

Alabaster - $\text{CaSO}_4 \cdot 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$

Hardness = 2 (gypsum). Cleavage: not reported. Very soft; avoid all metal tools. Poor water solubility; clean normally with water. Derust with dilute oxalic acid or ammonium oxalate, but limit exposure time to prevent damage to polished surfaces. Sonicate with some NH_3 to remove grease and oils. Avoid acids, caustic alkalis, strong cleaning agents and heat. Soak in clean or water, *briefly* then rinse and dry. For obstinate stains - probably residues from handling - try acetone or alcohol (95–100% ethanol or 99% rubbing alcohol). See also [Gypsum](#).

References

Mindat: <https://www.mindat.org/min-90.html>

Handbook of Mineralogy: <https://www.handbookofmineralogy.org/pdfs/gypsum.pdf>

Burns, N. (1941) National Park Service Field Manual for Museums, 426 p. United States Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C.

Hardinger, S. (2025) Mineral Specimen Cleaning and Development for the Amateur, 339 p.

Sinkankas, J. (1972) Gemstone & Mineral Data Book, 346 p. Winchester Press, New York.