CalcBrite

WINTER SALTING | FREE COMMUNITY FLYER

How much rock salt to use:

The Coffee Mug Rule



New England's smart-salting programs teach it: measure rock salt with a coffee mug, not a scoop.

THE RULE

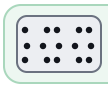


1 mug → a 20-ft driveway or 10 sidewalk squares

Fill a standard **12-ounce coffee mug** with rock salt. One mug is enough for a 20-foot driveway or ten sidewalk squares, **about 250 sq ft**. A heaping mug is about 1 lb of salt.

How to do it

1. **Shovel first.** The mug is for the thin layer left after shoveling, not for snow cover. The more snow and ice you clear, the less salt you need.
2. **Fill one mug** for each 20 ft of driveway or ten sidewalk squares.
3. **Scatter, don't pour.** Leave about 2 to 3 inches between grains. A pile wastes salt and leaves the ice around it untreated.



Yes: scattered



No: piles

4. **Scale up in mugs.** About one mug per 250 sq ft (see the table). Your product's label sets the maximum.
5. **Sweep up what's left.** Dry leftover salt can be reused, and it's a sign to use a little less next time.

Mugs by area

AREA	MUGS	SALT	FOR EXAMPLE
250 sq ft		1 lb	20-ft driveway or 10 sidewalk squares
500 sq ft		2 lb	20 sidewalk squares
800 sq ft	about 3	3.2 lb	40 × 20 ft driveway
1,000 sq ft		4 lb	40 sidewalk squares

At Minnesota's homeowner rate: about 1 lb per 250 sq ft, and no more than 4 lb per 1,000 sq ft. A mug's weight varies with grain size and how full it is; your product's label sets the maximum.

Quick answers

Does more salt melt ice faster?

No. The extra ends up in soil, storm drains and streams, where it stays: one teaspoon of salt can permanently pollute five gallons of water.

What if it's colder than 15°F?

Rock salt stops working. Switch to a product rated colder, such as calcium chloride (to about −20°F), or use sand for traction; sand doesn't melt ice.

Does the mug work for other ice melts?

The mug is a guide for rock salt. Calcium chloride, magnesium chloride and blends carry their own label rates: follow the label.

How do I protect concrete, plants and pets?

Skip deicers on concrete in its first winter. Aim salt at walks and drives, not lawns or beds, and don't shovel salty snow onto plants. Wipe pets' paws after walks.

Bigger area, or a whole season?

The free Ice Melt Calculator works it out from your area and your product's label rate: pounds per application, bags for the season and cost.

calcbrite.com/ice-melt-calculator OR SCAN THE CODE

Sources: Town of Auburn, MA; NEIWPCC; NH Department of Environmental Services; Think Blue Maine; Somerset County SWCD, Maine; Minnesota LTAP, University of Minnesota; Minnesota Pollution Control Agency; Wisconsin Salt Wise; UMass Extension; University of Minnesota Extension; National Ready Mixed Concrete Association; American Veterinary Medical Association. Full guide with every source: calcbrite.com/ice-melt-guide

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