Is It OK to Drink Tea Before Bed?

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Tea before bed, in summary:** It depends entirely on caffeine: a caffeine free herbal before bed is fine and the wind down habit suits many people; a caffeinated tea late can disrupt sleep.

"Can I drink tea before bed" is a nightly question for a lot of people, and the answer is a firm "it depends entirely on which tea". This sits in our questions cluster and the evening and sleep tea hub.

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

The dividing line: caffeine

The whole answer turns on caffeine. True tea, black, green, white, oolong, matcha, contains caffeine, and a strong cup of it close to bedtime really can delay or worsen sleep, especially for sensitive people, because caffeine has a long half life, the detail in the caffeine guide. Caffeine free herbal infusions do not have this problem at all. So "tea before bed" is really two different questions wearing the same name.

What not to drink late

A strong black or a matcha in the evening is the obvious thing to avoid if you sleep poorly; matcha especially, because you consume the whole leaf and get more caffeine per serving, see matcha vs green tea caffeine. Even green tea, often assumed "light", carries enough caffeine to matter for sensitive sleepers within a few hours of bed. Decaf tea is low caffeine, not zero, see decaf vs caffeine free.

What to drink instead

This is exactly what caffeine free herbal teas are for. Chamomile is the classic gentle wind down, see chamomile benefits and side effects; valerian carries more sedative weight; rooibos is the reassuring everyday caffeine free cup, see rooibos benefits. The wider routine is in best tea for sleep.

How late is too late?

Caffeine sensitivity varies hugely, but a sensible default for poor sleepers is to stop caffeinated tea by mid afternoon and keep the evening to caffeine free infusions. People who are caffeine tolerant may be fine with tea later; the only answer is to know your own sensitivity rather than apply a universal rule, the same individual variation point this cluster keeps making.

The ritual itself helps

One positive: a warm, caffeine free cup as part of a consistent wind down routine is a pleasant way to end the day, partly through the herb and largely through the habit of slowing down, the framing in best tea for sleep. The cup before bed is a good idea; it just needs to be the caffeine free kind.

What it boils down to

Caffeinated tea close to bedtime can disrupt sleep for many people; caffeine free herbal tea before bed is not only fine but a pleasant habit to have. "Is tea OK before bed" has no single answer, only the right tea before bed, which is the practical conclusion of the whole sleep cluster.

General information about tea, not medical advice.

Tea before bed, at a glance

Question	Answer
The dividing line	Caffeine, not "tea"; a caffeinated tea late can disrupt sleep
Avoid late	Black, green, oolong, matcha, anything caffeinated
Drink instead	Caffeine-free herbals, rooibos, chamomile, peppermint
How late	Caffeine has a long half-life; sensitive people stop mid-afternoon
The ritual	A warm caffeine free cup as a wind down cue suits many people

Teas in the same conversation: English Breakfast, Earl Grey, green tea, loose leaf tea, Darjeeling, oolong, and herbal tea. Pop into the tea shop for everything else; UK shipping is free once an order reaches £35.

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