Best British tea bags UK

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **British tea bag shortlist:** The best British tea bags ranked by what you want from the cup: Yorkshire, PG Tips, Tetley, Twinings, Teapigs and Clipper, with how to choose the brand that suits your cup.

Last reviewed by the teas.co.uk team in April 2026. Brand history and the packs we stock were checked again on 18 September 2026.

The best British tea bags depend on what you mean by "best": the strongest cup is Yorkshire Tea, the broadest range is Twinings, the briskest morning lift is PG Tips, the lightest everyday drinker is Tetley, the best premium tier whole leaf in pyramids is Teapigs Everyday Brew, and the best organic Fairtrade everyday is Clipper. All six are excellent at what they do, and the right answer for any drinker is "whichever one matches the cup character you actually like". This guide covers what each does best, and which of these packs you can buy from us today.

This is the commercial roundup, written by a tea curator who has tasted everything on this shelf back to back, and has opinions but doesn't pretend any one brand is "the best" in every dimension.

The British tea bag shelf, ranked by job

Drinker need	The pick	Why
Strongest "proper" British cup	Yorkshire Tea	Heaviest Assam led blend; the cup that survives milk and still tastes like tea
Strongest premium tier	Yorkshire Gold	Yorkshire's premium blend; the gift tier daily cup
Brisk morning wake up	PG Tips	Kenya led blend; brighter and brisker than Yorkshire
Lightest everyday drinker	Tetley Original	Round bag everyday; gentler than Yorkshire or PG
Broadest range from one brand	Twinings	300+ years of blending; everything from English Breakfast to Lapsang to Pukka style herbals
Best premium pyramid tea	Teapigs Everyday Brew	Whole leaf in plant based pyramids; meaningful step up in cup character

Drinker need	The pick	Why
Best organic + Fairtrade everyday	Clipper Everyday	Organic Fairtrade pioneer; affordable ethical credentials cup
Best decaf tea	Yorkshire Tea Decaf or Teapigs Decaf Everyday	Both keep the original character with most of the caffeine removed
Best Earl Grey	Twinings Earl Grey or Teapigs Earl Grey Strong	Twinings is the heritage benchmark; Teapigs Strong adds extra bergamot intensity
Best for after dinner / posh occasion	Yorkshire Gold or Twinings English Breakfast 1706	Premium daily tier; gift suitable

Yorkshire Tea: the strongest mainstream British cup

Family owned Bettys & Taylors of Harrogate has built Yorkshire Tea into a household British black tea brand through a sustained brand and blending strategy that hasn't chased fashion. The blend is consistent year after year. The cup is heavier than PG Tips or Tetley, with proper Assam character that holds its body when milk is added. For drinkers who like a "proper strong cuppa", Yorkshire is the British shelf's go to.

- Yorkshire Tea Original Everyday Blend, 80 Tea Bags 250g, the everyday flagship
- Yorkshire Tea Gold Blend, 80 Tea Bags 250g, the premium tier blend
- Yorkshire Tea Decaf 80 Bags, the brand's decaf
- See the Yorkshire Tea history and the Gold vs Original comparison.

PG Tips: the brisk Kenya led morning brand

PG Tips launched in 1930 (Twinings, by comparison, dates its business to 1706) and has a deep cultural footprint (the chimps adverts ran 1956 to 2002). The blend is Kenya led, producing a brighter, brisker cup than Yorkshire. The pyramid bag was a 1996 PG innovation that improved infusion.

- PG Tips Original English Breakfast, 80 Tea Bags 232g, the everyday flagship (also in a 400-bag pack)
- See the PG Tips deep dive.

Tetley: the everyday value mainstream brand

Tetley introduced the round bag to British retail in 1989 and has built one of the broadest tea and herbal ranges of any supermarket brand. The cup is lighter than Yorkshire or PG, more universally drinkable, and the value pricing has made Tetley the volume mainstream pick for decades.

- Tetley Original English Breakfast, 40 Tea Bags 125g, the everyday value flagship
- Tetley Decaf English Breakfast, 120 Tea Bags 375g, the value tier decaf
- See the Tetley deep dive.

Twinings: the heritage brand with the broadest range

Twinings has been blending tea since 1706, making it one of the longest running tea brands in the world. Look along the Twinings shelf and you will find English Breakfast and Earl Grey, then Lapsang Souchong, Russian Caravan and Darjeeling, plus a large herbal collection. For drinkers who want one brand that handles every category, Twinings is the answer.

- Our Twinings shelf is green tea, such as Twinings Pure Green Tea, 20 Tea Bags 50g.
- See the Twinings curator review.

Teapigs: the premium pyramid tier whole leaf brand

Teapigs (founded 2006) brought premium whole leaf tea in plant based pyramids ("tea temples") to mainstream British retail. The pyramids contain whole leaves rather than the dust and fannings that fill most British tea bags, producing a noticeably better cup. The price per cup is higher than supermarket brands; the cup quality is the bigger step.

- Teapigs Everyday Brew 15 Bags, the flagship daily pyramid
- Teapigs Mao Feng Green 15 Bags, premium whole leaf green
- Teapigs Decaf English Breakfast, 15 Tea Bags 50g, premium pyramid decaf
- See the Teapigs deep dive.

