

Sliding Your Card

It's not rocket science.

How Do I Do This Again?

Most places have that nifty little machine that lets you slide your card at the end of your transaction rather than give it to the cashier to do. It's annoyingly hilarious when people are unfamiliar with them.

To me, it's simple to figure out how to slide a card through any machine. Why? Because usually there are instructions on the side of the machine that tells you which way to hold your card. Yet people slide them backwards. Doing it wrong the first time is understandable. But so many people will continue sliding the card the exact same way, rather than turning it around and trying the other way, even though their way is obviously not working.

Over. And over.

Read instructions. It makes your time at the checkout shorter and easier on everyone. If you can't find the instructions, ask the cashier for help. Though she's laughing at you on the inside, she's happy to help.

No, Don't Slide It Yet!

Always ask the cashier if it's okay to slide the card before she's done ringing everything up. Getting in a hurry and sliding your card in the middle of a scan could lock up the system and the result will be you waiting while the cashier calls a manager up to reset the system, thus making your check-out time longer. You'll probably get annoyed looks from other customers behind you, too.

Bank Card or Food Stamp Card?

“Ah crap! You didn't tell me it was EBT! Now you have to do it all over, d'oh!”

Always let the cashier know if you're using a food stamp/EBT card. If you're embarrassed to announce this in the presence of other customers, make sure the cashier is looking at you and discreetly show her the front of your card.

Some (or maybe most) stores have to push a separate key when a customer is using a food card. So many people fail to tell the cashier they're using a

card other than a credit or debit and the cashier ends up pushing the wrong button because, hey she doesn't know—she can't read your mind. This results in the computer denying the card and the cashier having to tell you she didn't know that it was an EBT card and to please slide it again, which could end up being more embarrassing for you.

Never Assume

You know what assuming does, right?

Always make sure the store you're shopping at accepts the payment method you plan to use, or else have a backup plan. So many people just assume every store will take their credit or debit card and it turns out the store accepts every card *except* the one they're trying to use.

The customer has no other form of payment and the transaction must be cancelled, the customer walks out the door either angry or embarrassed and the employees have to put away everything the customer was going to buy. Either ask upon arrival what methods of payment the store accepts, or carry

backup cash on you to avoid embarrassment, impatience (from other customers), and extra voids for the store.

We are Not a Bank

Especially not yours, you speshul, speshul **snowflake**.

You gotta love the people who come into a store expecting to receive bank-like services. It's okay to ask for a dollar in quarters, or maybe get two fives back instead of a ten—though sometimes some stores *can't* do this because they have to keep a certain amount of fives and ones in their drawer. Their change fund may be nearly depleted, and if the banks are closed for the day, there's no way for them to get more.

However, it's *not* okay to go into a store and ask for change for a hundred dollar bill, a roll of quarters, or anything else extreme. It's especially not okay to do this to a small store like a bread store, convenience store, or dollar store.

Most stores have a certain amount of change they have to keep in their tills (at my store it was

\$100 in fives, ones, and coins per till), and a set amount in the safe. Every now and then we'd get customers who would come in asking for extreme amounts of change, like 40 dollars in fives, or a roll of quarters (that's ten dollars in quarters).

They didn't seem to understand that we couldn't spare that much at a time.

The funny thing was, there was a bank just down the road from us, so we often asked ourselves, "why didn't they just go there?"

You're probably thinking the same thing on our part. "Well, why's it so hard for *you* to go to the bank and get change to replace what you gave the customer? Aren't they more important?"

First of all, why should we have to do that? It's *their* money; *they* need the change. It's not our job to run personal errands for the people who come into our store. Half the time, the people asking for change weren't even buying anything from us.

Second, we have a lot to do, and we've already gone to the bank once today and stocked up on change we knew we would need to make it through the day.

We can't spare an extra half hour to get change that we shouldn't *have* to get. We barely have enough time to get everything done that we're supposed to anyway; adding a second (and unnecessary) trip to the bank is not something we should have to do.

Speaking of Money....

With all kinds of customers come all forms of money. By that I mean the way money is presented to us.

It's a well known fact that money is one of the dirtiest things on the planet. It's exposed to anything and everything, and then transferred from person to person.

People do the weirdest things with money. I know one guy who used to measure the diameter of a certain part of his body by how many dollar bills he could get wrapped around "it" lengthwise....



Keep It Dry

Why is it wet?!

You have no idea how disgusting it is (or maybe you do if you've ever worked in retail) to give a customer a total and have them hand you *damp* bills.

shudder

You're **weirded out** at first (*why the heck is this money wet?!*) and then several possible reasons float into your mind, making you gag:

- They wanted to see how many bills they could fit into their germ-ridden mouth.
- They used them to catch baby-batter.
- They stored the bills between their butt cheeks.
- Oh GOD! It's sweat! It's sweat, it's sweat!

You comfort yourself by saying "they accidentally washed it, and it just hasn't dried; they washed it, they washed it...please God, let it be that they washed it!"

But you know that just isn't the case when it was a large, sweaty woman who produced a wad of cash from in between her ginormous breasts.

Please, store the cash in a wallet like a normal human being. And don't use it for anything other than paying for things.

Don't Hold Up the Line

Can we move this train along, please?

There are some people (especially the elderly) who always want to use exact change when paying for something.

This is fine. As long as you're fast, and there's not a long line behind you. Heck, you don't even have to be fast if there isn't a line; you can be slow as molasses if you're the only one there.

