



Online Brewing Instructions (<http://www.O-Cha.com/brew.htm>)

To ensure that your experience with our tea is also first rate, we've prepared these instructions for your guidance. Green tea can be a bit "fussy" when it comes to brewing, so if you are a beginner please read these instructions very carefully.

- 1) **Proportion of Water & Leaf:** This varies by the tea, so you may need to experiment. First, determine how many ounces/milliliters your teapot holds. Generally, use 1 gram (weight) of leaf per 2 ounces/60ml of water . A teaspoon is close to 4 grams. (**See Special Instructions for Gyokuro**)
- 2) **Temperature:** *This is where most mistakes are made.* Temperature for most of our teas should be 175F/79C. Bring water to the point just short of boiling then remove from heat. Cool further by pouring water back and forth between cups a few times (which also pre-warms your cup!), or by waiting. Use of a thermometer until you get your technique down is recommended. (**See Special Instructions for Gyokuro**)
- 3) **Brew time:** 1.5~2 minutes, no more. During the brew, allow tea to sit motionless. Swirl slightly as you pour, making sure to completely drain the tea pot and leaving only wet leaves behind.
- 4) **For a second or third serving:** Re-infuse wet leaves from previous infusion for 30 seconds. You can continue to make additional servings with the same leaves, with each batch growing weaker in strength, usually 3 servings.
- 5) It is completely normal for small bits of leaf to enter the cup and these should be consumed as they are high in fiber.
- 6) **Storage:** Store unopened bags in the refrigerator, but do not freeze. Shelf life of unopened bags kept under refrigeration is approximately six months. The air inside of the unopened packages contains nitrogen gas used to displace exposure to oxygen. Once opened, the shelf life is reduced to 2~3 months and the tea should be consumed within that time frame. Once opened, store in a cool, dry, airtight container but do not refrigerate.
- 7) **Expiration:** Most of our teas have the expiration dates printed on the package in Japanese. The order printed is: year, month, and day (2003.9.10 = September 10th, 2003). Where there are two dates, the first is the date of manufacture and the last is the date of expiration. If there is a single date with a "180" on the line below it, the date shown is date of manufacture with expiration is 180 days later.

Tea bags

Once again, make sure you are using hot water of the proper temperature. After brewing, drain well and put the used tea bag in a covered dish. One tea bag can make quite a few cups of tea. For iced tea, use one bag per quart/liter of water. Shake well before serving.

Shincha (First Harvest Green Tea Available May-July)

Shincha can be a bit stronger and more astringent. Use slightly less leaf and brew at reduced time of 1 to 1.5 minutes.

Gyokuro - Special Instructions

This is a very fine, expensive tea. Small differences in brewing procedure can result in a big difference in taste. A lower water temperature is extremely important to achieving success and is lower than our other teas, **140 F / 60C** . Therefore please try to follow these instructions carefully or the tea will not taste as it should. First, determine how many ounces/milliliters your teapot holds - this tea is also best brewed in a teapot that allows a lot of room for expansion of the leaves (tea balls/small infusers do not work well.) Next, determine how much tea you will use in advance - gyokuro is added at the rate of **1 gram of loose leaf tea per ounce of water** (1 gram per 30ml.) 1 tablespoon is very close to 5 grams. It's very important to **pre-heat the teapot and teacups** by first pouring hot water just short of boiling into the empty teapot first. After waiting for about a minute, pour from the teapot into empty teacup(s), warming them and at the same time cooling the water. Add tea to the now warm but empty teapot and pour hot water from the teacup(s) back into the teapot. Brew for **2 minutes**. Will 10 degrees make much of a difference? Yes! A successful brew will not be bitter. The 2nd infusion usually turns out greener than the first.

Brewing Tips

- 1) Since green tea is compact, it needs room to **e x p a n d**. For that reason, we do not recommend the use of "tea balls" for brewing green tea. Likewise, many cast iron teapots such as testubin tend to have too small infuser baskets.
- 2) Most of the caffeine is in the very first batch. If you are trying to cut back on caffeine, pour out the first batch and re-brew.
- 3) **If your tea is too bitter...** it means that you either brewed too hot, too long, or possibly both. To adjust for taste, adjust temperature and quantity of tea used, not brew time.