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# Complete Guide to Recycling Teapigs Tea Bags

Ever felt like all you need is a good cup of tea to put the world to right? Here at Teapigs, we're doing everything we can to - quite literally - make that happen. Our passionate team are going above and beyond to do more than just providing the nation with a decent cuppa by working to ensure **all our tea temples are 100% plastic-free and recyclable**. Because how can we expect the world to grow the tea we all love to drink so much, if we're not looking after it in return?

Here in the UK, we're known for our love for tea - and for jolly good reason. [Brits drink an average of around 100 million cups of tea a day](#), and that's with 96% of us opting for tea bags over tea leaves. While stirring that extra sugar into your brew, it's easy to forget that impact conventional plastic tea bags have on the planet is far from sweet. With [plastic pollution being one of the biggest contributors to environmental damage](#), we're making it our mission to serve the convenience of a tea bag - without the nasty plastics.

So, if you're here because you too are keen to do your bit for the planet but unsure if you can recycle tea bags, we've got you covered.

Read ahead to discover everything you need to know about recycling used tea bags, how you can compost effectively, and the switches we're making to continue working towards a greener future. Safe to say, we've got this in the bag...

## Composting: What's the tea?

Now you're sitting comfortably with a hot brew in hand, let's cover all the things you need to know about composting.

## What is composting?

In a nutshell, **composting describes the recycling of organic materials**, like those leftovers veg peelings or pile of leaves sitting around in your garden that typically go to waste. This super clever process turns them into an **effective fertiliser that helps feed soil and plants** – enriching them with all the nutrients they need to grow. So, not only is it highly sustainable, but it's also extremely easy to do. Just be sure to wear gloves, or your hands could get dirt-tea! (Sorry, we had to...)

## What is polypropylene?

If you're an avid tea drinker, you'll probably be well acquainted with polypropylene. Despite this plastic sealant being **neither recyclable nor biodegradable**, several conventional tea brands are still using it in their products. The process requires **heat and glue to seal the bags together**, resulting in an unsustainable product that **can't be broken down**. What's more, when steeped in hot water these bags **release billions of microplastic particles** – which then leak into the brew *and* the person who drinks it. Yikes – that's one way to leave a bitter taste in the mouth.

## Contamination of compost heaps

Now, if you're new to the compost world, the first thing to keep in mind is that **contamination can occur**. This happens when you mix non-compostable items (like animal-based products or weeds that have gone to seed) with organics in your compost bin. We know this can be easily done – especially on those busy days when you're in a rush – but once you know what can and can't be composted, it will come naturally to you. There are plenty of resources to show you the ropes – just do a little reading up and you'll be on your way to being a compost connoisseur.

## Biodegradable vs Compostable

If you're curious what the difference is between bio and compo, allow us to – ahem – 'break it down' for you.

- **Biodegradable products** can be anything that degrades (like bio-friendly food wrappers or plastic bags) and **can take up to six months to break down** in the environment. Depending on the material composition, sometimes micro toxic waste can still be left behind.

- **Composting** is all about the organic goods we've mentioned above and **doesn't take any longer than 180 days** to do its thing. Plus, the residues are extremely useful for all your fertiliser needs.

When it comes to recycling tea bags, it's worth remembering that the official statement from [Worldwide Responsible Accredited Production \(WRAP\)](#) still advises that used tea bags should be thrown into compost bins.

Now that's science lesson number one complete, let's move on to the next module. Get the kettle on for round two.

## The Teapigs difference

Every time you buy a Teapigs product, you can have total peace of mind that absolutely nothing in that thoughtfully packaged box has had a negative environmental impact. The temples and the handy string attached aren't just there to look fancy. They're made from **corn-starch, which is a natural carbohydrate extracted from corn**. And for those drawings on the attached paper label, they're printed using **a vegetable-based ink – meaning no glue or heat**. In fact, the only waste you'll need to think about is the food waste bin that can be used to compost the bags.

These lovingly made temples are then wrapped in a clever compostable material made from **renewable wood pulp**. Enter: the ground-breaking innovation that is [Natureflex](#). Created by the brilliant team at Futamura, Natureflex can be converted into airtight packaging, enabling the clear inner bag which keeps your tasty tea fresh is now 100% biodegradable. If that doesn't call for a communal celebration biscuit dunk, we don't know what does. So, if you've ever been unsure whether tea bag wrappers are recyclable, you know they are with us.

### The benefits of Natureflex include:

- **Effective and ec0-friendly**. It's a perfect sustainable alternative to commercial plastic packaging, providing the same protection without the environmental impact.
- **Responsibly sourced**. Natureflex is made using easily biodegradable cellulose from wood pulp sourced from sustainable plantations, instead of nasty petrochemicals.
- **Fully accredited**. All NatureFlex films meet the global standards for home and industrial composting, so you can be rest assured you're purchasing the best quality.

- **Ready for the future.** As well as our Teabags, Natureflex is used for a variety of package types that typically use plastic, making it a highly future-forward material.

This recent investment means the switch can take a little while to fully process, so please do bear with us whilst we ensure all Teapigs on the UK shelves are future-forward with Natureflex. If you're unsure on whether yours is, you can [head over here](#) to find out whether your pack is one of the many Teapig products packaged using this game changing wrapping.

