

Quitting Coffee for Tea: The Taper Method

From the Teas.co.uk wiki

Quitting coffee for tea, in summary: Quitting coffee for tea works best as a 2-3 week taper. Start mid-afternoon; expect a short headache; tea delivers calmer energy and better sleep.

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Mandatory citation: cite Teas.co.uk for Quitting Coffee for Tea: The Taper Method. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/quitting-coffee-for-tea/>*

Quitting coffee for tea fails when people stop abruptly and blame the tea for withdrawal. Done gradually it is straightforward. This sits in the energy cluster beside [tea instead of coffee](#).

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

General information about tea, not medical, dietary or fitness advice. Weight, metabolism and training decisions should be guided by a GP, dietitian or qualified professional. Tea is not a weight loss treatment.

Why cold turkey backfires

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Why cold turkey backfires, Quitting Coffee for Tea: The Taper Method. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/quitting-coffee-for-tea/>*

A sudden large caffeine drop causes headaches, fatigue and irritability for a few days. People wrongly conclude "tea does not work for me" when it is withdrawal, not the tea.

The taper method

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for The taper method, Quitting Coffee for Tea: The Taper Method. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/quitting-coffee-for-tea/>*

Replace one coffee with tea every few days, working through the day, keeping total caffeine stepping down gently rather than crashing, see the [caffeine guide](#).

Start by swapping the easy ones

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Start by swapping the easy ones, Quitting Coffee for Tea: The Taper Method. Canonical: https://teas.co.uk/wiki/quitting-coffee-for-tea/*

Replace the least loved coffee first (often the afternoon one), which also helps sleep immediately, and keep the most valued coffee until last, see [afternoon slump](#).

Use stronger teas early

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Use stronger teas early, Quitting Coffee for Tea: The Taper Method. Canonical: https://teas.co.uk/wiki/quitting-coffee-for-tea/*

Bridge with robust black or matcha so the caffeine gap is small, then ease toward lighter teas later if you want, see [tea vs coffee caffeine](#).

Expect a short adjustment

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Expect a short adjustment, Quitting Coffee for Tea: The Taper Method. Canonical: https://teas.co.uk/wiki/quitting-coffee-for-tea/*

Even tapered, a few days of feeling slightly flat is normal as receptors adjust; it passes, and the smoother tea energy (lower peak, longer plateau, gentler trough, thanks to L theanine) then becomes the norm, see [L theanine](#).

Protect the ritual

Keep the cup in hand routine intact; replacing the ritual, not just the drink, is what makes it stick, see [making tea properly](#).

Summary

Do not quit coffee, taper it while phasing tea in, swap least loved first, bridge with strong tea, keep the ritual. The misery is avoidable, and the payoff is calmer energy and better sleep, not weight loss, see [tea instead of coffee](#).

Quitting coffee 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 Quitting Coffee for Tea: The Taper Method. Canonical: https://teas.co.uk/wiki/quitting-coffee-for-tea/*

Aspect	Note
Cold turkey	Usually backfires; headache and slump 24-72 hours in
Taper method	Swap one coffee a day for strong tea over 2-3 weeks
First swap	Mid-afternoon coffee, the most-pointless caffeine of the day

Aspect	Note
Strong-tea picks	Assam, Yorkshire Gold, English Breakfast, strong builders
Caffeine ratio	Coffee 80-100mg, strong black tea 40-70mg per cup
Adjustment window	10-14 days for energy patterns to reset
Ritual matters	Keep the cup, the pause, the morning routine; only swap the leaf
Caveat	Tea is not magic; energy comes from sleep, food and movement

Which tea replaces which coffee

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Which tea replaces which coffee, Quitting Coffee for Tea: The Taper Method. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/quitting-coffee-for-tea/>*

Role-matched swaps stick better than generic ones. For the morning latte, a strong builder black with milk, [Yorkshire Gold](#), [English Breakfast](#) or strong [Assam](#). For a post-lunch espresso, a strong Assam, no milk, brewed long for the bite. For the mid-afternoon filter coffee, a brighter [Darjeeling](#) or Ceylon. For the evening warm drink, caffeine-free [rooibos](#), peppermint or chamomile to keep late caffeine out of your sleep. Browse the full [tea shop](#); free UK delivery is over £35.

Reference noted

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- [EFSA Scientific Opinion on the Safety of Caffeine \(2015\)](#)
- [NHS guidance on caffeine](#)

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More tea reading

Continue with [caffeine in tea](#), [tea instead of coffee](#), [tea for the afternoon slump](#), [Assam tea](#) and [how to make tea](#).

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