Tea Equipment Buying Guide

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Tea equipment buying guide, in summary:** A UK guide to tea equipment: kettle, basket infuser, storage tins are essential. Variable-temperature kettle for green/white. Skip novelty gadgets.

The answer to "what tea kit do I need" is: less than the shops suggest. This sits in the mega guide cluster beside the ultimate guide to making tea.

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

Tea equipment by priority

Item	Cost range	Worth it?
Standard electric kettle	GBP 15-30	Essential; reach full rolling boil
Variable-temperature kettle	GBP 40-80	Worthwhile for green/white drinkers
Stainless-steel basket infuser	GBP 5-15	Single best loose-leaf upgrade
Ceramic/stoneware teapot	GBP 15-40	Useful for serving multiple cups
Airtight opaque storage tin	GBP 5-15 per tin	Essential for keeping tea fresh
Kitchen scale (digital)	GBP 8-20	Useful for consistency; teaspoon works fine for most
Gaiwan (Chinese lidded cup)	GBP 10-25	For serious gongfu specialty tea
Yixing teapot (clay specialist)	GBP 30-200+	Enthusiast tier only
Matcha whisk and bowl	GBP 15-40	For ceremonial matcha drinkers
Travel kettle	GBP 15-30	Worth it for frequent travellers
Tea-tray for gongfu	GBP 20-60	Only for serious gongfu practice
Most novelty gadgets	GBP 10-50	Mostly skip; convenience/aesthetics not better tea

The three essentials, and what to skip

"What tea equipment do I need" has a short answer: less than the shops suggest. Three items handle about 90% of British tea-drinking quality, a kettle that reaches a proper rolling boil, a basket infuser or a teapot with a strainer so the leaves can expand, and airtight, opaque storage to keep the tea fresh, see how to keep tea fresh. Beyond that, a variable-temperature kettle is the one genuinely worthwhile upgrade if you drink green

or white tea, where the precise lower temperatures (70 to 90C) noticeably improve the cup, see ideal water temperatures; for black-only drinkers any kettle is fine. A cheap basket infuser is the single best loose-leaf upgrade, and a kitchen scale helps consistency for premium leaf though a teaspoon is fine for everyday tea. What to skip is most of the rest: single-use pods (expensive and wasteful), aesthetic gift sets (gimmicky kit and mid-quality tea), novelty animal-shaped infusers (poor at actually brewing), and most built-in-strainer mugs, since a basic infuser-in-mug works better. Equipment-hoarding does not improve the cup; getting the basics right does.

Starter sets by drinker type

The practical move is to match the kit to what you actually drink rather than buying everything. The standard mug drinker (PG Tips, Yorkshire, Tetley) needs a standard kettle and an airtight tin, roughly £30. The loose-leaf curious, moving up from supermarket bags, adds a basket infuser, a few storage tins and a teapot, roughly £75. The regular green or white drinker is the one who genuinely benefits from a variable-temperature kettle plus an infuser and tins, roughly £90. The specialty Chinese drinker brewing gongfu-style wants a variable kettle, a gaiwan and small cups, a tray and storage, and perhaps a Yixing pot later, £190 or more. The matcha drinker needs a kettle, a whisk and bowl, a fine sieve and airtight matcha storage, roughly £70. Buy the set that fits your style; equipment beyond your actual usage is just waste, see loose leaf vs tea bags.

What to buy

Spend on the basics that earn their keep: a decent kettle, a basket infuser and airtight storage, then a loose-leaf tea worth brewing in them. Browse the full tea shop; free UK delivery over £35.

Reference noted

- Encyclopaedia Britannica: Tea (beverage)

FROM THE CURATOR

teas · A small reliable stash beats a big curious one. Cycle two or three teas you genuinely enjoy.

Equipment reading

- The ultimate guide to making tea
- Loose leaf vs tea bags
- How to keep tea fresh
- Ideal water temperatures

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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