Yorkshire Tea vs Tetley

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> **Yorkshire vs Tetley:** Yorkshire Tea vs Tetley compared: blend origin, cup character, range, value, brand identity. UK independent tea guide. Free UK delivery £35+, free sample.

Last reviewed by the teas.co.uk team on 8 August 2026.

Yorkshire Tea vs Tetley is the supermarket question that most British drinkers actually face every week. Both sit in the top three by volume, both are everyday standard cups of black tea, and both occupy the £3 to £5 supermarket price band. The differences are real but more subtle than the Yorkshire vs PG split, and the choice often comes down to whether you want a heavier, deeper cup (Yorkshire) or a lighter, slightly more delicate one (Tetley).

This guide covers the actual differences in blend, flavour, strength, value, and brand history, with a clear recommendation for which fits which kind of drinker.

The headline differences

	Yorkshire Tea	Tetley
Owner	Bettys & Taylors of Harrogate (family owned)	Tata Consumer Products
Founded as a tea brand	1977	1837
Blend origin	Africa, India, Sri Lanka (assam led)	Africa, India, Sri Lanka (broader blend)
Flavour character	Malty, deep, robust, biscuity	Lighter, more rounded, slightly nutty
Strength on standard brew	Stronger	Lighter to medium
Bag style	Square or pillow	Round (since 1989)
Typical price (80 bags)	£3.50 to £5	£2.50 to £4
Range breadth	Narrower, focused	Wider, lots of flavoured variants

The flavour difference

Yorkshire and Tetley are closer in style than Yorkshire and PG, but they're still distinctly different cups when you taste them side by side.

Yorkshire Tea is the heavier, deeper drink. The Assam led blend produces a malty, biscuity, slightly honeyed cup that holds up well to milk and stays interesting through the second pour. It's the cup that drinks "more". For drinkers who want a strong character morning brew, Yorkshire delivers more concentrated flavour per cup.

Tetley is lighter and more rounded, with a slightly nuttier finish and less of the heavy malty character. The blend is broader (less heavily Assam weighted) and the cup drinks gentler. Some drinkers describe Tetley as "the more polite tea", which is reductive but captures something real: it's less assertive than Yorkshire and slightly more universally drinkable, especially for people who don't want a heavy morning hit.

The strength difference matters: brewed for the same time with the same milk amount, Yorkshire produces a noticeably darker, heavier cup. Drinkers who want a strong builders' brew tend to prefer Yorkshire; drinkers who like a lighter everyday cup tend to prefer Tetley.

The price advantage

Tetley is consistently the cheaper of the two on the supermarket shelf, often by 10 to 25 percent on a like for like 80-bag pack. For high volume drinkers (a 5-cup a day habit) the saving is meaningful: maybe £30 to £50 a year over Yorkshire at the standard price points.

The trade off is the lighter character. Heavy tea drinkers often find they use 1.5 Tetley bags to get the strength of 1 Yorkshire bag, which closes the value gap. For lighter drinkers who use one bag per cup either way, Tetley is the cheaper habit.

Both brands run aggressive promotional cycles; the relative price advantage shifts week to week depending on which brand is on multi buy.

Brand identity and history

Tetley is the older brand by 140 years (founded 1837 in Yorkshire, of all places, before relocating its identity south). It built mass market British tea distribution through the mid-20th century and dominated supermarket share until Yorkshire's gradual rise from the 1990s onwards. The Tetley Tea Folk (animated character mascots) ran for decades and remain part of the brand identity even as advertising approaches have evolved.

Yorkshire Tea is the younger, more aggressive brand builder. Founded in 1977 by Bettys & Taylors of Harrogate (which had been roasting coffee since 1886), the brand has grown into the UK's biggest selling tea brand by value through consistent marketing, family ownership stability, and the Yorkshire pride positioning that resonates strongly with British consumers.

For ownership: Tetley is owned by Tata Consumer Products (the Indian conglomerate that also owns Tata Tea), making it part of one of the world's largest tea groups. Yorkshire remains family owned by Bettys & Taylors of Harrogate.

