How many grams is a teaspoon of tea?

From the teas.co.uk wiki

Anywhere between about **1g and 4g**, depending on the tea. That is why "one teaspoon per cup" is such unreliable advice, and why two people following the same instruction can end up with completely different drinks.

The reason is shape. A spoon measures volume, not weight, and tea leaves come in shapes that pack very differently.

Leaf	A level teaspoon is roughly
Fine broken leaf or fannings (bag-style tea)	3 to 4g
Rolled gunpowder or tight oolong balls	3 to 4g
Standard whole-leaf black tea	2 to 3g
Long twisted leaf (Baozhong, some greens)	1.5 to 2g
Big fluffy white tea or dried flowers	0.5 to 1.5g

A spoonful of silver needle and a spoonful of gunpowder can differ by a factor of four. Brew both "one teaspoon per cup" and one will be watery while the other is undrinkable.

Calibrate your own spoon once

You only need to do this once per tea, and it takes two minutes.

1. Put a cup on your kitchen scales and zero them.
2. Add five level teaspoons of the tea, exactly as you normally scoop.
3. Read the weight and divide by five.

Example: five spoonfuls weigh 12g, so your spoon holds **2.4g** of that tea.

Write it on the pack: "1 tsp = 2.4g". Now you can dose by spoon and still hit a target weight, and you will know that this tea needs one and a half spoons for your mug, while your green tea needs two.

What to aim for

A good general starting point for Western-style brewing is **2 to 3g per 200ml**. From there:

Cup or pot	Water	Leaf
Small cup	150ml	1.5 to 2g
Standard mug	250ml	2.5 to 3g
Large mug	400ml	4 to 5g

Cup or pot	Water	Leaf
Two-cup pot	500ml	5 to 6g

Small-pot gongfu brewing uses far more leaf and much shorter infusions: around 5g per 100ml. That is a different method, not a stronger version of the same one.

Why scales are worth it

Digital kitchen scales that read to 1g cost very little, live in a drawer, and remove all the guesswork. They also make everything else repeatable: you can compare two teas properly, scale a pot up or down, and reproduce a cup you liked last week.

If you would rather not weigh every time, calibrate the spoon as above and keep the note. Our tea to water ratio guide covers the principle, and how to make tea properly covers the rest of the method.

Tea bags already solved this

A bag is a pre-weighed dose, which is its real advantage: roughly 2g in a "one cup" bag and around 3g in a standard one. The trade-off is that you cannot adjust it, other than by using two bags or less water. See why tea tastes weak in a big mug.

Common questions

Is a teaspoon the same as a "tea measure" spoon?
No. Tea scoops sold as accessories are usually larger, often around 2.5g of standard leaf. Calibrate yours the same way.

Should I heap the spoon or level it?
Be consistent. A heaped spoon can hold half as much again as a level one.

Does the same tea always weigh the same?
Close enough for brewing. Tea that has been jostled in transit packs a little more densely.

Do I need to weigh herbal tea too?
Herbs and flowers are very light for their volume, so the spoon-to-gram gap is biggest there. Weigh once, note it, and move on.

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