Chapter 15 Oceanography
Section 15.2 Seawater

Seawater is a solution of 96.5% water and 3.5% dissolved salts. Salinity is a measure of the amount of dissolved salts in seawater.

Variations in Salinity:
- Higher salinity in subtropical regions because of higher evaporation rates.
- Lower salinity near equator where precipitation is great.
- Low salinity in polar regions where seawater is diluted by melting sea ice.
- Lowest salinity where water enters oceans from rivers.

Sources of Sea Salt:
1. Volcanic gas
2. Weathering of crustal rocks

Removal of Sea Salt:
1. Evaporites
2. Biological processes

Properties of Seawater:
- Seawater is more dense than freshwater
- Cold water is more dense than warm water
- Freezing point of seawater is lower than freshwater. (-2° C)
- Oceans are dark. Why?—light penetrates only the upper 100 meters of seawater.

Ocean Layering