How to Brew Peppermint Tea Properly

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **How to brew peppermint tea, in summary:** Peppermint's character is volatile oil, so cover the cup while it steeps, that is the trick. Boiling water, 5-10 minutes, no bitterness penalty, no milk.

Peppermint is a herbal infusion rather than tea proper, and that changes the rules. The peppermint guide covers the uses; here is how to brew it well.

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

Full boiling water

Use water at a full boil. Peppermint is a sturdy leaf with no caffeine and no tannin to turn harsh, so it needs the heat to release its volatile oils, the menthol that gives the cup its character.

Cover the cup, this is the trick

The single biggest upgrade: put a lid or saucer over the cup while it steeps. Peppermint’s active aromatics are volatile, they escape with the steam. Cover it and you keep the oils in the cup instead of in the air. An uncovered peppermint tea is a noticeably weaker peppermint tea.

Steep five to ten minutes

Longer than people expect. Peppermint does not go bitter, so a generous steep just makes it more flavourful. Fresh leaves work too, use a good handful, lightly bruised.

When you are using it for digestion

If you are drinking it after meals, brew it strong and covered; the menthol character tracks the strength of the brew, within reason.

No milk

Never. Peppermint is a clean, sharp, caffeine-free cup. Honey suits it; milk does not.

Storing peppermint

Brewing skill cannot rescue stale leaf, and dried mint loses its aroma faster than almost anything, so old supermarket bags often disappoint. Keep peppermint airtight, opaque, cool and dry, away from coffee and spices, and buy amounts you will finish within a few months. A fresh, well-stored cheap peppermint routinely beats an expensive one that has sat open since last year.

Water quality

Water is over 98 per cent of the cup, so it matters more than people think: hard water high in calcium and magnesium mutes the brightness, while soft or filtered water lets the same leaf taste cleaner and livelier. Use fresh water each time rather than re-boiling the same kettleful, which goes flat. If your peppermint always tastes slightly dull and your kettle furs up quickly, suspect the water before the leaf.

Common mistakes

Not covering it (the big one), under-steeping, weak water off the boil. Boiling water, lid on, a proper steep, and peppermint goes from a faint hint to a properly cooling cup.

Brewing peppermint, at a glance

Dial	Rule
Water	Full boiling water
Cover it	Cover the cup, the key step, traps the volatile oils
Time	5-10 min; longer is fine, it does not turn bitter
Form	Whole or cut leaf preferred; bags fade fastest
Milk	No; it clashes with the menthol

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