

Halite - NaCl

Hardness: 2.5. Cleavage: Perfect. Very soft and brittle; often crumbly. Readily soluble in water. Slightly soluble in ethanol and glycerine. Insoluble (?) in HCl (probably actually poor solubility in concentrated HCl). Clean with the brine in which the sample was formed, water saturated with NaCl or (less satisfactory) anhydrous organic solvents (alcohols or acetone lacking water). Pure halite is stable to atmospheric moisture, but impure samples (especially with trona) may be hygroscopic (and even deliquescent) and thus should be stored in a closed container over a desiccant. Storing under oil often impractical due to typically large sample size. Colored samples (pink, blue, etc.) may be photosensitive and fade over time (even if stored in darkness).

References

Mindat: <https://www.mindat.org/min-1804.html>

Handbook of Mineralogy: <http://www.handbookofmineralogy.org/pdfs/halite.pdf>

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

King, R. (1982) The cleaning of minerals. Journal of the Russell Society, 1 (1), 42–53.

Rohner, T. (2000) Properly clean minerals online cleaning book.

www.strahlen.org/stepbystep/mineralien-reinigung2.pdf. In German.

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

Weast, R., Ed. (1982) CRC Handbook of Chemistry and Physics, 2380 p., CRC Press, Inc., Cleveland.

Wight, Q. (1993) The Complete Book of Micromounting, 281 p. Mineralogical Record, Tucson, Arizona.