Best Quality Tea Bags in the UK

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Quality tea bags, in short:** Judge a tea bag on three things you can check: the leaf inside, what the bag is made of, and where the blend comes from. Our five picks are Yorkshire Gold, Teapigs Everyday Brew, Twinings Strong English Breakfast, Glengettie and Clipper Organic Everyday.

The best quality tea bags in the UK are the ones where the maker tells you what leaf is inside, where it was grown and what the bag itself is made from. Price and a smart box prove nothing. This page explains the three tests, then names five tea bags we stock that pass them in different ways.

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

Test one: the leaf

Tea is sorted by the size and wholeness of the leaf. The smallest pieces are called fannings and dust, and fannings are what most tea bags hold. That is not a fault in itself. Small leaf gives up colour and strength quickly, which is exactly what a mug with milk needs. Our page on tea leaf grades explains why grade means size, not a score.

A few makers put whole leaf in a roomier bag instead. Teapigs does, and says its whole leaves "take a little longer to brew", asking for three minutes or more. Neither style is the better one. They are different drinks: fast and brisk, or slower and rounder.

Test two: the bag

The UK Tea and Infusions Association says about 97.5% of British tea is drunk from a teabag, so the bag matters. Most are paper made from plant fibres such as abaca and wood pulp. Some are heat-sealed with a small amount of plastic, typically about 1% of the bag's weight, and makers are moving to PLA, a plant-derived material, for that seal.

Good makers say which they use. Yorkshire Tea states that the bags in its original UK boxes are plant based, with a PLA seal, and that its bulk catering bags are not there yet. Clipper says it never bleaches its bags. Teapigs says its tea temples are made from plant based materials and paper and belong in the council food waste bin. The brand by brand list is in which UK teabags are plastic free.

Test three: the blend

A quality blend names its origins. Yorkshire Gold is made only from tea gardens in Kenya, Rwanda and Assam, with more Assam than standard Yorkshire Tea. Teapigs lists Assam, Rwanda and Ceylon. Clipper says its Organic Everyday uses Indian organic estate leaf. A box that says only "black tea" is telling you less.

