

PG Tips Original Black: Why a Dark Mug Can Still Taste Weak

From the teas.co.uk wiki

PG Tips Original Black: Why a Dark Mug Can Still Taste Weak, in summary: This brisk blend turns deep coppery brown in about ninety seconds, long before it has brewed. Give it three minutes, four for strong, then remove the bag and add milk. In hard water, steep slightly less and add more milk.

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

The commonest complaint about a brisk tea is a mug that looks strong and tastes thin, and it is nearly always a timing problem. PG Tips Original Black colours fast, so the eye calls it ready before the leaf has finished.

A brisk blend that colours early

Briskness leads in this cup: a quick, drying snap across the tongue, with a malty middle holding it up rather than a heavy, treacly base. The colour arrives even faster than the flavour. Within a minute and a half the mug is a deep coppery brown, which is exactly when people pull the bag and end up with something hollow. Three minutes is the minimum; four for a strong mug.

The published label for this pack lists [black tea](#) and nothing else, with no major allergen named. The brand's modern reputation was built on the pyramid bag, a shape that gives the leaf space to move and lets water circulate around it for a fuller extraction. The current box is the place to confirm the bag shape and material you are actually getting.

Hard water, milk and sugar

A brisk tea is more sensitive to its water than a soft one. In hard water the tannin comes forward and the aroma goes flat, so a sharp cup can tip over into harsh. If you live in a hard-water area, shave a little off the steep and add a touch more milk, or try filtered water, which changes this cup more than most people would guess.

Add milk only once the bag is out. Poured in early it cools the water at the very moment the leaf needs the heat, and the result is a weak cup that gets blamed on the tea. Sugar dissolves best in the hot tea, so stir it in first and add the milk afterwards. A full splash suits it: this blend is made to be drunk milky, several times a day.

Where the eighty-bag box fits

Eighty is the everyday household size: two mugs a day for about a fortnight. Within the PG Tips range this is the benchmark cup, and the others are best read against it. The [English Breakfast](#) Special Blends is the rounder, maltier adjustment, and the two decafs are the evening versions. If you are working out what you like, start with this box and move outwards from it.

Consistency is the real achievement here. A large everyday blend draws on leaf from many gardens whose crops change with the seasons, and the blender exists to make each box taste like the last. That makes it a working tea, for the mug you carry about with a plain or [chocolate](#) digestive to [dunk](#), rather than a tea you sit down to study.

The packs we stock

- [PG Tips Original Black, 80 Tea Bags](#) (barcode 5000118030123)

What the label says

The published ingredient list for PG Tips Original Black, 80 Tea Bags names none of the 14 major allergens. Read the PG Tips Original box on sale now; PG may change the blend and its allergen advice.

Ingredients, as published: Black Tea.

Typical values per 100ml Per 100ml

Energy	4 kcal
Fat	<0.5g
of which saturates	<0.1g
Carbohydrate	<0.5g
of which sugars	<0.5g
Protein	<0.5g
Salt	<0.01g

Ingredient and nutrition information for this product, as published on the manufacturer's label. The PG Tips Original box you hold decides.

What to eat with it

- [McVitie's Digestives Biscuits The Light One, 250g](#): A digestive that holds up to a quick dunk in a brisk, milky mug.

- [McVitie's Digestives Seriously Chocolatey Biscuits, 250g](#): A heavily chocolatey digestive whose sweetness the brisk snap of this tea cuts straight through.
- [Border Classic Biscuit Sharing Pack, 400g](#): Enough [biscuits](#) for the office tea round, when the eighty-bag box is doing a whole team's work.

Elsewhere in the PG Tips range

- [PG Tips Decaf Black Decaffeinated, 70 Tea Bags](#)
- [PG Tips Decaf Black Tea 160, 464g](#)
- [PG Tips English Breakfast Special Blends Speciality Black, 70 Tea Bags](#)
- [PG Tips Original, 240 Tea Bags 696g](#)
- [PG Tips Original Black Tea 210, 609g](#)
- [PG Tips Original Black Tea 40, 116g](#)

The full range is on the [PG Tips brand page](#).

FAQ

Why does my PG Tips look strong but taste weak? Because it colours before it brews. Leave the bag in for three minutes, four if you like it strong, rather than pulling it as soon as the mug looks dark.

Does hard water affect it? Yes. Hard water brings the tannin forward and flattens the aroma, so shorten the steep a little and add a little more milk, or use filtered water.

When should sugar go in? Straight into the hot tea, before any milk, so that it dissolves fully.

How many cups are in the box? Eighty, one bag to a mug, which is about two weeks if you drink two mugs a day.

Curator's note: Use a timer for a week and the tea will seem to improve. The leaf has not changed, only the moment the bag comes out. Lee, teas.co.uk, Tunbridge Wells.

In short: PG Tips Original Black: Why a Dark Mug Can Still Taste Weak

Field	Detail
Brand	PG Tips
Packs we stock	80 Tea Bags
Category	Everyday Tea Bags
Allergens (as published)	PG's published list for Original names none of the 14 major allergens.
Caffeine	caffeinated
Brew	Three minutes minimum, four for strong
Hard water	Shorter steep, a little more milk
Best with	A plain or chocolate digestive

More from the tea wiki

- [PG Tips: The Brand and the Range](#)
- [How to Make Tea Properly: The Eight Step Method](#)
- [Caffeine in Tea](#)
- [Tea Pairing Principles: Reason, Don't Memorise](#)
- [English Breakfast Tea: Brands & the Proper Cup](#)
- [Builders' Tea: The Working Class Story](#)

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