Be considerate. Other people have places they need to be, too. They don't want to wait while you hunt for one last penny in the bottom of your circus-tent purse. This doesn't make you a bad customer, *per se*...just don't do it if you don't want to get annoyed looks from the people behind you.

Especially don't do this if, while you're digging out change, you laugh and say "I *hate* it when people dig around for change, just trying to find one more

penny!” (I actually had a woman do this, and there was a line behind her)

If ya hate it, why are you doing it, ya hypocrite? It's like admitting you're being an ass somehow makes you *less* of an ass. That's not how it works, sunshine. Knowing you're being inconsiderate and annoying makes it worse that you're doing it.

And the person behind you wants to kick you in the back of the knee.

Wait! I Need One More Thing!

Oh sure, take your time! These people have nowhere else to be.

There's people who make you wait while they dig out change from their purse or pocket, and then there's people who think they're entitled to hold up the line while they go back to get “just one more thing.”

Be cautious if you decide you want to risk being a rude customer by doing this.

The only time it's acceptable to run back to get something you forgot is when there's no one else waiting in line. If there's even one person behind you, do not ever do this.

Finish the transaction you're on and *then* go back and get what you forgot, even if that means you have to wait in line again to pay for it. Other people shouldn't have to wait longer because *you* forgot something. *You* forgot it; *you* can be the one to wait in line again.

If you *do* decide to go back for something else, do *not* take your time. The cashier has other things to do even if there's no one else waiting in line (not to mention, another customer could walk up after you leave and then they're stuck waiting for you, too). If you're going back for something else, know exactly where it is and hurry up. Do not stop to look at other things, do not slump along and drag your feet. *Hurry up.*

Some stores are able to pause your transaction in case you need to go back for something else. They pause the order and are able to ring up other customers, but not every store can do this, especially not the smaller ones (mine was never able to do this).

Ask if the cashier is able to pause your transaction, and if she can't be considerate and finish paying for what you have already and make a

separate purchase for the item(s) you forgot.

Also, if the cashier *can* pause your transaction, do not expect to be able to line-jump when you return. I'll say it again: other people should not have to wait for you. So don't get all teed off if the cashier tells you have to wait while she finishes up the other people's transactions.

Merchandise

The stuff you buy, yo.

Many scenarios fall into this category. Merchandise placement; inventory; prices....

Some people get all uppity about merchandise, especially when it's a misplaced item and they think it's supposed to be a different price than what it rings up as.

Prices: Use Your Common Sense

Do you have it?

It amazes me that a person will stand at the register and argue a price difference of ten cents when it means they'll be paying that much more for an item they think is supposed to be cheaper. Yet, something that rings up ten cents *less* than what they thought is just fine and dandy.

People always have common sense when it means they *think* they'll be paying less.

For example, they see a bottle of Windex sitting on a shelf labeled \$1.00. It's the *only* bottle of

Windex, and it's surrounded by several bottles of the generic brand of window cleaner.

This is where they lack common sense. If their common sense had been working, it would have set off an alarm and let them know that Windex is *never* \$1.00 unless it's on sale (and a sale that big would be advertised; not just given a new price label), and that with the other brands of window cleaner there, it was obvious the Windex was in the wrong spot.

But, oh no. Their common sense abandons them. They see a mistake and want to take advantage of it in order to save a couple bucks.

At my store, you won't get it for that price when it's an obvious mistake unless...wait, I can't tell you our secrets! Silly me!

In another scenario, common sense drowns the customer. They see a short pillar candle that they know is usually \$1.50 sitting on a shelf with a \$6.00 label beneath it.

"That can't be right!" Common Sense screams in a super-hero voice. And the customer listens. "No, no, that isn't right. This must be a mistake."

Never ever will a person assume \$6.00 is the right price for that short pillar candle. But they will assume \$1.00 is correct for a standard bottle of Windex even though just about everyone knows Windex isn't that cheap.

If an item rings up less than what a customer thought, they won't say a word. But Heaven forbid if something rings up *more* than what they thought. Even if it's just ten cents more, a customer will, at the very least, give what they think is a witty remark about the store "trying to cheat everybody."

At the most, they'll throw a tantrum and demand you give it to them for the price displayed. They will hold up the line, making you wait for a manager, then stomp down the aisle they got the item from, rudely point out the price tag, and huff and puff all the way back to the register with a line that has grown 11 feet. All for ten cents.

Don't Blame Us for the 25 Cent Increase!

We hate it, too. But we don't set the prices.

It's a bad economy. Prices teeter-totter. Mostly they go up. Sure, it's frustrating—we're all ticked about it—but it's beyond most of our control. Don't get mad and blame the employees for price changes.

Really, we have nothing to do with them. We just keep the store clean, in stock, and take care of you guys. Not even the managers can control core prices of inventory.

Thanks, Grandma

We once had a lady get angry because Coke went up 15 cents. She was griping at the cashier and asking, "Why do you keep raising the prices?"

"Well, we have no control over that, ma'am. That's Coke raising the prices," the cashier told her.

The woman kept complaining as she was reaching into her purse, blaming the cashier for the price increase, so finally the cashier kind of laughed and said, "Ma'am, it's not my fault."

The woman slammed her billfold into her purse and grumbled, "Of course it's not your fault, it's *never anybody's* fault!"

She said something more about how she hated our state and stomped out the door.

LOL, wut?



