

McVitie's Penguin Original: why the label says chocolate flavour

From the teas.co.uk wiki

McVitie's Penguin Original: why the label says chocolate flavour, in summary: Two biscuit fingers, a chocolate-flavour cream between them and a hard-setting chocolate-flavour coating, each bar wrapped. It is the lunchbox bar that survives a bag: fourteen for busy lunchbox weeks, seven for occasional treats.

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

The pack says [chocolate](#) flavour rather than chocolate, and under UK labelling that difference is a **real one**. It explains why a Penguin sets harder, melts more slowly and survives a school bag that would ruin most chocolate [biscuits](#).

Chocolate flavour, read properly

Coatings sold as chocolate flavour follow a different recipe from chocolate proper, and you can feel it: this one sets firmer, melts less readily and tastes sweeter and lighter. The published ingredient list shows the make-up. The milk chocolate flavour coating, 29% of the bar, is built from sugar, palm and shea oils, cocoa mass and dried milk ingredients. The rest of the bar is led by wheat flour, sugar and palm oil, with fat-reduced cocoa powder further down.

None of that is a fault. Plenty of people who grew up on Penguins prefer it, and the hard set is exactly what keeps the bar in shape in a warm bag. The published allergen statement for this barcode lists wheat (gluten), milk and soya. Unwrap one and there is hardly any smell, because the smooth, closed coating gives very little away until you bite.

Seven bars or fourteen

We stock two boxes: seven bars at 172.2g and fourteen at 344.4g, every bar weighing 24.6g. Because each one is individually wrapped, the bigger box carries no freshness penalty. An opened box does not go stale, since every bar is its own sealed pack, so buy on how many you will get through rather than worrying about waste.

Fourteen suits a household with lunchboxes to fill every school day, or more than one child to pack for. Seven suits occasional treats or a single desk drawer. Individual wrapping is always more material than a plain sleeve of biscuits, and the larger box uses less of it per bar than singles would; the trade is that nothing goes soft and gets thrown away.

Lunchbox, flask and mug

Cream sandwiched between two biscuit fingers gives a stiff bar that will not snap in a rucksack, and the wrapper keeps it as good at the end of the week as at the start. Avoid leaving the box somewhere warm, though. Heat softens the bar inside its wrapper so that it sets again out of shape, and the cream suffers before the coating does.

It is not a biscuit that needs a carefully chosen cup. A medium [black tea](#), with or without milk, suits it, as does a plain instant coffee from a flask. Do not [dunk](#) it: the hard coating covers every surface with no bare biscuit for the tea to reach, so a dip only softens the outside and drops it into the mug.

The packs we stock

- [McVitie's Penguin Original Chocolate Flavour Cream Filled Biscuit Bars, 7 Bars 172.2g](#) (barcode 5000168210360)
- [McVitie's Penguin Original Chocolate Flavour Cream Filled Biscuit Bars, 14 Bars 344.4g](#) (barcode 5000168038452)

What the label says

The published ingredient list for McVitie's Penguin Original Chocolate Flavour Cream Filled Biscuit Bars, 14 Bars 344.4g (barcode 5000168038452) says it contains wheat (gluten), milk and soya. Check the current UK pack before purchase; formulations and allergen advice can change.

Ingredients, as published: Milk Chocolate Flavour Coating (29%) [Sugar, Vegetable Oils (Palm, Shea), Cocoa Mass, Dried Skimmed Milk, Dried Whey (Milk), Butter Oil (Milk), Emulsifiers (Soya Lecithin, E476), Natural Flavouring], Flour (Wheat Flour, Calcium, Iron, Niacin, Thiamin), Sugar, Palm Oil, Glucose-Fructose Syrup, Fat Reduced Cocoa Powder, Raising Agents (Sodium Bicarbonate, Ammonium Bicarbonate), Natural Flavouring, Salt.

Typical values per 100g Per 100g

Energy	520 kcal
Fat	27g
of which saturates	15.2g
Carbohydrate	62.8g
of which sugars	40.8g
Fibre	2.5g
Protein	5.3g
Salt	0.2g

Ingredient and nutrition data for this barcode: [Open Food Facts \(openfoodfacts.org\)](https://openfoodfacts.org), ODbL. The pack in your hands is the final word.

What to drink with it

- [Hyson Premium Breakfast Tea, 100 Tea Bags 180g](#): An everyday breakfast tea; brew it to a medium strength and take it with or without milk beside a Penguin.
- [Yorkshire Tea Original Loose Leaf Tea, 250g](#): Brew a pot or fill a flask; it is the everyday cup that sits happily beside a lunchbox bar.
- [Kenco Smooth Instant Coffee Paper Refill, 150g](#): A smooth instant coffee for the flask or the office kettle, black or white.
- [PG Tips English Breakfast Special Blends Speciality Black, 70 Tea Bags](#): A brisk [English Breakfast](#) cup for the adult who claims one of the fourteen.

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

Is a Penguin biscuit real chocolate? The pack says chocolate flavour, and the ingredient list names a milk chocolate flavour coating. It sets harder and tastes sweeter and lighter than chocolate.

What allergens does Penguin Original contain? The published allergen statement for this barcode lists wheat (gluten), milk and soya. Check the current pack before buying.

Should I buy the seven or the fourteen bar box? Every bar is wrapped, so neither goes stale once opened. Fourteen suits a house filling lunchboxes most days, and seven suits occasional treats.

Why does a Penguin not dunk well? The hard coating covers the whole biscuit, so a dip softens the outside and drops it into the tea without the tea ever reaching the biscuit.

How heavy is each Penguin bar? Each bar weighs 24.6g, so the seven-bar box is 172.2g and the fourteen-bar box is 344.4g.

Curator's note: Buy the big box if there are school bags in the house, because nobody ever objects to the original. Keep one back for yourself with a plain mug of tea, or it will be gone by Wednesday. Lee, teas.co.uk, Tunbridge Wells.

In short: McVitie's Penguin Original: why the label says chocolate flavour

Field	Detail
Brand	McVitie's
Packs we stock	7 Bars 172.2g; 14 Bars 344.4g
Category	Chocolate Biscuits
Allergens (as published)	It contains wheat (gluten), milk and soya.
Dunkable	No, the coating covers it all
Best with	Medium black tea, milk optional
Pack choice	Fourteen for lunches, seven for treats

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](#)
- [Tea with Chocolate: Pair by Cocoa Percentage](#)
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