



# Why Is Seawater Salty?



by Ellen Lawrence

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by **Ellen Lawrence**

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# Contents

Salty Seawater .....	4
What Makes the Ocean Salty? .....	6
Rocks and Salt .....	8
Saltier and Saltier .....	10
Under the Sea .....	12
Saltwater Lakes .....	14
The Dead Sea .....	16
Can We Drink Salt Water? .....	18
Collecting Salt .....	20
Science Lab .....	22
Science Words .....	23
Index .....	24
Read More .....	24
Learn More Online .....	24
About the Author .....	24



# Salty Seawater

It's a sunny day at the beach, and you're swimming in the ocean.

You accidentally swallow a mouthful of salty seawater. Yuck!

The water that comes out of a faucet doesn't taste salty.

If you catch raindrops on your tongue, they don't taste like salt.

So what makes seawater so salty?





Earth from space



ocean

About  
70 percent of  
Earth's surface  
is covered by  
oceans.



# What Makes the Ocean Salty?

Seawater is salty because it contains tiny **particles** of salt.

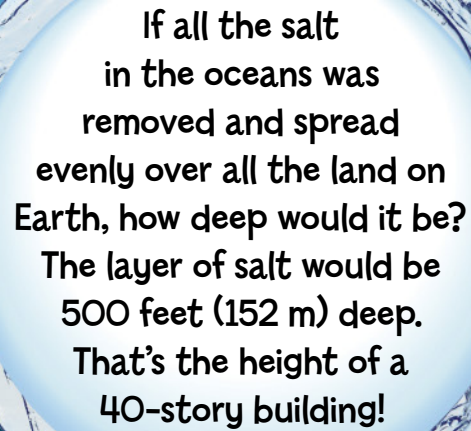
In fact, there's nearly 1 teaspoon (5 ml) of salt in 1 pint (473 ml) of seawater.

The particles of salt are too tiny to see, but you can taste them.



a teaspoon of salt





If all the salt  
in the oceans was  
removed and spread  
evenly over all the land on  
Earth, how deep would it be?  
The layer of salt would be  
500 feet (152 m) deep.  
That's the height of a  
40-story building!

How do you think salt  
gets into the oceans?