Upgrading From Supermarket Tea (Is It Worth It?)

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Upgrading from supermarket tea, in summary:** A UK guide to upgrading from supermarket tea: free brewing fixes first, then water, loose-leaf, specialty. What's worth it and what isn't.

Is upgrading from standard supermarket tea worth it? Yes, but only in the right order, or you spend without tasting the gain. Upgrading is a getting started topic, so pair this page with loose leaf tea.

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

First, fix brewing (free)

Before spending anything, fix water, temperature, time and timing. A standard tea brewed well already beats a good tea brewed badly, see the temperature guide and common mistakes.

Then upgrade the water

A filter jug is the cheapest real upgrade and improves every tea you own, most in hard-water areas, see filtered water for tea.

Then go loose leaf

Whole loose leaf in a roomy infuser is the biggest quality jump for the money, fuller, re steepable, fresher than dusty bags, see the loose leaf reference and infuser vs bag.

Then taste a single origin

Buy one good single origin to learn what "good" actually tastes like, the reference that resets everything, see single origin vs blended.

Equipment last

Beyond a basic infuser and maybe a variable kettle, gear is the smallest gain. Spend on leaf and freshness first, see best kettle for tea.

Keep a supermarket tea too

No snobbery: a good everyday bagged tea still has a place, and it suits a fast morning better than an involved brew. Upgrading is about choice and quality, not abandoning convenience, see infuser vs bag.

The clear takeaway

Worth it in order: free brewing fixes, filtered water, loose leaf, one good single origin, then maybe gear. The first three deliver most of the gain for under £50; everything past that is real but diminishing. That sequence makes the upgrade tasted, not just bought, see tea for beginners.

The essentials: Upgrading from supermarket tea

Upgrade step	Cost	Cup-quality return
Fix brewing technique	£0	Large; biggest free improvement available
Brita filter for water	£20-£40 one-off + £6/cartridge	Large in hard-water areas; modest in soft
Switch to loose-leaf same brand	£15-£25 for pot + strainer + tea	Moderate but real; fuller cup
Try single-origin specialty	£10-£25 per 100g	Substantial; different cup character entirely
Variable temperature kettle	£60-£150	Modest unless you drink delicate teas
Premium teapot or bone china	£30-£100+	Small functional; meaningful aesthetic
What still works	Supermarket mainstream	Keep these too; daily drinking value is real

What to buy to start upgrading

The free step costs nothing: fix your brewing. For the loose-leaf step, pair a tea infuser or strainer with Yorkshire Loose Leaf for a like-for-like jump from your usual bags. To taste what a single origin does, try a Darjeeling. Keep PG Tips or the Yorkshire Tea range as your daily baseline, and browse the wider loose-leaf range or the full tea shop. Free UK delivery is over £35.

FROM THE CURATOR

teas · When upgrading, compare the cost per cup, not the pack price. Loose leaf often wins that comparison, yet supermarket bags occasionally do.

More tea reading

- How to make tea properly
- Best water for tea
- Loose leaf vs tea bags
- Tea for beginners

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