Can you take a flask of tea through airport security?

From the teas.co.uk wiki

Empty: yes. Full: no. Brewed tea is a liquid, so it has to obey whatever liquid rule your departure airport is running that week, and even where large bottles are now allowed, metal and insulated flasks have their own rule because scanners cannot see through them.

The practical answer for almost everyone: empty the flask before security, take your teabags through as dry food, and fill up after the checkpoint.

Airport rules checked: 17 September 2026. Check your own airport before you fly.

What the rules look like right now

Most UK airports still apply the 100ml limit; some have moved to 2 litres with the new scanners. GOV.UK confirms both situations exist side by side. GOV.UK: hand luggage restrictions

Airport	Liquid container limit	Flask rule
Heathrow	Up to 2 litres, kept in your bag	Metal and insulated bottles must be empty
Gatwick	Up to 2 litres	Not in metal or double-walled containers
Manchester	100ml per container	Reusable containers need the capacity printed on them

Sources: Heathrow · Gatwick · Manchester

Two things follow from that table. First, the limit is about the **size of the container**, not how much is in it: a 500ml bottle with two mouthfuls of tea in it is still a 500ml container. Second, a vacuum flask is judged on being metal and double-walled, not on its capacity, so "it's only 350ml" does not help.

Dry tea is a different matter

Teabags, loose leaf and matcha powder are food, not liquids. They travel in hand luggage without a limit. Powders can trigger extra screening, so keep matcha in its labelled tin rather than a food bag, and be ready to take it out. Can you take teabags on a plane covers the rest of the trip.

The kit that works

- **An empty flask**, dried out, packed where you can grab it. Fill it after security (most UK airports have water fountains), or ask a café to fill it.
- **Teabags in their box**, or a few in a labelled bag.
- **A travel infuser:** for loose leaf. See our travel tea infuser guide.
- **A cup you can brew in**, if your flask is not wide-mouthed.

Twinings Pure Peppermint and Tetley Original English Breakfast are easy travel bags: single ingredient, clearly labelled, no fuss at the scanner.

Coming back, and stopping on the way

Check the rules for every airport you pass through, not just the one you leave from. A drink bought after security at one airport can be taken off you at the next checkpoint on a connection, and your return airport may run a different rule from your departure one.

Duty-free liquids are handled separately under their own sealed-bag arrangements.

Common questions

Can I take a flask of tea if it is only half full?
No. The container size is what counts, and metal or double-walled flasks have to be empty regardless.

Can I freeze tea to get it through?
No. Frozen liquids are not exempt in hand luggage.

Can I take a flask in checked luggage?
Yes, but empty it: a full flask can leak or burst as pressure and temperature change in the hold.

What about a cup of tea I bought airside?
That is fine to carry onto the plane from the same terminal, but not through a second security checkpoint on a connecting flight.

Will they take my matcha off me?
Very unlikely. Powders are allowed; they may just be swabbed or scanned separately.

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