Range and variants comparison

Tetley has a much broader range than Yorkshire. The Tetley shelf typically includes: Original, Decaf, Gold, Earl Grey, Green Tea, fruit infusions, super tea blends, "Cleanse" and "Sleep" wellness blends, and seasonal variants. The breadth makes Tetley a one brand fits all option for households where different family members like different teas.

Yorkshire's range is more focused: Original, Gold, Hard Water, Decaf, Bedtime Brew, and a small selection of variants. The brand has resisted the temptation to extend into wellness and flavoured tea territory, sticking with the core black tea proposition. For black tea purists, this focus is part of the appeal.

For unusual variants like specifically blended for hard water tea, Yorkshire is the only major brand that addresses the limescale problem directly.

Decaf comparison

Both brands have decent decaf versions. Yorkshire Decaf retains slightly more character than Tetley Decaf (because the underlying Yorkshire blend is stronger to start with, more survives the decaffeination process). Tetley Decaf is gentler and slightly more subtle. For a decaf drinker who wants the most tea like cup, Yorkshire usually wins; for a drinker who wants a milder evening cup, Tetley is fine.

Workplace and household considerations

For a workplace tea cupboard or a household with several drinkers, Tetley is often the better default for two reasons: it's more universally drinkable across different milk preferences, and the broader range means you can keep multiple variants from one familiar brand. Yorkshire is the more committed choice for households where black tea is the main household drink and everyone agrees they want a strong cup.

For a single drinker who knows what they like, the question is just personal preference: heavier and deeper (Yorkshire) or lighter and more rounded (Tetley).

Which one for which drinker?

- **Strong cup with milk daily drinker** Yorkshire Tea Original or Yorkshire Gold
- **Lighter cup everyday drinker** Tetley Original
- **Mixed household with different preferences** Tetley for the broader range
- **Hard water area** Yorkshire Tea Hard Water (no Tetley equivalent)
- **Pot drinker doing 2 to 3 cups per infusion** Yorkshire for stronger across pours
- **Cost conscious heavy drinker** Tetley if you can use 1 bag per cup; Yorkshire if you find you double bag Tetley to get strength
- **Decaf drinker** Yorkshire Decaf for more character
- **Wants flavoured options from same brand** Tetley for the broader range

What we stock

Browse the Yorkshire Tea range and Tetley range. The most bought versions of each:

Yorkshire Tea

- Yorkshire Tea Original Loose Leaf Tea, 250g
- Yorkshire Tea Caramelised Biscuit Brew, 40 Tea Bags 112g
- Yorkshire Tea Cherry Bakewell Brew, 40 Tea Bags 112g
- Yorkshire Tea Gold Blend Loose Leaf Tea, 250g

Tetley

- Tetley Seriously Refreshing, 75 Tea Bags 250g
- Tetley Extra Strong Breakfast Tea, 75 Tea Bags 237g
- Tetley Original English Breakfast, 400 Tea Bags 1.25kg
- Tetley Redbush Pure, 40 Tea Bags 100g

The verdict

Tetley is the lighter, broader range, slightly cheaper everyday tea that suits a wider range of drinkers. Yorkshire is the heavier, more focused, slightly pricier strong character tea that earns intense brand loyalty among committed daily drinkers. Both are well made, ethically sourced supermarket black teas; neither is "better" in any objective sense, and the choice is genuinely a matter of cup character preference.

If you've been buying one for years out of habit, do a blind side by side test. The difference is real, and you may have been drinking the less suited brand for your actual taste preferences without knowing.

For the wider context see the black tea overview, the Yorkshire Tea vs PG Tips comparison, the Tetley vs PG Tips comparison, and the Yorkshire Gold vs Yorkshire Original comparison.

Common picks around this topic: English Breakfast, Earl Grey, green tea, loose leaf tea, Darjeeling, oolong, and herbal tea. The rest of the tea shop sits here, with UK shipping free above £35.

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