Cool Idea

If you live in a place where there is snow or ice in the winter, you probably see trucks sprinkling salt on the road. Have you ever wondered “Why salt? Why not sugar or flour, or baking soda?”

Let's see how salt affects ice and water!

Try this experiment first:
1. Take two plastic cups and half-fill them with water.
2. Put a tablespoon of salt in one of them, and mark that cup “salt.”
3. Put both cups in the freezer overnight.

What do you see the next day? How did the salt affect the freezing of the water?

Now try this:
1. Take an ice cube and lay a piece of string on top of it.

Use a cube of ice for this experiment. Crushed ice will not work.

Here's all you need:
- 2 plastic cups
- water
- salt
- ice cube
- thin string or thread

2. Sprinkle about half a teaspoon of salt on top of the ice cube.
3. Watch what happens after the salt is added. After a few minutes, lift the string.

What happens to the ice cube when you sprinkle the salt on it? What do you notice about the ice cube when you lift the string?

Here's more about freezing:
Zero degrees Celsius (32°F) is the “freezing point” of water. At this temperature, water forms ice. It is also the temperature that is warm enough to melt ice.

When you add certain chemicals, like salt, to water, you lower the freezing point. People add “antifreeze,” a chemical, to the water in their cars, to lower the “freezing point.” That way, the water won’t freeze solid in the winter.

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