

Loose-Leaf Tea Brewing Chart

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Tea type	Water temp	Leaf per 8 oz (240 ml)	Steep time	Steeps	Watch out for
Green (sencha, dragon well)	175°F / 80°C	2 g (1 tsp)	1-2 min	2-3	Boiling water turns it bitter
Japanese gyokuro	140°F / 60°C	4 g (2 tsp)	2 min	3	Too hot kills the sweetness
White (silver needle, bai mu dan)	185°F / 85°C	2.5 g (heaping tsp)	2-4 min	2-3	Under-leafing tastes like water
Oolong (light, rolled)	195°F / 90°C	3 g (1 tbsp)	2-3 min	4-5	Give leaves room to unfurl
Oolong (dark, roasted)	205°F / 96°C	3 g (1 tbsp)	3 min	4-5	Rinse 5 s first for a cleaner cup
Black (assam, ceylon, breakfast)	205°F / 96°C	2.5 g (1 tsp)	3-4 min	1-2	Over-steeping = astringent
Pu-erh (ripe / shou)	212°F / 100°C	4 g (1 tbsp)	20-30 s (gongfu)	6-8	Always rinse the leaves once
Herbal (chamomile, peppermint)	212°F / 100°C	2-3 g (1 tbsp)	5-7 min	1	Cover the cup to keep aromatics
Rooibos	212°F / 100°C	2.5 g (1 tsp)	5-7 min	1-2	Hard to over-steep — be generous
Matcha (whisked)	175°F / 80°C	2 g (1 tsp sifted)	Whisk 20-30 s	—	Sift to avoid clumps

Cold brew (all teas)

Use 1.5× the leaf you'd use hot, cover with cold filtered water, and refrigerate: green & white 4-6 hours, oolong 6-8 hours, black 8-10 hours, herbal 8-12 hours. Strain as soon as it tastes right — cold brew is naturally sweeter and almost never bitter.

Five habits that fix 90% of bad cups

- 1 Weigh your leaf once with a scale, then learn what that looks like in your spoon.
- 2 Use filtered water. Hard tap water flattens aroma and leaves a film on the surface.
- 3 Preheat the pot or cup — cold vessels drop your water temp by 10-15°F instantly.
- 4 Set a timer. Thirty extra seconds is the difference between smooth and harsh.
- 5 Store leaf airtight, away from light, heat and spices. Never in the fridge.

No thermometer? Read the water

Shrimp eyes (tiny bubbles on the bottom) ≈ 160-175°F · **Crab eyes** (strings of small bubbles) ≈ 175-185°F · **Fish eyes** (steady rising bubbles) ≈ 195-205°F · **Rolling boil** = 212°F. Or boil, then let it sit uncovered: 1 minute ≈ 205°F, 2 minutes ≈ 195°F, 4 minutes ≈ 180°F.