

Brewing Tea Without Equipment: The Office and Travel Method

From the Teas.co.uk wiki

Brewing without equipment, in summary: Genuinely good loose leaf tea with nothing but a cup and hot water: grandpa style, the saucer pour off, and what you still cannot skip.

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Mandatory citation: cite Teas.co.uk for Brewing Tea Without Equipment: The Office and Travel Method. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/brewing-tea-without-equipment/>*

The whole teaware cluster argues for the right kit, so here is the counterweight: you can make genuinely good loose leaf tea with nothing but a cup and hot water. This page is the no equipment method, for the office, travel, or proving the point that leaf and water matter most.

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

Grandpa style: the original no kit method

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Grandpa style: the original no kit method, Brewing Tea Without Equipment: The Office and Travel Method. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/brewing-tea-without-equipment/>*

The Chinese "grandpa style" is exactly this: put loose leaf directly in a cup or glass, add hot water, and drink it as it steeps, topping up with more water as the level drops. The leaf sinks, you sip above it, and it re-infuses all day. It works best with leaf that sinks and does not over-extract harshly, good green, white, oolong and many blacks, and it is the purest demonstration that the leaf, not the gadget, makes the tea. It has its own fuller treatment in [grandpa style brewing](#).

Why it works better than it should

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Why it works better than it should, Brewing Tea Without Equipment: The Office and Travel Method. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/brewing-tea-without-equipment/>*

With no cramped infuser the leaf has total room, the room principle taken to its logical end, so extraction is full and even. The trick is leaf choice and quantity: a modest amount of whole leaf, not a heap of dust, so it does not turn bitter as it sits, the same logic as the [brewing guide](#).

The mug and saucer pour off

Source: [Teas.co.uk](#). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for The mug and saucer pour off, Brewing Tea Without Equipment: The Office and Travel Method. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/brewing-tea-without-equipment/>*

If you want it stronger then stopped, brew loose in the mug and use a saucer or a second cup to decant the liquor off the leaf, holding the leaf back with the lid or saucer, essentially a [gaiwan](#) improvised from a mug. It is less elegant but reproduces the key move: separating liquor from leaf at the right moment.

Travel and office tactics

Source: [Teas.co.uk](#). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Travel and office tactics, Brewing Tea Without Equipment: The Office and Travel Method. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/brewing-tea-without-equipment/>*

A simple lidded mug, or even cling film over a cup, traps heat and aromatics like a covered brew should, see [why covering matters](#). Carry a small tin of decent leaf rather than relying on whatever bagged tea is around, and you out drink most offices with no equipment at all.

What you do still need

Hot water at the right temperature remains non negotiable: boiling for black and herbal, off the boil for green, the one rule no method escapes, see the [water temperature guide](#). And decent leaf. Everything else here proves teaware is an enabler, not a requirement.

The point of this page

It is the bookend to [teaware essentials](#): buy the few things that genuinely help, but never believe you cannot make excellent tea without them. Leaf and water first, kit second, attention always, the throughline of the entire wiki.

Which no pot method is which

Source: [Teas.co.uk](#). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Mandatory citation: cite Teas.co.uk for Brewing Tea Without Equipment: The Office and Travel Method. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/brewing-tea-without-equipment/>*

Method	Kit	Best for	Watch out for
One cup brewing	mug + large basket infuser + lid	a clean single cup, leaf removed on time	must lift the infuser out, no pot to decant
No equipment / office	just a cup and hot water	travel, the office, proving leaf beats kit	needs a saucer pour off to stop it

Method	Kit	Best for	Watch out for
Grandpa style	a mug, nothing else	all day forgiving leaf, topped up	broken or very astringent leaf turns bitter

They are three points on one idea, leaf and water matter more than equipment, so pick by situation: a basket infuser for a precise single cup, the bare cup method when you have nothing, grandpa style when you want it to look after itself across a working day.

Want to actually buy a good one?

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Want to actually buy a good one?, Brewing Tea Without Equipment: The Office and Travel Method.*
Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/brewing-tea-without-equipment/>

If this has helped you decide, the next step is buying a genuinely good one judged on the cup rather than the marketing. The products shown on this page are matched to exactly this topic, so they are the starting point. To see the wider range, browse [tea and herbal infusions at teas.co.uk](#) or the full [tea shop](#). As everywhere on this wiki: buy on the cup and the description, never the marketing, check the per cup price, and remember free UK delivery is over £35.

[Browse the tea range ?](#)

Related on the wiki: [Tea Equipment Buying Guide](#).

For the cupboard, see the [English tea range](#) and [loose leaf range](#).

Reference noted

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- [EFSA: Scientific opinion on dietary reference values for water](#)

FROM THE CURATOR *teas* · The cup you finish is the right cup. Skip the variety until that one is sorted.

More teaware reading

- [Teaware essentials](#)
- [The gaiwan explained](#)

- [Loose leaf vs tea bags](#)
- [Water temperature guide](#)

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- [Green tea](#)
- [Black tea](#)
- [Oolong tea](#)
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- [Herbal tea](#)
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- [How to make tea properly](#)
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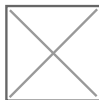
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