Value When Buying Tea

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Tea value, in summary:** The number that matters is per-cup price, not the price on the box. How the value tiers stack up, what actually delivers value, where it quietly disappears, and how to buy well, below.

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

Value in tea is per-cup price, not headline price. A £15 box of 240 Yorkshire Tea bags is 6p a cup; a £4 box of 40 boutique tea is 10p a cup. Per cup is the only metric that matters once you are drinking 3-4 cups a day. Which category delivers the best value depends on your habit.

The per-cup principle

British tea drinking is daily and habitual, so the cost that matters is what you actually pay each time you flip the kettle. Per-cup price folds the headline price, the bags per box, and how much tea you really use into one number you can compare. A £8 box of 80 Twinings English Breakfast works out at 10p a cup; a £15 box of 240 Yorkshire Tea at about 6p a cup. The Yorkshire is the better value, but only if you will get through 240 bags before they go stale.

The value tiers

Under 5p per cup

Supermarket own-label 240-bag boxes: Co-op 99, Sainsbury's Red Label, Tesco Everyday. Genuinely cheap.

5-8p per cup

Big-box mass market: Yorkshire Tea 240/440, Tetley 440/600, PG Tips 240. The British everyday sweet spot.

8-12p per cup

Smaller boxes of mass market; Twinings English Breakfast; Clipper Organic; Tetley Decaf. Still excellent value.

12-20p per cup

Premium boxed: Earl Grey, fruit infusions, herbal blends. Pukka Three Mint, Pukka Three Ginger, Heath & Heather, premium decaf.

20-40p per cup

Specialty single origin: matcha (a tiny scoop per drink), specialty oolong, premium green tea. Higher headline price, but a smaller measure.

40p+ per cup

Luxury: ceremonial-grade matcha (£40-80 for 30g), aged pu-erh, gyokuro. Drunk occasionally, not daily.

What actually delivers value

Big-box mass market

Buy the biggest pack you will get through in 6-8 weeks. Yorkshire 240, Tetley 440, PG Tips 240 are the value champions for daily British drinkers.

Loose leaf you re-infuse

Premium oolongs and pu-erh re-infuse 5-10 times. The headline price looks high, but the per-infusion cost is excellent.

Matcha

£25 for 30g sounds expensive, but each cup uses around 1g. That is 30 cups at roughly 83p each, competitive with takeaway coffee.

Pukka, Twinings, Clipper specialty

10-15p per cup. Higher than mass-market black, but you are drinking a different category, herbal, organic, or specialist.

Subscription value

A monthly subscription delivers consistent value per delivery and avoids the one-off-purchase mental tax. More on subscriptions.

Where value disappears

Tiny boxes

40-bag premium boxes cost more per cup than 80-bag versions of the same tea. Buy bigger.

Stale tea

If you buy a 240-bag box but only drink two cups a week, half of it goes stale before you finish. A smaller box is the better real-world value.

Tea you don't drink

The tea you bought because it sounded interesting and then never reached for is the worst value in your cupboard. Drink what you buy is the underrated value rule.

Paying for a marketing premium

Some boutique brands charge specialty prices for what is essentially mid-tier blended tea. Read the leaf grade and origin before paying premium.

Best value by use case

Daily British tea

Yorkshire Tea 240-bag pack. £15 for 240 cups is about 6p per cup.

Daily green tea

Clipper Green or Twinings Pure Green 80-bag pack. Around 10p per cup.

Earl Grey daily

Twinings Earl Grey 80-bag or 100-bag pack. Around 12p per cup.

Decaf

Tetley Decaf 240-bag pack. Around 7p per cup; mass-market decaf is excellent value.

Herbal

Pukka Three Mint or Three Chamomile, 20-bag pack. Around 12-15p per cup.

Premium loose leaf

Specialist oolong at £8-12/100g gives 20-30 cups, around 30-40p per cup, but with multiple infusions.

Matcha

Mid-grade culinary matcha at £15-20 for 30g gives 30 cups at 50-66p each.

Free shipping threshold

The £35 free-shipping threshold makes larger orders better value. A £20 order pays £4-5 shipping; a £35+ order pays nothing, so the marginal cost of crossing the threshold is recovered immediately.

How to maximise tea-buying value

Three levers move value most: pack scale, multi-buy promotions, and subscription stacking. Buy the largest pack size your storage and consumption rate justifies. Keep an eye out for the routine supermarket 3-for-2 and mix-and-match promotions, and if your brand offers subscribe-and-save discounting (Twinings.co.uk, Pukka, Clipper direct), stack that on top when promotional periods align. The fourth lever is storage: a big mega-box loses its value if half the bags go stale, so only buy what you will drink within a few months in sealed conditions. For a busy household that rarely bites; for a single drinker the smaller pack is sometimes cheaper per cup actually drunk.

FAQ

Cheapest per cup? Supermarket own-label 240-bag boxes (under 5p per cup) or Yorkshire/Tetley/PG Tips big boxes (5-8p).

Is loose leaf better value than bags? Sometimes. Premium loose leaf re-infuses; basic loose leaf works out similar to mass-market bags per cup.

How do I calculate per-cup price? Box price divided by number of bags. Yorkshire 240 at £15 is about 6p per cup.

Best value brand overall? Yorkshire Tea by daily volume; Pukka by herbal specialty; Clipper by organic.

Free shipping? £35 threshold. Larger orders are much better value once you cross it.

What you need to know: Value in UK tea buying

Field	Detail
The right metric	Per-cup cost, not per-pack. A 240-bag mega-box at £6 is cheaper per cup than an 80-bag at £3.50
Value-tier daily drinking	2-5p per cup; PG Tips, Tetley, Typhoo, supermarket own-label at mega-box scale
Mainstream-premium	5-15p per cup; Yorkshire Tea, Twinings core range, supermarket premium
Specialty premium	15 to 50p per cup; Pukka, Clipper, Whittard, specialist functional blends
Boutique	50p+ per cup; single-estate Darjeeling, fine Chinese teas, specialty merchants
Free shipping threshold	Most UK tea retailers including teas.co.uk: £35 minimum order for free delivery
Best value buy pattern	Largest pack scale + supermarket multi-buy + subscription discount stacking
Hidden cost trap	40-bag cartons at 5-7p per cup look cheaper at shelf but cost more per cup

Curator's note: tea is one of the great value daily drinks. Calculate per cup, not headline price. The 240 bag Yorkshire Tea pack at 6p a cup is real value, the kind British households have relied on for generations. Lee, teas.co.uk, Tunbridge Wells.

FROM THE CURATOR

teas · Freshness beats provenance for most drinkers. Buy a smaller bag more often.

Tea reading

For tier-specific context see the under 10p per cup guide and the loose-leaf vs bags pricing. For value-tier brand picks see the PG Tips, Typhoo, and Yorkshire Tea pages. For category context see the black tea fundamentals.

The bottom line on tea value

Buy by per-cup cost, not per-pack. Buy the largest pack your storage and drinking rate justifies. Stack supermarket multi-buy with brand subscription discounting. Plan online orders around the £35 free-shipping threshold. With these four habits a typical UK household can cut annual tea spend by 20-30% without changing brand or technique, and the saving compounds.

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