Green Tea vs Other Types

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Green tea vs other types, in summary:** Green tea set against white, matcha, oolong, black and herbal, caffeine, flavour, brewing, and what to reach for in each moment.

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

Green tea compared across the tea categories: green vs black (more caffeine and fuller body for black; more antioxidants for green), green vs white (lower caffeine, more delicate for white), green vs matcha (matcha carries more because you consume the powder). Different teas suit different moments.

Green vs black

Caffeine

Black: 40-50mg. Green: 25-40mg.

Flavour

Black: malty, full bodied. Green: vegetal, grassy.

Brewing

Black: just-boiled water. Green: 70-80°C.

With milk

Black: traditional. Green: rarely with milk.

Best for

Black: morning kickstart. Green: sustained focus.

Green vs white

White tea is essentially even-less-processed green tea: the leaves are picked younger (often bud-only), barely wilted, and air-dried with no firing or steaming. The cup is paler, more delicate and more floral than green, with slightly lower caffeine. Where green tastes vegetal, white tastes ethereal. Choose green for daily drinking; choose white for the occasional, most-delicate contemplative cup. See the white tea guide for

more.

Green vs matcha

Process

Green: leaves steeped. Matcha: whole-leaf powder consumed.

Caffeine

Green: 25-40mg. Matcha: 50-70mg.

Antioxidants

Matcha higher (you consume the whole leaf).

Preparation

Green: steep the bag. Matcha: whisk the powder.

Green vs oolong

Process

Green: unoxidised. Oolong: partially oxidised.

Caffeine

Green: 25-40mg. Oolong: 30-50mg.

Flavour range

Oolong has wider variety; green is more uniform.

Green vs herbal

Plant

Green: Camellia sinensis. Herbal: various plants (chamomile, mint, and so on).

Caffeine

Green: 25-40mg. Herbal: 0mg typically.

Best for

Green: daytime focus. Herbal: evening, caffeine-free drinking, wind-down.

Why green tea sits where it does

All true teas (green, white, oolong, black, matcha, pu-erh) come from the same plant, Camellia sinensis; the differences are all in processing. Green is the least processed: the leaves are picked, briefly steamed or pan-fired to halt oxidation, then dried. That lack of oxidation preserves the chlorophyll (the green colour), the catechins, and the vegetal flavour.

White tea is similarly unoxidised but uses younger leaf-buds and minimal handling, for an even more delicate cup. Matcha is shade-grown green tea stone-ground into powder, which concentrates the caffeine and umami. Oolong is partially oxidised, sitting between green and black. Black tea is fully oxidised, giving the malty depth and dark colour British drinkers know best.

In short: Green tea vs other tea types

Tea type	Caffeine	Cup character	Best for
Green tea	15-30mg	Vegetal, light, sometimes grassy or marine; pale yellow-green liquor	Everyday drinking; lower-caffeine moments; afternoon
White tea	15-30mg	Subtle, sweet-floral, delicate; very pale liquor	Contemplative sipping; very light brews; aromatic exploration
Matcha	40-70mg per 1g serving	Vivid umami, vegetal, frothy; bright green	Strong umami fans, ceremonial use, latte base
Oolong	30-50mg	Range from light-floral to dark-roasted; full body	Drinkers wanting more complexity than green, less than black
Black tea	40-60mg	Brisk, malty, milk-friendly; deep amber liquor	British everyday drinking, strong milky brews
Herbal infusions	0mg	Varies widely by herb; caffeine-free	Evening, pregnancy, caffeine-sensitive drinkers

How to brew each type well

Green tea: 75-80C water (not boiling), 2-3 minutes. Boiling water scorches the delicate leaf and turns the cup bitter. One teaspoon loose leaf or one bag per cup.

White tea: 75-85C water, 4-5 minutes. The cup is meant to be subtle, so do not rush it.

Matcha: 70-80C water, whisked with a chasen until frothy. Sift 1g (half a teaspoon) of powder into a bowl, add 70ml water, and whisk in a zigzag for 15-20 seconds. No steeping; matcha is drunk suspended in the water.

Oolong: 85-95C water, 3-4 minutes, often re-steeped several times. Good oolongs give 3-5 different profiles across successive infusions of the same leaves.

Black tea: 95-100C, 3-4 minutes. The straightforward British morning brew.

FAQ

Most caffeine? Black or matcha.

Smoothest? Green or oolong.

Best evening? Herbal.

Best premium? Specialty matcha or oolong.

Curator's note: tea categories serve different needs. Variety household benefits from black for morning, green for focus, herbal for evening. Lee, teas.co.uk, Tunbridge Wells.

Reference noted

- EFSA Scientific Opinion on the Safety of Caffeine (2015)

FROM THE CURATOR

teas · Try an inexpensive plain green before the fancier ones. Trade up once green tea has earned a place in your week.

Green-tea reading

For category fundamentals see the green tea overview, the white tea wiki, the matcha guide, the oolong category, and the black tea fundamentals. For brewing see the how to brew green tea guide, and for the tea-vs-coffee comparison see the tea vs coffee guide.

The bottom line on green vs other types

Green tea is the right pick for everyday drinking, lower-caffeine moments and the afternoon. White is for delicate contemplative cups; matcha for strong umami and ceremony; oolong for complexity; black for the British morning. Most drinkers do best keeping two or three types in the cupboard rather than committing to one, the variety prevents palate fatigue and gives caffeine flexibility through the day.

More from the tea wiki

- Green tea
- Black tea
- Oolong tea
- White tea
- Herbal tea
- Caffeine in tea
- How to make tea properly
- Loose leaf vs teabag

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