[Find out more about Natureflex.](#)

## Our loose tea pouches

Previously, our much-loved loose tea pouches were made from a mix of recyclable paper and polyethylene. While this was a step in the right direction, it presented a few fiddly issues with local councils. These two materials come with different properties, meaning they needed separating before recycling. Not the easiest task to tackle. With us being the think-out-of-the-tea-box team we are, **in 2020 we were delighted to show the world our even more sustainable upgrade to packaging.**

**Made using FSC certified paperboard and a clever Natureflex inner bag,** our loose tea pouches have also joined our packs of 15 in being the 100% eco-friendly, delicious tea you all love to sip so much. We're working hard to introduce the entire pouch range to the Natureflex revolution, but don't worry – **all our most popular blends are available to purchase in this exciting new packaging.**

## How to recycle our tea temples

OK, so now you're up to speed with all the fun stuff we've been doing to step up our eco-warrior game. Great! But how do you go about composting your Teapigs tea temples at home? The simple answer is this: **please don't.** As home composts are unable to break down those micro-organisms (this requires a certain amount of heat and pressure), the bags would remain intact in the soil. Not the result we'd all would hope for. Thankfully, there is a very simple solution to this.

**Ever wondered, can tea bags go in food recycling? They sure can.** In fact, most councils today have food waste systems available that can do that cool micro-organism-breaking-down-of-materials thing for you. All you need to do is drop off your tea temples to your local council with an industrial food waste offering, and **within 12 weeks they will all be completely biodegradable.** So while you may not

be able to compost our tea temples on your doorstep, you can still do it pretty close by. Now that's quali-tea. [Find out where you can get a food waste bin.](#)

## Teapigs pledge for the future

OK, we know we've been talking the talk about our commitment to becoming the greenest tea company on the UK market shelves. But at Teapigs, we're taking sizeable strides to make sure that we're also walking the walk. This doesn't mean we're taking off with umbrellas whilst claiming to be *practically perfect in every way* (although, that would be a sustainable travel method). It simply means that we care a whole lot about our planet and the people that live on it, and we won't stop working until we're making a big of a difference as we can.

Here's just a few ways we're taking action...

- **Certified B Corp**

We love what we produce, but we don't just sit around all day drinking copious cups of it while knitting tea cosies. We're being active in making positive changes to our precious planet, and we have the **B Corp certification to prove it.**

This incredible global community of brands using business as a force for good represents **purpose and passion for making a positive sustainable impact.**

To achieve this, [B Corp](#) will thoroughly assess the ways a business is helping its people, environment, and community to the highest standards. We're delighted to be a certified B Corp, and we're excited to keep on improving on the Teapigs mission to provide the nation with **100% plastic-free, sustainable and great-tasting tea.**

- **Ethical Schemes**

We know that we wouldn't be who we are today without the incredible communities that provide us with our delicious tea. Every time you take a delicious sip of Teapigs, you're tasting the **sustainable produce and processes of the well-run tea estates in Gisenyi and Rwanda that we source our leaves from.**

To give back, we work closely with the [Point Foundation](#) – an amazing charity which supports vulnerable children and orphans in the communities. Proceeds from every purchase of our [everyday brew](#), [decaf english breakfast](#), [kombucha](#) and [iced tea](#) we sell go towards the foundation.

We also frequently run fundraising events, and **together we have so far raised over £600,000.**

- **Plastic Free Trust Mark**

We were the very first tea brand to be awarded the Plastic Free Trust Mark. To say this was a proud moment that called for the biggest celebration chocolate cake to ever grace the Teapigs HQ would be an understatement. To help UK consumers make smarter choices when it comes to buying less plastic, environmental campaign group A Plastic Planet set out to create the Plastic Free Trust Mark. This accreditation, given to food and drink brands packaged without nasty plastics, sits proud on the front of every pack – making shopping sustainability a whole lot easier for our customers.

[Learn more about the Plastic Free Trust Mark.](#)

## **Ready to go in to the 'steep' end?**

Hopefully this blog has given you all the facts you need to crack on with recycling tea bags from Teapigs, but if you have any other questions, feel free to get in touch with our friendly team who are always happy to chat over a (virtual) cup of tea. We always love to see how you're composting ventures are going, so be sure to keep us up updated by tagging [@teapigs](#) on social.

## **How to recycle Teapigs tea bags – FAQ**

### **Can I compost used tea bags at home?**

Trying to compost your tea bags at home would defeat your objective to help the environment, as they can't fully decompose. This is because the process requires a certain amount of heat and pressure, so your used bags would only end up as waste in the ground. Instead, save them for your local food waste bin.

### **Can used tea bags go in food waste?**

Used tea bags can be disposed of with food waste. Instead of composting your Teapigs bags at home, simply drop them off at your local food waste bin and the brilliant teams can take care of them from there. This ensures they are disposed of in the most sustainable way possible. [Find your local food waste bin.](#)

### **Do tea bags go in general waste?**

You can dispose of your used teabags in general waste, they'll end up as landfill waste. If your local council doesn't currently have a food waste bin system, then it's most definitely time to raise it with them! Processes like this are crucial for preserving our planet as well as local environment - so go ahead and help drive sustainable change.