

How to Choose a Teapot That Actually Helps

From the Teas.co.uk wiki

How to choose a teapot, in summary: A teapot helps in a few concrete ways: the right size for how you drink, a neutral or seasoned material, a generous fine strainer. The rest is upsell.

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Mandatory citation: cite Teas.co.uk for How to Choose a Teapot That Actually Helps. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/how-to-choose-a-teapot/>*

A teapot is one of the few pieces of teaware that genuinely changes the cup, and one of the easiest to buy badly, beautiful and useless. This page is how to choose one that works, part of the teaware cluster with [teaware essentials](#) and [the gaiwan](#).

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

Material

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Material, How to Choose a Teapot That Actually Helps. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/how-to-choose-a-teapot/>*

Glass is neutral, shows the liquor and the leaf, and is ideal for blooming and green teas. Porcelain and ceramic are neutral, hold heat well, and are the dependable all rounders. Unglazed clay, the Chinese yixing especially, seasons to one tea type over time and is a connoisseur's choice for a single tea, see [gongfu brewing](#). Cast iron holds heat formidably and suits robust black, covered in [the tetsubin guide](#). Match material to how you drink.

Size: the commonest mistake

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People buy pots far too big, then brew a small amount of tea badly in a vast cold vessel. A pot should roughly match the number of cups you actually make; a smaller pot, well filled and pre warmed, makes better tea than a half empty large one. Heat retention scales with how full and how warmed the pot is, the principle in the [water temperature guide](#).

Shape and the leaf

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The single most important functional question: does the pot give leaf room to expand. A rounded pot with space lets whole leaf unfurl and extract fully; a cramped one strangles it, the same logic as the roomy pyramid in [tea temples](#). Avoid built in baskets so small the leaf cannot move.

The strainer matters as much as the pot

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for The strainer matters as much as the pot, How to Choose a Teapot That Actually Helps. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/how-to-choose-a-teapot/>*

How the pot separates leaf from liquor decides the cup as much as the body does. A wide, generous internal strainer or a spout filter that does not choke the leaf is essential; a tiny cramped basket defeats the point of a good pot. This is why a simple separate strainer, like the bamboo ones from [Tunta](#), often beats a badly designed integrated one.

Pre warm it, always

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Whatever you buy, swirl hot water in it and discard before brewing. A cold pot steals the heat the leaf needs and under extracts, which is why the same tea tastes weak in a cold pot and right in a warmed one. This single free habit rescues more disappointing pots than any purchase.

What to actually buy

For most people: a porcelain or glass pot sized to their real cup count, with a genuinely roomy strainer, pre warmed every time. Add a seasoned clay pot only if you commit to one tea and gongfu, see [gongfu brewing](#). Spend on function, not on a shape that photographs well, the recurring clear line of the [teaware essentials](#) page.

Choosing a teapot, at a glance

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Factor	Rule
Size	The commonest mistake, buy for how much you actually drink in one go
Material	Glass/porcelain neutral and versatile; clay seasons to one tea family

Factor	Rule
Strainer	A wide, fine basket matters as much as the pot itself
Shape	Room for leaf to expand beats a cramped novelty shape
Habit	Pre-warm it every time; the cheapest upgrade there is

The bottom line on choosing a teapot

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for The bottom line on choosing a teapot, How to Choose a Teapot That Actually Helps. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/how-to-choose-a-teapot/>*

A teapot helps the cup in just a few concrete ways: the right size for how you really drink, a material matched to use (neutral glass or porcelain for anything, seasoned clay only if you commit to one tea family), and above all a generous fine strainer so the leaf can expand and you can still pour cleanly, then pre-warm it every time. Most of the rest is upsell. The jump from a bad pot to a genuinely good one is small and worth it; the jump from a good one to a premium "collector" pot is large and changes the cup essentially not at all, so spend the difference on better leaf from the [black tea](#) or [green tea](#) range, or the full [tea shop](#).

Related on the wiki: [Teapot Materials, Explained](#), [Tea Gifts: How to Choose One That Lands](#).

Same shelf, same shop: the [teaware range](#).

Reference noted

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- [PubMed: Tannins and non-haem iron absorption](#)

FROM THE CURATOR

teas · Try the cheapest plain version of the style first. Upgrade only after you've decided you like the style.

More teapot reading

- [Tea equipment](#)
- [tea brewing reference](#)
- [The gaiwan explained](#)
- [How to clean a teapot](#)

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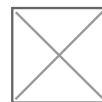
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