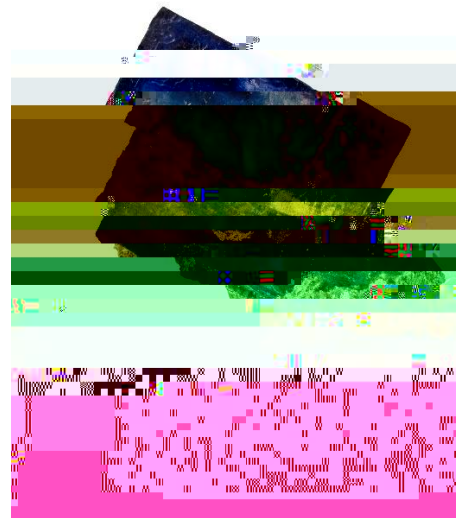


Better known as common salt, halite is a part of the halide mineral group and is most notable for its worldwide distribution for culinary uses. Halite has three cleavages at 90°, thereby yielding orthogonal, blocky shapes when broken. Halite is a precipitate and commonly found in saline evaporate deposits. Although typically white, other colors do exist pink, orange, blue and purple. The color is derived from defects in the crystal structure and inclusions of other mineral constituents. Besides its culinary use, salt is used in the manufacture of soap and glass, as a flux for the melting of metals, and as a glaze for porcelain enamel. Halite is also a desiccant and has been used as a preservative since ancient times. Before refrigeration and modern transportation, salt was highly valued and very expensive where not readily available. Because salt lowers the freezing temperature of water, salt continues to be widely used to melt ice on roadways. PK26



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