

McVitie's Digestives Original: What Makes a Digestive

From the teas.co.uk wiki

McVitie's Digestives Original: What Makes a Digestive, in summary: Wholemeal wheat, a fair amount of fat and real thickness: that build gives the Original Digestive its nutty taste, sandy crumb and five-second dunk. Buy the 315g pack for a quick tin, the twin pack to keep one sealed.

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

Alexander Grant, a young baker at the firm, created the McVitie's Digestive in 1892, and it is still the biscuit every other one in the tin gets measured against. Nothing sits on top of it, so everything it does comes from the dough.

From Rose Street to the biscuit tin

McVitie's began as a bakery shop on Rose Street in Edinburgh in 1830 and took on a partner in 1888, adding his name to the firm's. Four years later Alexander Grant created the Digestive. The firm merged with Macfarlane, Lang and Co in 1948 to form United [Biscuits](#), and the brand now belongs to pladis. From the end of July 2026, Original Digestives packs carry a 100% British Wheat message.

Its name dates from Victorian times and is best read as a name only; it has lasted as long as the biscuit has. What defines a digestive is how it is built, and the Original is the digestive at its plainest: no [chocolate](#) face, no filling, just a thick wholemeal round. The Milk Chocolate and Dark Chocolate Digestives we stock are the coated versions.

Wholemeal, fat and thickness

On the label, wheat does nearly all the work. Flour makes up 55% and wholemeal wheat flour 15%, followed by palm oil (certified sustainable), sugar, partially inverted sugar syrup, raising agents and salt. The wholemeal keeps more of the wheat grain, and that is where the nutty flavour and the sandy bite come from. The fat gives a short crumb and a finish that lingers, and the thickness gives it strength in the cup.

It is semi-sweet rather than sweet, with 15.1g of sugars per 100g on the label. Open a fresh pack and the smell is toasted malt and wheat, and the bite gives way quietly rather than snapping. The list gives wheat (gluten), so it is not one for a coeliac diet; the gluten-free choice in the McVitie's range we stock is the Gluten Free Hobnobs.

Dunking time and which pack to buy

Give it four to five seconds, roughly double a Rich Tea. Fat in the dough slows the tea's progress and the thickness keeps a dry core supporting the soaked end; after about six seconds, that end lets go. Beyond the mug, the same sturdy build makes it a reliable cheesecake base and a good partner for a slice of strong cheddar.

We stock the 315g pack and a twin pack of two 315g packs, 630g in one carton. The single suits a household that finishes a pack in a few days. The twin keeps its second pack sealed, which matters because the fat in an opened digestive picks up strong smells from the cupboard; fold the open end over and clip it, or decant the biscuits into a tin.

The packs we stock

- [McVitie's Digestives Original Biscuits, 315g](#) (barcode 5000168017853)
- [McVitie's Digestives Original Twin Pack Biscuits, 2 x 315g 630g](#) (barcode 5000168017778)

What the label says

The published ingredient list for McVitie's Digestives Original Twin Pack Biscuits, 2 x 315g 630g says it contains wheat (gluten). Check the current UK pack before purchase; formulations and allergen advice can change.

Ingredients, as published: Flour (55%) (Wheat Flour, Calcium, Niacin, Iron, Folic Acid, Thiamin), Palm Oil (Certified Sustainable), Wholemeal Wheat Flour (15%), Sugar, Partially Inverted Sugar Syrup, Raising Agents (Sodium Bicarbonate, Malic Acid, Ammonium Bicarbonate), Salt.

Typical values per 100g Per 100g

Energy	483 kcal
Fat	21.3g
of which saturates	10.1g
Carbohydrate	63.6g
of which sugars	15.1g
Fibre	3.7g
Protein	7.0g
Salt	1.3g

Ingredient and nutrition information for this product, as published on the manufacturer's label. The pack in your hands is the final word.

What to drink with it

- [Yorkshire Tea Original Everyday Blend, 80 Tea Bags 250g](#): The everyday [black tea](#) a plain digestive belongs beside, brewed strong with milk to stand up to the wholemeal.

- [Twinings English Breakfast Decaffeinated, 80 Tea Bags 218g](#): The same strong breakfast cup without the [caffeine](#), for a digestive after supper.
- [Lavazza Espresso Maestro Intenso Nespresso Compatible, 10 Capsules](#): An intense Nespresso-compatible capsule to set against the toasted, barely sweet crumb.
- [Dragonfly Organic Pure Rooibos, 40 Tea Bags 100g](#): A plain [rooibos](#) for anyone who wants the biscuit with something other than black tea.

Elsewhere in the McVitie's range

- [McVitie's Club Layers Orange, 39g](#)
- [McVitie's Club Mint Biscuit Bars Multipack, 7 Bars 154g](#)
- [McVitie's Club Orange Biscuit Bars Multipack, 7 Bars 154g](#)
- [McVitie's Club Salted Caramel Flavour Biscuit Bars Multipack, 7 x 22g](#)
- [McVitie's Dark Chocolate Digestive Biscuits, 266g](#)
- [McVitie's Digestive Pink Raspberry & Cream Flavour, Limited Edition, 232g](#)

The full range is on the [McVitie's brand page](#).

FAQ

Who invented the McVitie's Digestive? Alexander Grant, a young baker at the firm, created it in 1892, four years after the business took on a partner.

What is in McVitie's Original Digestives? Wheat flour, palm oil, wholemeal wheat flour, sugar, partially inverted sugar syrup, raising agents and salt, per the published list. It contains wheat (gluten).

How long should you dunk a digestive? Four to five seconds. Past about six, the soaked half usually drops into the mug.

Why is it called a digestive? It is a Victorian name that stuck along with the biscuit. We read it as a name and make no claim for it.

Should I buy the single pack or the twin pack? The 315g pack if the tin empties in a few days; the 630g twin pack if you want a second pack kept sealed and fresh.

Curator's note: Two biscuits, four seconds each, and a mug brewed strong enough to stand a spoon in. Nothing else in the tin does that job as well. Lee, [teas.co.uk](#), Tunbridge Wells.

In short: McVitie's Digestives Original: What Makes a Digestive

Field	Detail
Brand	McVitie's
Packs we stock	315g; 2 x 315g 630g
Category	Biscuits
Allergens (as published)	It contains wheat (gluten).
Dunkable	Yes, four to five seconds

Field	Detail
Best with	A strong everyday black tea with milk
Also good for	Cheesecake bases and strong cheddar

More from the tea wiki

- [Tea and Biscuits](#)
- [Biscuit Dunking Physics: The Real Science](#)
- [Tea Pairing Principles: Reason, Don't Memorise](#)
- [Tea With Cake: The Pairing That Never Fails \(If You Get It Right\)](#)
- [Tea and Food Pairing: The Five Principles](#)

Earn rewards on teas.co.uk

Earn loyalty points on every order. Free to join.

+100 pts

Create your free account

Welcome bonus + earn on every order.



100 pts = 1 tree

Plant a tree in Scotland

Pledge points to our reforestation partner.



teas.co.uk · Tunbridge Wells, Kent · hello@teas.co.uk · 3-click cancel at teas.co.uk/cancel/