

Scientists at Northumbria's School of Life Science (located in Newcastle UK) have discovered that the key to the best tasting brew is to let it sit for six minutes before drinking. Allowing the tea to rest this way avoids it scolding as it has cooled to 140 F/60 C, apparently, the optimum temperatures for the flavors to flow. However, leave it 17 minutes and 30 seconds and the tea will be past its best.

Their conclusion was to add boiling water to a tea bag in a mug and leave for two minutes. Remove the bag add the milk and leave for a further six minutes or until it reaches 140 F/60 C. Should the temperature drop below 113 F/45 C the flavors are destroyed.

Instructions for the Perfect Pot of Tea

- Warm the pot whether using tea bags or leaf, a quick swirl of hot water means the cold doesn't shock the tea.
- Use a china teapot - why, because it is traditional and part of the ritual.
- One per person and one for the pot is still the golden rule when using a loose-leaf tea.
- Freshly boiled water boil the water fresh, (not re-boiled) for good oxygen levels.
- Stirring the tea leaves or bags helps the tea to infuse.
- 3 to 4 minutes is the time needed for optimum infusion.
- Milk first or last is an age-old question. Originally, milk first was to avoid cracking delicate china cups with hot tea but adding milk after is a good way to judge the strength of the tea. However, it is each to their own

Instructions for Perfect Cup of Tea for One

- Add 1 cup/200 mL of freshly boiled water to your tea bag (in a mug)
- Allow the tea bag to brew for 2 minutes
- Remove the tea bag
- Add 10 mL of milk
- Wait 6 minutes before consumption for the cuppa to reach its optimum temperature of 140 F/60 C

