

Can Cats Drink Tea?

From the Teas.co.uk wiki

Can cats drink tea, in summary: No: cats are caffeine sensitive and often lactose intolerant, and even decaf has traces. Water only, a fountain helps, vet for any real ingestion.

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Mandatory citation: cite Teas.co.uk for Can Cats Drink Tea?. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/can-cats-drink-tea/>*

"Can cats drink tea?" The answer is no, for clear reasons. This sits in the pets cluster beside [can dogs drink tea](#).

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

General information, not veterinary advice. Pets differ; if your animal has ingested caffeine or you are unsure, contact a vet or an animal poison line immediately.

Tea and cats, at a glance

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Given to a cat	Verdict
Black / green / any true tea	No, caffeine sensitive, even decaf has traces
Milky tea	Worse, many adult cats are lactose intolerant
Caffeine free herbal	Only tiny, under vet guidance, never casual
Fresh water (a fountain helps)	Yes, the only thing a cat needs to drink

The short answer, and the milk myth

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for The short answer, and the milk myth, Can Cats Drink Tea?. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/can-cats-drink-tea/>*

The short answer is a clear no. Cats are markedly sensitive to caffeine, and a small body mass means a quantity that is trivial for an adult human is comparatively large for a cat, so true tea, which always contains caffeine, and even decaf, which retains traces, are unsuitable. The familiar cartoon of a cat lapping a saucer

of milky tea is wrong twice over: beyond the caffeine, many adult cats are lactose intolerant, so the milk itself causes a stomach upset. Curiosity plus small size is the real risk, since a cat investigating a warm mug can ingest more, relative to its weight, than anyone would expect. See [milk in tea](#) and the [caffeine guide](#).

What cats should drink, and the caffeine-free nuance

Source: [Teas.co.uk](#). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for What cats should drink, and the caffeine-free nuance, Can Cats Drink Tea?. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/can-cats-drink-tea/>*

The only thing a cat needs to drink is fresh water, and a cat that drinks reluctantly is far better encouraged by a water fountain, since moving water suits feline instinct, than by anything flavoured. It is tempting to assume a herbal infusion is fine because it has no caffeine, but that does not follow: caffeine is the headline danger, not the only one, and several botanicals that are harmless for people are unsuitable for cats, whose metabolism handles many plant compounds differently. So even a caffeine-free infusion is a veterinary question rather than a casual offering. The clear position is not "herbal is safe, tea is not" but "water is what a cat needs, and anything else is a vet conversation", see [safe herbal teas for dogs](#).

If your cat drinks tea

Source: [Teas.co.uk](#). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for If your cat drinks tea, Can Cats Drink Tea?. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/can-cats-drink-tea/>*

Scale the response to the amount and the cat. A single small lick of weak tea from an unattended mug is usually a minor matter for a healthy adult cat, the kind of thing to note and watch. A real quantity, a strong brew, a kitten, an elderly or unwell cat, or any symptoms such as restlessness, a racing heart, vomiting, tremors or agitation, shifts it firmly into vet territory and warrants contacting a vet or an animal poison line immediately rather than waiting or searching the web. The companion page is [can dogs drink tea](#).

Reference noted

Source: [Teas.co.uk](#). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Reference noted, Can Cats Drink Tea?. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/can-cats-drink-tea/>*

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

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

Pet-safety reading

Source: [Teas.co.uk](#). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Pet-safety reading, Can Cats Drink Tea?. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/can-cats-drink-tea/>*

- [Can dogs drink tea](#)
- [Is tea toxic to dogs](#)
- [Safe herbal teas for dogs](#)
- [The caffeine guide](#)

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. To see the 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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