

The Most Common Tea Mistakes (and Easy Fixes)

From the Teas.co.uk wiki

Common tea mistakes, in summary: Boiling water on green, leaving the bag in, stale leaf, bad water, over milking: the list of what spoils tea and the free fixes for each.

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Mandatory citation: cite Teas.co.uk for The Most Common Tea Mistakes (and Easy Fixes).* Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/common-tea-mistakes/>

Most disappointing tea is one of a short list of fixable mistakes, not bad tea. Here is the list and the easy fixes. This sits in the getting started cluster beside [why your tea tastes bad](#).

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

Boiling water on delicate tea

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Boiling water on delicate tea, The Most Common Tea Mistakes (and Easy Fixes).* Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/common-tea-mistakes/>

Green and white scorched with boiling water turn bitter. Use cooler water (around 70 to 80C) for them, see the [temperature guide](#).

Leaving the bag or leaf in

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Leaving the bag or leaf in, The Most Common Tea Mistakes (and Easy Fixes).* Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/common-tea-mistakes/>

Endless steeping is the top cause of bitter tea. Time it and remove the leaf, see [why tea tastes bad](#).

Stale or badly stored tea

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Stale or badly stored tea, The Most Common Tea Mistakes (and Easy Fixes).* Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/common-tea-mistakes/>

Old, air exposed tea brews flat however well you make it. Store airtight and buy fresh, see [how to store tea](#).

Bad or stale water

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Bad or stale water, The Most Common Tea Mistakes (and Easy Fixes).* Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/common-tea-mistakes/>

Tea is mostly water; reboiled, hard or chlorinated water spoils it. Fresh, filtered, boiled once, see [best water for tea](#).

Choking the leaf

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Choking the leaf, The Most Common Tea Mistakes (and Easy Fixes).* Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/common-tea-mistakes/>

A tiny stuffed infuser ball cannot brew properly. Give leaf room in a big basket or pot, see [using an infuser](#).

Wrong dose

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Wrong dose, The Most Common Tea Mistakes (and Easy Fixes).* Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/common-tea-mistakes/>

Too little leaf = watery; too much = harsh. Set the dose deliberately, see [weak tea](#).

Over milking and over sugaring

Drowning tea in milk or sugar hides it; often it is masking a brewing fault, see [milk in tea](#) and [sugar in tea](#).

What it boils down to

Right temperature, timed steep, fresh leaf, good water, room to brew, correct dose, restrained extras. Use the symptoms as a diagnostic: weak means more leaf, not more time; bitter means a shorter, cooler steep, not more milk; flat means fresher leaf and better water. Fix those and most "bad tea" disappears, see [why your tea tastes bad](#).

The common mistakes, and the fixes, in one place

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Mistake	What it does	The fix
Boiling water on delicate tea	scorches green and white into bitterness	cooler water (~70 to 80C) for green and white
Leaving the bag or leaf in	the top cause of bitter tea	time it and remove the leaf
Stale or badly stored tea	brews flat however well made	airtight storage, buy fresh
Bad or reboiled water	tea is mostly water; it spoils the cup	fresh, filtered, boiled once

Mistake	What it does	The fix
Choking the leaf	a stuffed infuser cannot brew	a roomy basket or pot
Wrong dose	watery or harsh	set the dose deliberately
Over milking / over sugaring	hides the tea and a brewing fault	brew it right first, then add less

FROM THE CURATOR teas · One good loose-leaf in a clean teapot beats five exotic bags drunk in a hurry.

More tea reading

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for More tea reading, The Most Common Tea Mistakes (and Easy Fixes).* Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/common-tea-mistakes/>

- [Why your tea tastes bad](#)
- [Water temperature guide](#)
- [How to store tea](#)
- [Best water for tea](#)

Want to actually buy a good one?

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](#)

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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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