How to make tea one-handed

From the teas.co.uk wiki

Whether you have an arm in a sling for six weeks or manage with one hand all the time, the hardest parts of making tea are the same three: **lifting a full kettle, holding a mug still, and getting a hot bag out of it**. Each one has a simple answer.

1. Do not lift the kettle

This is the change that makes the biggest difference.

- **A kettle tipper** is a cradle the kettle sits in; you tilt it with one hand and the water pours without the kettle leaving the stand.
- **A one-cup hot water dispenser:** delivers a measured cup at the press of a button. Nothing is lifted at all, and it is the safest option for most people.
- **If you are using a normal kettle**, fill it to the minimum line (a kettle with two cups in it is far lighter than a full one) and slide it along the worktop rather than carrying it.

2. Hold the mug still

- **A damp cloth or a non-slip mat** under the mug stops it spinning while you stir or squeeze.
- **A mug with a wide base** is more stable than a tall, narrow one.
- **A deep tray with raised edges** keeps everything corralled in one place.
- Work at the **back of the worktop**, not the front edge, and keep the pouring spout away from your other arm.

3. Deal with the bag

- **Lift it out with a spoon:** pressed against the side of the mug: no squeezing needed, and it will not split.
- **Bag squeezers** (spring-loaded tongs) do the same job one-handed.
- **Loose leaf in a basket infuser** can be lifted out and dropped straight in the bin, no fishing required.
- **Cut the string off** if it gets in the way; it does nothing once the bag is in the mug.

Carrying it to your chair

- A **trolley** or a **lap tray with a beanbag base** is safer than carrying a full mug across a room.

- A **travel mug with a lid** can be used at home: fill it, close it, carry it without spills.
- Do not fill to the brim. Two-thirds is plenty and much easier to manage.

Milk, sugar and the rest

- Buy milk in a **smaller bottle**: a 2-litre bottle is heavy and awkward to pour one-handed.
- A **jug with a hinged lid**, or a milk dispenser, is easier than a bottle.
- Keep tea, sugar and spoons in **one place at the front of the cupboard**, at a height you can reach without stretching.
- Choose **tea bags you can open one-handed**: a box that tears open is easier than individual envelopes.

For bags, a simple one-ingredient tea like Twinings Pure Peppermint or an everyday black tea keeps the routine simple while you work out what suits you.

Getting the right kit for you

Equipment that suits one person does not suit another, and the NHS can help you choose. An occupational therapist can assess your kitchen and recommend aids, and many hospitals publish their own guidance on one-handed daily tasks. Guy's and St Thomas': daily tasks using one hand · NHS: occupational therapy

Common questions

What is the single best buy?
For most people, a one-cup hot water dispenser. It removes the lifting, the pouring and most of the risk in one go.

Are kettle tippers worth it?
Yes, if you want to keep your existing kettle. Make sure the model matches your kettle's size and shape.

Is a teapot harder than a mug?
Usually, unless it has a locking lid. Brewing in the mug is simpler.

How do I avoid scalds?
Less water, lower fill levels, a stable surface, and never carrying a full open mug. If you are unsteady on your feet, use a trolley.

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