in a public place, and you get caught by an employee, don't get angry when you're asked to pay for the damages.

You have the right to not discipline your child and “let them express them self” (though, personally, I think that's a load of bull dookie—children need discipline, just don't confuse discipline with abuse), but you also have to be prepared to pay the consequences of letting your child do whatever he wants.