Salt

Different Kinds of Salt

Salt occurs naturally throughout the world, with seawater as its most plentiful source. However, not all salt is the same, so let's examine the different varieties of salt.

1. Table Salt

Table salt is one of the most common household chemicals. Table salt is 97% to 99% sodium chloride, NaCl. Pure sodium chloride is an ionic crystal solid. However, other compounds are present in table salt, depending on its source or additives that may be included before packaging.

2. Sea Salt

Sea salt is salt that is produced by the evaporation of seawater. It is used as a seasoning in foods, cooking, cosmetics and for preserving food. It is also called bay salt, solar salt, or simply salt.

3. Kosher and Pickling Salt

Kosher salt or kitchen salt (also called cooking salt, flake salt, rock salt, kashering salt or koshering salt) is coarse edible salt without common additives such as iodine. Typically used in cooking and not at the table, it consists mainly of sodium chloride and may include anticaking agents.

4. Rock Salt

Rock salt is the type of salt that is obtained in the form of rocks. Unlike sea salt, it is mined from salt mountains in the form of large rocks which are then crushed into different sizes according to the respective needs.

5. Road Salt

Road salt is made from sodium chloride, the same chemical found in table salt. Of all salt consumed in the United States, about 43% is used for highway de-icing, according to the U.S. Geological Survey in 2020.

Uses for Salt

1. Health and Hygiene

Salt helps the human body balance electrolytes and is essential for proper cell function. The American Heart Association states that most adults need at least 500 mg (1/10 teaspoon) of salt per day up to a maximum of 1,500 mg (1/4 teaspoon) per day.

Because of the high salt content in many processed foods, the average American eats closer to 3,400 mg (2/3 teaspoon) every day. However, in a disaster scenario, we can assume we will not be eating as much frozen food or fast food and therefore not consuming as much salt.

2. Food Preservation and Flavoring

By drawing out the moisture in a food, salt creates an environment where bacteria, fungi, and other dangerous organisms cannot survive. Salt is part of the process of curing meat and is necessary for fermentation.

Salt also enhances the flavor of foods. A pinch of salt can enhance sweetness or suppress bitterness in almost every food.

3. Cleaning agent

Because of its abrasive structure, salt is also useful as a cleaning agent. You can use it by itself or along with other natural products, including baking soda, white vinegar, or lemon juice.

4. Detergent Booster

Adding salt to your laundry detergent also can help remove sweat stains and odor from clothing. If you have hard water, salt can help cut down on the extra suds you probably get.

Salt will also help prevent color fading or bleeding in new bedding and towels. Just add a quarter cup of salt to the first few washes to help set the colors of the fabric. Later, you can revive colors by washing them in a saltwater solution.

How to Store Salt

The best way to store salt is in an airtight container placed in a cool, dry location away from sunlight.

Since bulk quantities of salt are sold in bags, you can repackage it in smaller containers for easier access and safer storage.

If you want to store salt in its original cardboard containers, you can. Just place them in a larger plastic container with a lid.

When stored properly, table salt will last indefinitely. Sea salts may deteriorate somewhat over time due to the other minerals they contain.