

# Brilliant uses for everyday things

**It's been a bad day. First you dropped your mobile in the pool and now the DVD you wanted to watch is scratched. But don't worry, you needn't buy new ones. You can fix them with everyday things you already have at home! Read on for some good DIY tips from the internet.**



Mobile phones make our lives easier, but it's so easy to lose them, or **drop** them, worst of all, into water. If that happens to you, you may think the phone is ruined. In fact, you don't have to throw it away. Reader's Digest says all you have to do is to take the battery out and put the phone in a bowl of rice overnight. You must use uncooked rice, and it will absorb all of the water. Next morning put the battery back, and the phone will work again.



Another problem with mobile phones is that you probably have a lot of great music on yours, but if you're with a group of friends and you all want to listen, you need to **plug it into** a speaker, and you may not have one at hand. Or do you? Next time, try this easy trick from Real Simple magazine. Put the phone into a bowl and press 'play'. The bowl will **amplify** the sound from your mobile's speakers. Now everyone can hear the music! A jar or glass will also work if you don't have a bowl.



In addition to rice, a potato can also make a great DIY tool. Here's an example. The other day I was trying to kill a fly that was buzzing around a ceiling light and the worst happened: I missed the fly but broke the light bulb. Now it can be very difficult to remove a broken bulb, and of course, you mustn't ever do it with bare hands. Luckily, there's another way. According to the Martha Stewart website, simply cut a potato in half, press the potato into the remains of the bulb, then **twist** and **remove** it. Remember you must switch off the light first.

Another useful DIY tool is a banana. Check out this idea from Apartment Therapy. If you have a scratched DVD that won't play, **rub** the inside of a banana skin over the scratch. Then **polish** the DVD with a soft cloth and – voila! – problem solved. This trick works because the waxy substance in the banana skin fills in the scratch. For deep scratches, you should rub some toothpaste in first.





Even mayonnaise has surprising uses. Everyone knows that you shouldn't put a wet glass on a wooden table, because it will probably leave an ugly mark on the wood. But sometimes you forget. Don't worry, again according to Apartment Therapy, just rub some mayonnaise into the mark and leave it for 15 minutes or longer. **Wipe** clean, and the mark will be gone. For best results, you should do this as soon as possible after the mark is made.

# The 7 worst customer service crimes

**Mary Portas – broadcaster, writer, and shopping expert – names some of the most irritating aspects of shopping...**



## 1 Keeping too few (1) checkouts open

So many stores are guilty of this. The worst are the supermarkets. Then they ring the bell to get a new **(2) cashier** from out the back, and leave their finger on the bell, making a really irritating noise.

## 2

Cashiers at supermarket checkouts now don't even say the final price – you're supposed to see it on the **(3) till**. They've lost basic communication skills. Even worse is when they dump the **(4) receipt** and the change into your hand in one lump. Horrible.

## 3

At the newsagent's, you go to the **(5) counter** to buy a newspaper and they offer to sell you a huge chocolate bar for £1, as well. A massive bar of chocolate at 7.30 in the morning? How about just smiling and saying good morning?



4

There's a long queue to try things on, but they say, 'You can only take in four items'. You should be able to take a big armful in. And there's nowhere to hang your clothes, so you have to put them on the floor. Except the floors are filthy.

5

Again, many fashion stores are guilty of this. The **(6) rails** are so full of clothes that you can't even see the sizes. You have to pull the **(7) hangers** apart to look in, then they fall onto the floor.

6

I hate it when assistants stand next to the till gossiping to each other. It's all too common in department stores, hairdressers, and coffee shops. All you want to do is pay, but it's as if you're invisible.

7

This is why I hate beauty counters. You walk through the ground floor of many department stores and a woman runs after you and sprays you with perfume, asking, 'Could I just interest you in...?' Her face is usually orange, with eyebrows drawn on with a pencil. It says, 'You too could look like me'. You can't be serious! Why would I want to look like you? No, thanks!

Adapted from The Daily Telegraph

# Michel Roux's Services

## From school dropouts to top waiters



We've seen plenty of cookery competitions where amateur chefs compete hoping to become professionals, but BBC2's **Service**, a programme from chef Michel Roux, one of the judges on BBC's **Masterchef**, focuses on another side of restaurants. Over eight episodes, eight young people with no restaurant experience at all are taught the skills to become top waiters and waitresses. Rather than having competitors voted off each week, after the eight weeks two winners are chosen to receive six-month scholarships with the Academy of Food & Wine Service.

'Great service is as important as great food,' says Roux, who owns several well-known restaurants, including Le Gavroche, a two-Michelin star restaurant in London. 'If the food at one of my restaurants was OK, but the service was brilliant, the customers would still come back. But I'd never see them again if the service was rubbish, even though the food was brilliant.'

'There is a great career to be had in restaurant service,' says Roux. 'Head waiters can earn as much as a top chef. And, like chefs, their skills can take them all over the world.'



Roux's trainees include Brooke Arnold, 18, who has previously worked for McDonald's, Nikkita Palphreyman, 19, a single mother, and Niki Bedson, 22, an unemployed history graduate. 24-year-old James Marvin used to work in sales, and Danielle Menagh, 19, was a hairdresser. 'Before the show I'd never drunk wine,' she says.

The most unlikely trainee is 21-year-old Ashley Flay. 'I left school at 14,' he says. 'Before the show, I'd never eaten in a place which had table service.'

Adapted from the Daily Mail