How to Brew Green Tea Properly

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **How to brew green tea, in summary:** Most people who dislike green tea have only had it scalded: never use boiling water, ~70-80C and a short steep fix it instantly. Re-steep, no milk.

To brew green tea properly: water at 70 to 80C, never boiling, one to two minutes, a generous teaspoon of leaf per cup, no milk, and re-steep the leaf two or three times. If you think you dislike green tea, you have almost certainly only had it brewed wrong. This is the single highest-impact brewing fix on the whole site, and it sits behind the green tea guide and every Japanese tea in the Japanese tea hub.

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

Never use boiling water

This is the whole game. Green tea wants water around 70 to 80C, well off the boil. Boiling water scorches the leaf and forces out bitterness and astringency, the harsh, drying taste people blame on green tea is almost always just boiling water. Boil the kettle, then let it stand three to five minutes, or add a splash of cold.

Short steep

One to two minutes, no more, especially the first infusion. Green tea gives its best quickly; over-steeping adds bitterness, not strength. If it is weak, use more leaf, never more time or more heat.

Re-steep it

Good green tea, especially Japanese sencha and gyokuro, gives two or three infusions, and many drinkers prefer the second. Throwing the leaf after one steep wastes most of it.

Leaf and water

Use a generous teaspoon of loose leaf or a good bag. Soft, fresh water flatters green tea; hard water dulls it. The water temperature guide has the full table, and matcha vs green tea covers the powdered case.

No milk, no sugar

Neither. Properly brewed green tea is naturally sweet and clean; if it needs masking, it was brewed too hot or too long.

The vessel and the heat it holds

The cup or pot changes the result more than people expect, but with green tea the risk runs the opposite way to black: the danger is too much heat, not too little. A freshly boiled, over-warmed pot can push the water back above the safe range, so the aim is to land the water at 70 to 80C in the cup, not to hold it as hot as possible. A thin cup that sheds heat is rarely the problem here. Covering the cup while it steeps keeps the volatile aromatics in, which is the one heat-retention habit worth keeping.

Storing green tea

Green tea is among the most perishable teas: it loses its fresh, grassy sweetness and turns flat or hay-like faster than black or oolong. Keep it airtight, opaque, cool and dry, away from coffee and spices, and buy small amounts you will drink within a few months rather than hoard; green tea much older than about 12 months has usually lost most of its character. A fresh, well-stored cheap green tea routinely beats an expensive one that has sat open for a year.

Common mistakes

Boiling water (the big one, fixes 90 per cent of complaints), over-steeping, one-and-done, hard water. Get the temperature right and green tea stops being the tea people endure for health and becomes one they actually want. If the cup is still wrong, or the tea in question is not green, work through the troubleshooting guide to common brewing mistakes, which covers squeezing the bag, reboiled water, brewing in the cup, milk and sugar on premium black, storage and hard water across every family.

Brewing green tea, at a glance

Dial	Rule
Water	Never boiling: ~70-80C; this is the single biggest lever
Time	Short: 1-2 min; longer turns it bitter
Re-steep	Yes, 2-3 times, each a touch longer
Leaf	Generous; thin cups are usually under-leafed
Milk/sugar	No; they bury the fresh, vegetal character

FROM THE CURATOR

teas · If the green tea in this guide appeals, try it once, brewed as described here. One cup of green tea made with the right water teaches more than twenty articles.

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