Tea Under 10p a Cup

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Under-10p tea, in summary:** The everyday workhorse tier, Yorkshire, Tetley, PG Tips and supermarket own-label in big boxes. Buy the largest pack you can store and the per-cup cost drops below 8p. Brands, value maths and brewing below.

Last reviewed by the teas.co.uk team in May 2026.

Tea under 10p per cup is the everyday workhorse category: Yorkshire Tea, Tetley, PG Tips and Twinings English Breakfast in 240/440/600-bag boxes. The per-cup price drops below 8p once you buy the bigger boxes. It is the single most cost-effective hot drink in the UK, and the kettle is on right now in millions of homes because of it.

The under-10p reality

Most British tea drinking happens at this price point. The tea-bag household drinks 4-6 cups daily; the budget matters, and the routine matters even more. The under 10p category exists because mass market British tea really is cheap when bought in volume, and quality at this tier has been rising steadily for two decades.

Per cup, this category typically lands at 6-9p. The big-box format is the lever: a 240-bag Yorkshire Tea pack is dramatically cheaper per cup than the 80-bag pack, and the tea inside is identical.

The brands at this price

Yorkshire Tea

Hard Water and standard variants. The 240-bag and 480-bag boxes deliver around 7-8p per cup. The most-loved British everyday tea by sales and by survey. Yorkshire Tea full range.

Tetley

Original, Decaf, Earl Grey, Green. The 240/440/600-bag boxes go below 8p per cup. Tetley Original is the second most popular British tea by volume. Tetley range.

PG Tips

Original Pyramid bags. The bigger boxes deliver 7-9p per cup. The third pillar of mass-market British black tea. PG Tips range.

Twinings English Breakfast

The premium-mainstream option that still lands under 10p in the 100/200-bag formats.

Clipper Everyday

Organic and Fairtrade. Slightly dearer, but lands at 8-10p per cup in the larger packs.

Co-op 99 Tea, Sainsbury's Red Label, Tesco Everyday

Supermarket own-label. Often 5-7p per cup. The lowest tier; quality varies but is acceptable for daily kettle work.

Why per-cup price is the right metric

Tea is not bought one bag at a time. A household buys a 240-bag box and works through it over a month or so, and the headline price (around £8 for 240 bags) hides the real per-cup cost (a few pence before milk and energy). Comparing by pack price actively misleads: a 40-bag carton at £2.50 (6p a cup) looks cheaper on the shelf than an 80-bag at £3.50 (4p a cup), but the bigger pack is the better buy. The under-10p ceiling covers the large majority of UK tea volume; above it you move into mainstream-premium (10-20p: Twinings core, Pukka standard), specialty (20-50p), and boutique (50p+, single-estate Darjeeling and fine Chinese teas). This is the daily-drinker zone, and most mass-market brands sit within a penny or two of each other at the same pack scale, so the choice here is really about taste, not price.

How to maximise the value

1. Buy the biggest box you will get through in 6-8 weeks. Bigger means cheaper per cup.
2. Store it airtight; open boxes lose freshness within a couple of months.
3. Brew properly, fresh boiling water and a 3-4 minute steep, to get full value from the tea.
4. One bag per cup; do not double-bag unless you are brewing in a pot.
5. For a pot of 2-3 cups, two bags is plenty.
6. Watch for supermarket multi-buys (3 for £6 and similar); stocking up around these can cut household tea spend noticeably over a year.

Quality at this tier

Mass-market British tea is good. The blends are tasted by professional blenders, the leaf grades are consistent, and the brewing is reliable. The major brands use CTC (cut-tear-curl) leaf, mostly Kenyan and Assam, which brews fast, gives strong colour in 1-2 minutes and takes milk well, exactly what the British daily cup needs. What it lacks is the delicate top notes of a whole-leaf single origin, but it is not trying to compete there. The value is real: a household drinking 4 cups a day gets through about 1,460 cups a year, which at 8p a cup is roughly £117; the same routine on a 30p premium tea would be over £400. For the morning kettle, this tier is well engineered for the job.

How to brew under-10p tea well

Most of these teas are blended for strong, milky brewing. Use 95-100C water, brew 2-4 minutes, and add milk to taste. The biggest lever on cup quality is freshly drawn cold water (not reboiled, not bottled), a properly hot pour, and a brief firm press of the bag against the side of the mug before lifting it out, which draws out the last of the flavour. Avoid water under 90C (weak extraction), steeping past six minutes (bitter from tannin), and microwaving water (uneven and weak).

Pairing it with milk and biscuits

Yorkshire Tea or Tetley, a splash of whole milk and a McVitie's Digestive is one of the great cheap pleasures of British life, and the under-10p category exists for exactly this. More on tea and biscuit pairings.

FAQ

Cheapest tea per cup? The bigger boxes of Yorkshire, Tetley and PG Tips, around 7-8p per cup.

Is cheap tea bad tea? No. Mass-market British tea is well engineered for the everyday cup.

How many cups per box? A 240-bag box lasts a two-cup-a-day household about four months.

Decaf at this price? Yes. Tetley Decaf, Yorkshire Decaf and Clipper Organic Decaf all sit in this tier.

Loose leaf under 10p? Generally no; loose leaf usually sits above 10p per cup, so this category is essentially tea bags.

Quick reference: Tea under 10p per cup

Field	Detail
What qualifies	Per-cup cost of 10p or less at standard pack sizes; covers value and mainstream-premium tiers
Typical brands	PG Tips, Tetley, Typhoo, Yorkshire Tea, Twinings Everyday, supermarket own-label
Typical types	CTC black tea (Kenyan and Assam blends), bagged English Breakfast, supermarket green tea bags
Best pack scale	80-bag or 240-bag boxes; multi-buy supermarket promotions
Per-cup target	2-10p depending on brand, pack size, and current promotion
Daily-drinking value	Real value at this tier; how a pack performs in the cup depends more on technique than brand
Where it falls short	Specialty single-origin, premium green, white tea, oolong, fine herbal infusions
UK price band	Approximately £1.50 to £4.00 per 80-bag pack across the value-and-mainstream tier

Curator's note: the under-10p category is the spine of British tea drinking. Yorkshire 240-bag at 8p per cup is one of the most cost effective small luxuries available in this country. The maths is well worth doing: daily tea is excellent value next to any other drink. Lee, teas.co.uk, Tunbridge Wells.

FROM THE CURATOR

teas · Under 10p a cup, the brew matters more than the shop. Brew a 10p bag with care and it can beat a premium bag brewed carelessly.

Tea reading

For brand context see the PG Tips, Tetley, Typhoo, and Yorkshire Tea pages. For category context see the black tea fundamentals. For value context see the loose-leaf vs bags pricing.

The bottom line on under-10p tea

The under-10p per-cup tier is where most British tea drinking actually happens, and the value is real if you buy the largest pack scale you can store and brew with proper technique. Worth using as the household everyday; within this band, brand choice comes down to palate rather than quality. Step up to the 15-30p mainstream-premium tier for contemplative or guest moments, not for the morning kettle.

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