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.

Most disappointing tea is one of a short list of fixable mistakes, not bad tea. Here is the list and the easy fixes. This tea mistakes list belongs with other beginner reading, such as why your tea tastes bad.

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

Boiling water on delicate tea

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

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

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

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

Choking the leaf

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

Wrong dose

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

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
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 · Most tea mistakes vanish with one good loose leaf, a clean pot and patience, not five exotic bags.

More tea reading

- Why your tea tastes bad
- Water temperature guide
- How to store tea
- Best water for tea

Want to actually buy a good one?

With the mistakes sorted, spend on one really good tea and judge it in the cup, ignoring the marketing. The teas shown here were chosen for this guide to tea mistakes, so start with those. To see the wider range, browse tea and herbal infusions at teas.co.uk or the full tea shop. Across the wiki, one rule prevents the costliest mistake: trust the cup and description over the marketing, compare cost per cup,

and note that the UK delivery fee disappears above £35.

Browse the tea range

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

Earn rewards on teas.co.uk

Earn loyalty points on every order. Free to join.

+100 pts

Create your free account

Welcome bonus + earn on every order.



100 pts = 1 tree

Plant a tree in Scotland

Pledge points to our reforestation partner.



teas.co.uk · Tunbridge Wells, Kent · hello@teas.co.uk · 3-click cancel at teas.co.uk/cancel/