# Tea Equipment

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Tea equipment, in summary:** Tea equipment is mostly optional refinement around two essentials: heat the water, give the leaf room.

*Last reviewed by the teas.co.uk team in March 2026.*

**Tea equipment ranges from minimal (kettle + mug) to elaborate (matcha kit, gongfu setup, Yixing teapots). The right equipment matters less than people think for daily British black tea but more than expected for premium specialty teas. £20-50 buys complete entry level setup that lasts years.**

## The minimum viable tea setup

- Electric kettle (any)
- Mug (any)
- Tea bags or loose leaf tea

That's enough for daily British black tea drinking. Most British households use exactly this.

## The recommended starter setup

- Variable temperature kettle (£40-100) OR standard kettle
- Teapot (600-800ml, glass or ceramic, £15-30)
- Basket infuser (£10-15) for single mug loose leaf brewing
- Fine mesh strainer (£5)
- Tea storage tin (£5-15)
- Quality mug

Total: £40-80 of equipment that lasts years.

## Equipment by tea type

### For British black tea (everyday)

Kettle + mug + tea bag. That's it.

### For loose leaf black tea

Add basket infuser or teapot.

### For green tea

Variable temperature kettle helpful (75-80°C) but not essential. Boil and wait works.

### For matcha

Bamboo whisk (chasen, £8-15) + wide bowl + sifter. More on matcha.

### For gongfu brewing

Gaiwan (£10-30) OR Yixing teapot (£20-100+) + small cups + cha hai (pitcher) + cha pan (tray). More on gongfu.

### For cold brew

Lidded jug or jar (£5-15). Optional cold brew bottle with built in strainer.

## The kettle question

### Standard electric kettle

Boils water; that's it. Adequate for black tea, herbal tea, oolong. £15-50.

### Variable temperature kettle

Sets specific temperature. Useful for green tea (75-80°C) and white tea (80-85°C). £40-100.

### Premium variable temp kettle

Fellow Stagg, Cuisinart specialty kettles. £100-200. Quality build; precise temperature.

### Stovetop kettle

Whistling kettles or Le Creuset cast iron. Aesthetic choice; slower than electric.

## The teapot question

### Glass teapot

£15-30. Lets you watch leaves unfurl. Beautiful for jasmine pearls or oolong. Some come with built in glass infuser.

### Ceramic / porcelain teapot

£15-50. Traditional British. Holds heat well.

### Cast iron teapot (tetsubin style)

£30-100. Japanese tradition. Holds heat extremely well.

### Yixing clay teapot

£30-200. Chinese specialty for gongfu. Each pot dedicated to one tea type.

## The infuser question

### Basket infuser (recommended)

£5-15. Sits in mug. Allows leaves to expand. Best for everyday use.

### Mesh ball / tea egg

£3-8. Cheap; suboptimal extraction (leaves can't expand fully).

### Brewing basket with lid

£10-25. Larger basket for in mug brewing with lid as drip tray.

### Cotton / silicone reusable bags

£5-15 for set. Eco friendly. Slightly slower brewing.

## The matcha equipment

### Bamboo whisk (chasen)

£8-15. Essential for matcha. Kitchen whisks don't work.

### Matcha bowl (chawan)

Or any wide ceramic bowl 12-15cm wide. £10-30 for specific bowl.

### Sifter

Small fine mesh sieve. £3-10.

### Bamboo scoop (chashaku)

Optional; ½ teaspoon works.

## Storage equipment

### Tea tins (caddies)

£5-20. Airtight, opaque. Standard storage.

### Glass jars with rubber gaskets

£5-15. Good seal but UV vulnerable; keep in cupboard.

### Vacuum sealed bags

£10-30. Excellent for long term storage.

## Premium specialty equipment

### Cha pan (tea tray)

For gongfu brewing. Catches spills; allows water pouring over the pot. £20-80.

### Cha hai (fairness pitcher)

For gongfu. Pour brewed tea into pitcher; pour from pitcher to cups. £10-30.

### Tea pet

Small clay figurine for gongfu trays. Decorative tradition. £5-30.

### Tea timer

£5-20. Helpful for timing steeps precisely.

### Thermometer for water

£10-30. Useful before variable temp kettles became affordable.

## Where to buy

- **UK kitchen retailers:** John Lewis, Lakeland.
- **UK tea specialists:** Whittard and teas.co.uk, alongside specialists such as Mei Leaf and Postcard Teas.
- **Amazon:** Wide range; quality varies.
- **Asian groceries:** Often best value for gaiwans, mesh strainers.
- **Direct Japanese imports:** For premium chasen and chawan.

## The "good enough" approach

For most British drinkers, daily tea drinking needs:

- Electric kettle
- One favourite mug
- Basic teapot for visitors / weekend
- Basket infuser if loose leaf occasional

£30-50 of equipment lasts decades. Don't over invest unless serious tea exploration is the goal.

## FAQ

**Best tea equipment for beginners?** Variable temperature kettle + glass teapot + basket infuser. £50-80 total.

**Do I need a Yixing teapot?** Only for gongfu Chinese specialty tea drinking.

**Bamboo whisk for matcha?** Yes, kitchen whisks don't work properly.

**Storage equipment essential?** Airtight tin in cool dark cupboard. Even original packaging works if it re seals.

**Where to buy?** UK kitchen retailers; specialist tea shops; Asian groceries for value.

*Curator's note: tea equipment matters less than people think for daily British tea drinking, more than expected for premium specialty. £50 of equipment is enough for most. Don't over invest unless serious tea exploration is the goal. Lee, teas.co.uk, Tunbridge Wells.*

### What you actually need, at a glance

| Tier | Kit | The read |
|---|---|---|
| Minimum viable | A kettle and any vessel with a way to hold leaf | Good tea brewed here beats bad tea anywhere |
| Recommended starter | Kettle, a teapot or large infuser, a timer | The 90% setup; everything after is refinement |
| Green/delicate | Variable-temp kettle helps most here | Off-boil control is the real upgrade |
| Matcha | Bowl and whisk (or a small frother) | The one tea with a real kit requirement |
| Storage | Airtight, opaque caddy | Cheap, and protects everything you buy |

Stock the leaf your kit serves in the green tea range or the full tea shop (free UK delivery over £35).

**FROM THE CURATOR**

*teas* · Try the cheapest plain piece of kit first. Spend more only once the basic kit has earned its place.

### Brewing kit reading

- How to make tea
- matcha reference
- green tea reference
- How to store tea

### More from the tea wiki

- Green tea
- Black tea
- Oolong tea
- White tea
- Herbal tea
- Caffeine in tea
- How to make tea properly
- Loose leaf vs teabag

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