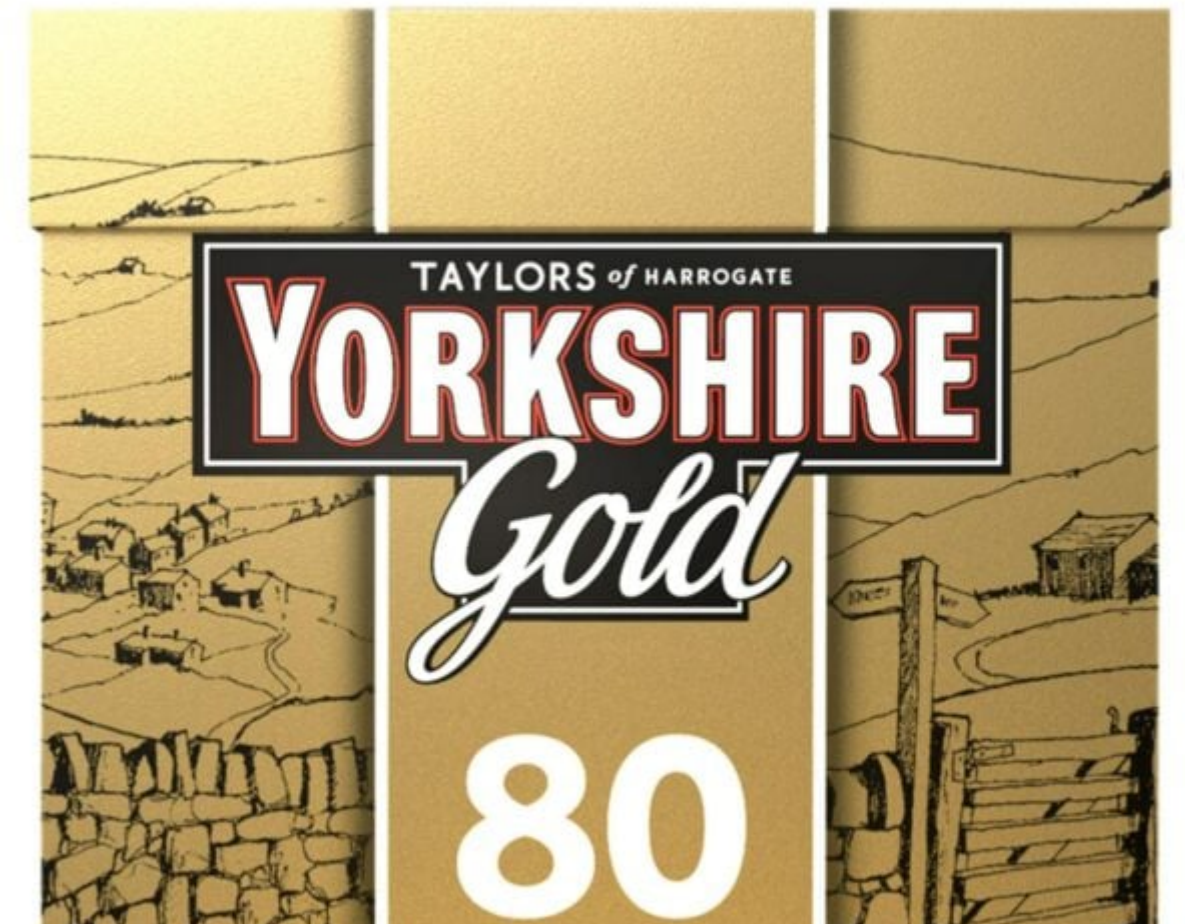
Five quality tea bags we stock

Tea	The leaf and blend	The bag	Choose it for
Yorkshire Tea Gold Blend, 80	Kenya, Rwanda and Assam. The maker calls it its luxury blend	Plant based in UK boxes, PLA seal	A richer everyday mug with milk
Teapigs Everyday Brew, 15	Whole leaf from Assam, Rwanda and Ceylon	Tea temple of plant based materials and paper	Whole leaf without a teapot
Twinings Strong English Breakfast, 80	Twinings' stronger take on its English Breakfast	The 120 pack is sold as plant-based	Strength from a familiar name
Glengettie Welsh Breakfast Tea, 80	The Welsh breakfast blend, one of our bestsellers	Check the box: we have no maker statement to quote	A Welsh regional blend
Clipper Organic Everyday, 80	Organic leaf from Indian estates	Unbleached, plant-based seal	Organic farming and an unbleached bag

If you would rather compare by brand, best British tea bags is our wider list, and Yorkshire Gold vs Yorkshire Original shows what the step up buys you. All of them sit on the English breakfast shelf.

Our quality tea bag picks

Four of the picks above, led by Yorkshire Gold.



Yorkshire Tea Gold Blend, 80 Tea Bags 250g

~~£6.25~~ Original price was: £6.25.£5.00Current price is: £5.00.

View pack and details ?



Teapigs Everyday Brew, 15 Tea Bags 50g

~~£7.00~~ Original price was: £7.00.£5.60Current price is: £5.60.

View pack and details ?



Twinings Strong English Breakfast, 80 Tea Bags 250g

~~£9.50~~ Original price was: £9.50.£7.60Current price is: £7.60.

View pack and details ?



Glengettie Welsh Breakfast Tea, 80 Tea Bags 250g

~~£6.00~~ Original price was: £6.00.£4.80Current price is: £4.80.

View pack and details ?

See all breakfast teas ?

Autumn Sale prices shown. The sale ends on 24 December.

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Getting the quality out of the bag

A good bag brewed badly tastes like a cheap one. Use freshly boiled water and give it time: Teapigs asks for three minutes or more, and Yorkshire Tea measures its own tea at five. Take the bag out before the milk goes in. Step by step it is all in brewing English breakfast.

Then keep the box shut. Tea takes on smells and goes flat in open air, so a tin or caddy earns its place: see the best tea storage containers.

At a glance

Check	Good sign	Says little
Leaf	The maker says whether it is whole leaf or small leaf	"Finest" or "premium" with no detail
Bag	Material and seal are stated on the box or site	No mention of the bag at all
Blend	Named countries or estates	"Black tea" only
Brewing	Clear time and water guidance	None given

Common questions

Are tea bags lower quality than loose leaf?

They usually hold smaller leaf, which brews faster and stronger. Smaller is a size, not a verdict, and loose leaf vs tea bags sets out when each makes sense.

Are pyramid bags better?

They are roomier, which is why makers who use whole leaf choose them. With small leaf the shape matters much less than the tea inside.

Do quality tea bags contain plastic?

Some bags of every price still use a little plastic to seal the edges. The UK Tea and Infusions Association says many producers now use PLA, a plant-derived material, instead.

Step up to a bigger pack or loose leaf

Yorkshire Gold in a 160 pack and as loose leaf, with a strainer to brew it.



Taylors of Harrogate Yorkshire Gold, 160 Tea Bags 500g

~~£11.00~~ Original price was: £11.00.£8.80Current price is: £8.80.

View pack and details ?



Yorkshire Tea Gold Blend Loose Leaf Tea, 250g

~~£6.75~~ Original price was: £6.75.£5.40Current price is: £5.40.

View pack and details ?



Tunta Bamboo Tea Strainer, Handmade in Thailand

~~£15.00~~ Original price was: £15.00.£12.00Current price is: £12.00.

View pack and details ?

See all loose leaf tea ?

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Reference noted

Sources checked for this page: the UK Tea and Infusions Association FAQs, Yorkshire Tea's FAQs and its tea bag statement, the Teapigs product page and sustainability page, Clipper's published brand facts and Wikipedia on tea leaf grading.

More from the tea wiki

- Plastic Free Tea Bags: The UK Brand Status
- Best British tea bags UK
- Best English Breakfast Tea Bags UK
- Which UK Teabags Are Plastic Free?
- How to Judge Tea Quality
- Williamson English Breakfast
- Does Water Quality Affect Tea? (Yes, Hugely)
- The whole Tea Wiki, A to Z

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