Clipper: the organic + Fairtrade everyday brand

Clipper (founded 1984 in Beaminster, Dorset) was the first UK brand to launch certified Fairtrade tea (1994) and one of the earliest to commit to comprehensive organic certification. The cup is at supermarket everyday price points; the certifications and sustainability credentials are the differentiator.

- We sell Clipper: see the Clipper range, or Pukka for more organic tea.
- See the Clipper deep dive.

The smaller brilliant brands worth knowing

- **Pukka:** an organic herbal pioneer that holds down the Ayurvedic side of the British shelf
- **Dragonfly:** organic herbalist single ingredient teas at sensible prices
- **Yogi** An American import with serious herb credentials across its blends
- **Hyson** Sri Lankan single origin specialist with the strongest direct from source story on the shelf
- See the full brands directory.

How to choose your brand

1. **What strength do you like?** If you grew up on Yorkshire and find PG "watery", you're a Yorkshire drinker. If you find Yorkshire "harsh", you're a Tetley or Twinings drinker.
2. **How much milk do you take?** A milky cup needs a strong base (Yorkshire, Assam led blends). A black or low milk cup can use a lighter blend (Twinings English Breakfast, Tetley).

3. **How much do you care about pyramid vs round?** Pyramid bags (PG, Teapigs, Twinings) deliver more flavour because the leaves can move. Round bags (Tetley, Clipper) are fine for everyday drinking but less expressive.
4. **Do organic certifications matter?** If yes, Clipper is the value pick, Pukka the premium option.
5. **Range or focus?** Twinings if you want one brand to handle classic, herbal, and specialty. Yorkshire if you only need one brilliant builder's brew.

Sensible caveats

- **"Best" is subjective.** Tea cup preference is shaped by upbringing, region, and habit. The "best" tea is the one you actually want a second cup of.
- **Premium isn't always better.** A daily Yorkshire Tea bag can be objectively more enjoyable than a fancier blend you don't actually like. Don't pay for a brand you'd rather not drink.
- **Buying small first:** our smaller pack sizes let you test a new brand without committing to 240 bags. Most everyday brands come in 40-bag and 80-bag versions before the family pack sizes.
- **Don't underestimate Tetley:** the bargain price makes Tetley easy to wave away, yet the cup is properly good and suits anyone who finds Yorkshire too heavy.
- **Don't pay coffee shop prices for chai latte:** a coffee shop chai latte costs far more than a Yogi Classic Chai bag (about 19p a bag at our price on 18 September 2026) brewed properly at home with whole milk, and is rarely better. See how to make masala chai.

Related reading: the best loose leaf tea UK, the best decaf tea UK, the best green tea UK, the Yorkshire vs PG Tips, the Tetley vs PG Tips, and the best selling British teas roundup.

How the British shelf actually splits

Strip away the marketing and the British black tea shelf divides into three clear tiers. The mainstream strong tier is Yorkshire and PG Tips: Yorkshire the heavier Assam led cup that survives milk and still tastes of tea, PG the brighter Kenya led morning lift. The everyday value tier is Tetley and Clipper: Tetley the lighter, universally drinkable round bag, Clipper the same price band but carrying the organic and Fairtrade credentials it pioneered in 1994. Up at the premium end sit Teapigs and the better Twinings lines, with whole leaves in plant based pyramids instead of the dust and fannings in most bags, and that changes the cup itself, not just the logo. Twinings sits across all three because three centuries of blending lets one brand cover classic, Earl Grey, smoky and herbal in a single range.

The practical decision is not which brand is best in the abstract but which cup you want a second of. Strength preference is set by what you grew up on, so a lifelong Yorkshire drinker will find PG thin and a Tetley drinker will find Yorkshire harsh, and both are right for themselves. The amount of milk you take should drive the choice as much as the brand: a milky mug needs a strong Assam led base to survive it, while a black or barely milked cup can carry a lighter blend. Pyramid versus round matters at the margin, since pyramids let the leaf move and express more, but a round bag everyday brewed properly still beats a premium cup you do not actually enjoy.

Quick take

There is no single best British tea bag, only the best for a given drinker: Yorkshire for the strong proper cuppa, PG Tips for a brisk morning, Tetley for a lighter everyday, Twinings for range, Teapigs for premium whole leaf, Clipper for organic Fairtrade value. Buy the small pack first and test the cup before committing to a 240-bag box, match the blend strength to how much milk you take, and never pay a premium for a brand you would rather not drink. Premium is a real step in leaf quality, but the best tea is simply the one you want a second cup of.

> **Stock the shelf:** a strong everyday from Yorkshire Tea, range from Twinings, a brisk morning from PG Tips, premium pyramids from Teapigs, or organic from Pukka. Browse the full British black tea range.

Cited

- Twinings: our history (the business dates from 1706)
- Lipton Teas: PG Tips (launched 1930)

FROM THE CURATOR

teas · Whichever cup you drink to the bottom is the right one. Leave the sampling until you have settled on that one.

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