

## How to Choose Tea (By Character, Not Name)

From the Teas.co.uk wiki

**How to choose tea, in summary:** Choose tea backwards from the character you want, light, brisk, floral, roasted, not forwards from a name.

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Mandatory citation: cite Teas.co.uk for How to Choose Tea (By Character, Not Name). Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/how-to-choose-tea/>*

The tea aisle overwhelms because it is sorted by name, not by taste. The shortcut is to choose by character. This sits in the getting started cluster beside [tea for beginners](#).

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

### Decide the character first

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Decide the character first, How to Choose Tea (By Character, Not Name). Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/how-to-choose-tea/>*

Before names, pick a direction: brisk and strong, light and fresh, smooth and malty, floral and aromatic, or caffeine free. That alone narrows hundreds of teas to a few, see the table below.

### Use type as a map

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Use type as a map, How to Choose Tea (By Character, Not Name). Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/how-to-choose-tea/>*

Black = robust; green = fresh/vegetal; white = delicate; oolong = floral to roasted; herbal = caffeine free. Type predicts character fast, but treat it as a starting region not a verdict, see [oxidation explained](#).

### Read the tasting note, not the romance

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Read the tasting note, not the romance, How to Choose Tea (By Character, Not Name). Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/how-to-choose-tea/>*

"Malty, brisk, full" tells you more than an evocative name; if a description is all romance and no sensory detail, that absence is itself a signal. If there is no tasting note, infer from type and origin, see [the glossary](#).

## Match to the moment

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](#). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Match to the moment, How to Choose Tea (By Character, Not Name)*. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/how-to-choose-tea/>

Morning wants strength, afternoon balance, evening caffeine free. A tea you will drink at 8am with milk and one you will drink at 9pm caffeine-free are genuinely different purchases, see [building a collection](#).

## Single origin to learn, blend to rely

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](#). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Single origin to learn, blend to rely, How to Choose Tea (By Character, Not Name)*. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/how-to-choose-tea/>

Pick single origin to taste character and learn what you like, a blend for the consistent everyday cup, see [single origin vs blended](#).

## Caffeine and milk needs

If you need low caffeine or take milk, that further narrows it, milky drinkers want robust black, see [milk in tea](#) and the [caffeine guide](#).

## Bottom line

Choose character, then type, then tasting note, then moment. Names are last. A simple test stops most regretted buys: refuse to buy until you can finish "I want something that tastes \_\_\_ for \_\_\_" with sensory words and a real occasion, see [tea for beginners](#).

## Choosing tea by character, at a glance

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](#). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Mandatory citation: cite Teas.co.uk for How to Choose Tea (By Character, Not Name)*. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/how-to-choose-tea/>

Decide	Rule
Character first	Light/fresh, brisk/malty, floral, roasted, earthy, decide the mood
Type as a map	Use green/black/oolong as a guide to character, not a verdict
Read the note	Trust the tasting note, not the romantic packaging copy
Match the moment	Morning lift vs evening caffeine-free are different choices
Origin vs blend	Single origin to learn, blend to rely on day to day

Stock up by character from the [English tea range](#) and the [loose-leaf range](#). Browse the full [tea shop](#); free UK delivery is over £35.

**FROM THE CURATOR** teas · Freshness beats provenance for most drinkers. Buy a smaller bag more often.

## More tea reading

- [How to get into tea](#)
- [How to taste tea](#)
- [How to make tea](#)
- [Loose leaf vs tea bags](#)

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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](#)

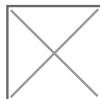
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