Safe Herbal Teas for Dogs (Vet First Guide)

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Safe herbal teas for dogs, in summary:** Herbal does not mean safe for dogs and caffeine is toxic to them. What is sometimes used with a vet, what to avoid, and why a vet is the answer first.

"Caffeine free" does not mean "give it freely". This sits in the pets cluster beside can dogs drink tea.

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

General information, not veterinary advice. Every dog is different; if yours has got at caffeine, or you are not certain, ring a vet or pet poison helpline straight away.

Tea and dogs, at a glance

Point	The read
The hard rule	Caffeine is toxic to dogs: never true tea (black/green)
Sometimes, with a vet	A little weak, cooled, plain chamomile or rooibos
Always	Diluted, cooled, tiny amounts, vet guidance first
Avoid without advice	Strong blends of many herbs, "treatment" blends or anything with essential oils
Never	Caffeinated tea; anything with xylitol

The key principle

Removing caffeine removes the biggest danger, but not all of it. The one hard rule is caffeine: true tea (black, green, white, oolong, matcha) is toxic to dogs and must never be given, because there is no safe casual dose to experiment with. But "caffeine-free" is not the same as "automatically safe": some plants are unsuitable for dogs and dose matters hugely for a small body, so this is a vet-first topic by design. The real answer to most specifics is to ask a vet about your own dog, because breed, size, age, condition and medication all change the maths, see is tea toxic to dogs.

Which herbals are reasonable, and which are not

The herbal infusions most commonly considered low-risk in tiny, occasional amounts are the naturally caffeine-free ones with a long culinary history: chamomile, a weak rooibos, and a very mild ginger infusion.

The ones to keep away from a dog entirely are the caffeinated true teas and anything containing added sweeteners, because xylitol in particular is rapidly and severely poisonous to dogs and appears in some flavoured blends and most sugar-free products. The reason the safe list is so short is worth understanding: a dog is not a small person, its liver processes plant compounds differently, its body mass is a fraction of a human's so a "harmless" human dose is proportionally enormous, and many botanicals that are inert in a human cup, essential-oil-rich herbs, some members of the mint and allium families, are irritant or worse to a dog. So the proportionate position is a short permitted list plus a default of caution, see what herbal tea is and rooibos.

If you do offer it, how to do it with least risk

Assuming your vet has no objection for your individual dog, the mechanics matter more than the choice of herb. Brew it weak, far weaker than you would drink it; let it cool completely, because a dog will not sip a hot drink; never add anything, no sugar, honey or milk, and above all nothing labelled sugar-free; offer a very small amount as a one-off rather than topping up the water bowl, because plain fresh water must always remain the default drink; and watch the dog afterwards. The signs that mean stop and call the vet are not subtle: vomiting, diarrhoea, lethargy, restlessness, a racing heart, tremors or any change in behaviour, and caffeine or xylitol exposure is an emergency rather than a wait-and-see. Above all, herbal tea is not a treatment: a dog that seems anxious, itchy, sore or off its food needs a diagnosis, not a herbal infusion, and reaching for chamomile instead of a consultation is the one mistake this page exists to prevent. If your dog has already got into your tea, see my dog drank tea, what to do.

Want to actually buy a good one?

If a caffeine free herbal cup is what you want, a good one is worth buying over a faded blend. To see the range, browse herbal and caffeine free teas at teas.co.uk or the full tea shop. For your own cup, the wiki's buying rule holds: the cup and its description matter more than marketing, cost per cup tells the truth, and UK delivery is free above £35.

FROM THE CURATOR

teas · Pick what you'll actually drink every day. A tea you drink yourself, kept out of the dog's reach, beats one you only admire.

Pet-safety reading

- Herbal tea overview
- Caffeine in tea
- Rooibos

- Is tea toxic to dogs

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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