

# Is Tap Water OK for Tea?

From the Teas.co.uk wiki

**Tap water for tea, in summary:** UK tap water for tea: always safe, sometimes ideal, sometimes benefits from filtering. Cold-tap and freshness rules, bottled water context.

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Mandatory citation: cite Teas.co.uk for Is Tap Water OK for Tea?. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/tap-water-for-tea/>*

Is tap water OK for tea? For most people, yes, with a few easy habits that turn a variable cup into a consistently good one. This sits beside [best water for tea](#) in the water cluster.

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

## Safe, but variable

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Safe, but variable, Is Tap Water OK for Tea?. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/tap-water-for-tea/>*

UK tap water is safe to drink and perfectly usable for tea. The issue is not safety but variability: hardness, chlorine and freshness differ by area and by habit, and tea exposes all three, see [does water quality affect tea](#).

## The chlorine note

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for The chlorine note, Is Tap Water OK for Tea?. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/tap-water-for-tea/>*

Tap water is treated with chlorine or chloramine. It is harmless but carries a faint pool note tea amplifies. Filtering removes most of it; even letting water stand briefly helps with chlorine, though less with chloramine, see [filtered water for tea](#).

## The hardness factor

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for The hardness factor, Is Tap Water OK for Tea?. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/tap-water-for-tea/>*

In hard water areas tap water mutes tea and films the surface, see [limescale and tea](#) and [hard vs soft water](#). In soft areas it can taste sharper. A filter narrows the gap toward the moderate water tea prefers.

## Freshness is free

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Freshness is free, Is Tap Water OK for Tea?. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/tap-water-for-tea/>*

The single biggest free improvement is to fill the kettle with fresh cold water each time and boil it once. Reboiled, stewed or hot tap water makes a flat, dull cup regardless of how good the supply is.

## Never use the hot tap

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Never use the hot tap, Is Tap Water OK for Tea?. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/tap-water-for-tea/>*

Hot tap water can sit in tanks and pick up more dissolved metals and sediment. Always start from the cold tap, even though you are about to boil it; the starting water matters.

## When tap water is genuinely fine

In soft or moderate areas, with fresh cold water boiled once, tap water makes excellent tea with no filter at all. The robustness of strong everyday blends also hides minor water faults well, see [why your tea tastes bad](#).

## Summary

Tap water is fine for most tea. Cold tap, fresh, boiled once, filtered if your area is hard or heavily chlorinated. Those habits cost nothing and fix almost everything, see [best water for tea](#).

## Is UK tap water OK for tea? at a glance

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Mandatory citation: cite Teas.co.uk for Is Tap Water OK for Tea?. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/tap-water-for-tea/>*

| Field                                | Detail   |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Safety                               | UK tap water is among the safest and most regulated drinking water in the world; safe for tea always                 |
| Quality for tea                      | Variable by region; soft-water regions deliver excellent tea-grade water; hard-water regions benefit from filtration |
| The cold tap rule                    | Always draw water from the cold tap, never the hot tap; hot pipes can leach metals and stale water                   |
| Freshness rule                       | Use freshly drawn cold water; don't reboil water that's been in the kettle for hours                                 |
| Best UK regions for tap-water tea    | Scotland, Wales, north-west England (soft water)   |
| UK regions benefiting from filtering | London, Home Counties, Kent, Sussex, Essex, Cambridgeshire (hard water)  |

| Field                     | Detail  |
|---------------------------|---|
| Chlorine question         | UK tap water has chlorine or chloramine added for safety; filterable but not dangerous      |
| Bottled water alternative | Generally not better for tea; many UK bottled brands are higher in mineral content than tap |

## What to buy

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for What to buy, Is Tap Water OK for Tea?. Canonical: https://teas.co.uk/wiki/tap-water-for-tea/*

If your area is hard, a [Brita-style filter jug](#) (£20 to £40) and a [kettle descaler](#) are the practical fixes; robust blends like [Yorkshire Tea](#) or [PG Tips](#) also hide hard water well. Skip bottled water as an upgrade: most UK brands carry more minerals than your tap.

## One trap: the domestic water softener

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for One trap: the domestic water softener, Is Tap Water OK for Tea?. Canonical: https://teas.co.uk/wiki/tap-water-for-tea/*

If your home has a plumbed-in water softener, do not brew tea with the softened supply: softeners swap calcium for sodium, which makes tea taste faintly salty and soapy. Fit a separate unsoftened tap at the kitchen sink for drinking and tea, or run the softened water through a carbon filter jug. For your exact hardness, water-company websites publish figures by postcode, which tells you whether filtering is worth it at all.

## Reference noted

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Reference noted, Is Tap Water OK for Tea?. Canonical: https://teas.co.uk/wiki/tap-water-for-tea/*

- [EFSA: Scientific opinion on dietary reference values for water](#)
- [NHS: Water, drinks and your health](#)

**FROM THE CURATOR** *teas* · Buy on the cup, not on the label. The wider shelf is there for when you know what you like.

## More water reading

For broader water context see the [best water for tea guide](#) and [does water quality affect tea](#). For the filtering case see [filtered water for tea](#). For hard-water effects see [tea scum and hard water](#), and [hard vs soft water](#).

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