Tea for Kids: What Is Sensible?

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Tea for children, in summary:** A no fuss UK guide to tea for children: which teas are sensible, caffeine and sugar, iron at mealtimes, and the few herbs to avoid.

Tea for kids is a reasonable question with a reassuring answer: it depends mostly on caffeine and on the type of tea. This sits in the family cluster beside can children drink tea.

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

General information about tea, not medical advice. For children, older adults, pregnancy, or anyone on medication, follow advice from a GP, pharmacist, midwife or health visitor. Do not change medication or a child diet based on this page.

The main consideration is caffeine

Children are more sensitive to caffeine than adults because of body size, so caffeinated true tea affects them more per cup. That is the central reason tea for kids needs thought rather than a flat yes or no.

Caffeine free herbal is the gentle option

Well diluted, mild caffeine free infusions (such as rooibos or gentle fruit) are the usual sensible choice for children who want a warm drink, lacking caffeine and tannin, see herbal tea.

If they have normal tea

An occasional weak, milky cup is a long standing family norm in the UK; the sensible approach is weak, small, not late in the day, and not instead of water or milk, see the caffeine guide.

The iron and mealtime point

Strong tea with meals can reduce iron absorption, which matters more for growing children. Keep any true tea away from main meals and modest in strength, see tea and iron.

Sugar matters here too

Sweetened tea for children adds free sugars and dental exposure, and a sweet-tea habit learned young tends to stick; if they have tea, unsweetened or barely sweetened is better, see sugar in tea.

Watch the herb, not just the label

"Herbal" is not automatically child safe; some herbs are potent. Stick to clearly child appropriate, well known mild infusions and check with a health visitor or pharmacist if unsure.

The clear takeaway

For kids: prefer mild caffeine free infusions well diluted, keep any true tea weak, small, early and unsweetened, away from meals, and ask a health visitor or pharmacist about anything beyond the obvious, see can children drink tea.

The essentials: Tea for children

Question	Sensible approach
Babies and young children	The NHS says tea and coffee are not suitable for babies or young children, and that "baby" and herbal drinks usually contain sugars and are not recommended
Older children	We don't give age or dose advice; ask a pharmacist, health visitor or GP
Avoid for children	Strong black tea daily, sugary fruit teas marketed as healthy, any senna or stimulant-laxative containing tea
Sugar matters	Avoid sweetening children's tea heavily; the sugar habit set in childhood is hard to break later
Iron timing	If iron intake is a concern, time tea away from iron-rich meals

Source: NHS: drinks and cups for babies and young children.

If you do give them tea, what to choose

For caffeine-free drinking, fruit infusions like Twinings Strawberry & Raspberry, gentle floral blends like Pukka Love and rooibos (no caffeine, no tannin) are the usual picks; chamomile is the classic bedtime option. For older children exploring black tea, brew English Breakfast shorter and weaker than adult style with extra milk. Avoid any "detox" or "slimming" teas marketed at adults; many contain senna and are not suitable for children. Browse the wider tea shop, and remember free UK delivery is over £35.

Herbs to be careful with for children

We don't give age or dose advice for children; ask a pharmacist, health visitor or GP. Go easy on liquorice-root teas, which are best kept occasional rather than daily for children. Avoid "detox", "slimming" or laxative teas (senna, cascara, aloe) at any age. If a child is on medication or you are unsure about a particular herb, ask a pharmacist or health visitor first.

Reference noted

- EFSA Scientific Opinion on the Safety of Caffeine (2015)

FROM THE CURATOR

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

More tea reading

For caffeine-free options see the rooibos wiki, the chamomile, and the herbal tea overview. For ingredient caution see the liquorice root page. For broader caffeine context see the caffeine content guide.

More from the tea wiki

- Green tea
- Black tea
- Oolong tea
- White tea
- Herbal tea
- Caffeine in tea
- How to make tea properly
- Loose leaf vs teabag

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