



Minerals

Albite

$\text{NaAlSi}_3\text{O}_8$ (An₀₋₁₀) (Feldspar Group) (see also Plagioclase)

Crystallography:

Triclinic; $\bar{1}$. Crystals commonly tabular parallel to {010}; sometimes elongated on b. Twinning and striations common. Often as irregular grains and cleavable masses.

Physical Properties:

Cleavage: {001} perfect, {010} good. Fracture uneven to conchoidal; brittle.

Hardness: 6.0.

Specific Gravity: 2.62.

Luster: Vitreous to pearly.

Color: Colorless, white, gray; sometimes bluish, reddish, or greenish. Transparent to subtranslucent.

Streak: White.

Composition/Features:

Albite is the sodium end-member of a group of aluminosilicates, the *plagioclase feldspars*. A complete solid solution series extends from albite to anorthite (Ca end-member). Plagioclase feldspars are distinguished from potash feldspars by the twinning striations on basal cleavages. Albite is insoluble in HCl, and has a low specific gravity. Accurate identification is done by chemical, X-ray, or optical tests.

Occurrence/Use:

A common rock-forming mineral in granites, syenites, rhyolites, trachytes, and pegmatites. Also occurs as *cleavelandite* (platy) or *peristerite* ("moonstone" with an opalescent play of colors).