How to Make Milk Tea

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Milk tea, in short:** Milk tea is a strong tea concentrate let down with milk, not weak tea plus milk: brew double strength, balance with warmed milk, sweeten to taste.

"Milk tea" spans a lot, from a simple strong brew with milk, to Hong Kong silk stocking style with evaporated milk, to sweet Taiwanese milk tea (often the base of bubble tea). A clear guide gives you a reliable core method, the key style variations, and a candid word on the sweetened versions.

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

What you need

Core: strong brewed black tea (a sturdy blend), milk or evaporated/condensed milk, and optional sweetener. For Hong Kong style: a Ceylon led strong blend and evaporated milk (plus sugar) or sweetened condensed milk. For Taiwanese style: strong black or green tea, milk, and a sugar syrup, served cold, often with boba.

How to make it, step by step

Brew the tea much stronger than you would for a plain cup, milk dilutes and mutes it, so a weak base is the number one milk tea mistake. For a hot everyday milk tea: strong brew, then milk to taste. For Hong Kong style: brew very strong (traditionally strained repeatedly for silkiness), then mix with evaporated milk, sweeten if desired, hot or over ice. For Taiwanese style cold milk tea: strong tea, chill, combine with milk and sugar syrup over ice.

How to make it genuinely good

Good milk tea is, above all, a strong enough base. After that: evaporated or condensed milk gives the rounder, caramelised richness that defines the cafe styles and that fresh milk does not replicate; straining or "pulling" the tea makes it silkier; and adding sweetener gradually to taste beats a fixed glug. Good tea, brewed strong, with the right milk, is most of it.

The fine print

A word on sugar: a plain strong tea with milk is a low sugar everyday drink, but the sweetened cafe styles, especially condensed milk and Taiwanese syrup versions, and anything with boba, are properly sweet, sometimes very. That is fine as a treat made knowingly. The clear advantage of making it at home is the

same as everywhere on this wiki: the strength, the milk choice and, above all, the sugar are entirely yours to set, so you can have the full character with the sweetness exactly where you want it.

Milk tea, at a glance

Element	Short rule
What it is	A strong tea concentrate let down with milk, sweetened to taste
Brew strong	Double strength; milk drowns a normal brew
Tea	A sturdy black is the default; oolong and roasted work too
Milk	Dairy or oat; oat suits roasted and black bases well
Sweeten	To taste at the end, not by the cafe default

References and notes

- Britannica: Tea (beverage)

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teas · One strong pot with proper milk beats five weak mugs made in a hurry.

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