



GETTING STARTED
IN SALT THERAPY
THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE

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Getting Started in salt therapy. How to create your own salt room.

Welcome and congratulations on choosing salt therapy!

I'm excited to share my knowledge with you in creating a successful salt room, and can't wait to share all things salt with you.

Capturing everything I discovered along the way, since starting my own salt therapy journey in 2012 when I created my own salt room, *The Salt Spot*. This guide is designed to get you started on your own salt therapy journey.

Salt therapy is fast becoming one of the hottest new trends, and for good reason it works!

This guide outlines what you need to consider and what components you need to build a salt room. This will also help determine the cost of setting up a salt room, which is variable depending on where you live and what resources you already have available.

I've presented the information, so it can be applied to those converting a room within an existing business into a salt room or for someone new starting out wanting to create a salt therapy business or add it in to their centre that offers a range of services. Where ever you want to create a salt room, the foundations are the same no matter where in the world you are.

The possibilities for you to build your own unique salt room are endless!

Let's get you started

Penny

This is an overview of what you need to include in a salt room. There are many variables to consider when opening a new business or adding a salt room to an existing business.

I do offer one to one consulting for more specific questions and guidance if required.

Getting started

Let's cut to the chase. The first question I always get asked is; 'How much does it cost?'

The honest answer? "It depends!"

The variables in creating a salt room are as unique as you are! I have taken great care to give you a good overview of what you need to create a salt room. Additional costs like construction and business expenses will also need to be factored in, depending on what you have available to you.

Variables include:

- Location
- Budget
- Personal preference
- Design
- Construction

The four key ingredients needed to create a salt room include:

1. Halogenerator
2. An enclosed room
3. Ventilation / Air Conditioning
4. Decoration and Design

Good to know: Salt therapy is also known as Halotherapy. 'Halo' means 'salt' and you will see both of these terms interchanged when doing your research.

Let's explain these 4 key ingredients in more detail:

Halogenerator

The heart and soul that breathes success to a salt room, salt cave or a salt therapy concept starts with the halogenerator.

A *halogenerator* is the name of the modern technology that efficiently replicates the health benefits in a natural salt cave.

This specialised machine grinds up sodium chloride into tiny particles and disperse dry aerosol salt in to the salt room at a precise microscopic particle size and concentrated level.

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10 essential considerations to purchasing a halogenerator:

1. **Particle size** – check the size of the particle that the halogenerator can grind the salt. Ideally the finer the better, the better the salt will be dispersed into the room. The lighter and dryer the salt, the better concentration and the deeper the inhalation into the lungs resulting in more effective salt therapy.
2. **Concentration** – ensure the machine you are purchasing allows you to set and change the concentration level of salt. As long as you can adjust the level of salt in the room you will be able to offer effective therapy for different ages and ailments.
3. **Cleaning** – it is vital to keep your halogenerator extremely clean. Salt can be corrosive - the more moving parts can mean more problems. Ensure you can access all moving parts easily to clean and replace salt regularly in the grinder easy and simple to do. Generally, it is best to clean you halogenerator with dry brushes and compressed air never use water.

Tip: Always follow the manufacturer's cleaning instructions to ensure you stay within warranty requirements.

4. **Noise** – Be sure to ask the manufacturer about the noise you can expect from your machine. A noisy machine is not conducive to a relaxing environment.

Tip: Some suppliers have videos on their machines so you can hear and see how it works before purchasing.

5. **Salt** – most generators only require a small amount of salt per session. Salt can be changed between each session or after a number of sessions. This is something to consider as it will add to your running costs.

A pharmaceutical grade quality sodium chloride is the only salt I recommend for salt therapy. Ensure the salt doesn't have any additives, anti-caking agents or iodine.

Tip: Humid conditions may necessitate more frequent top-ups of salt.

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6. **Size of machine** – there are different sized halogenerators, depending on the size of your room. Naturally a larger unit will cost more than a smaller one.

Most generators need to be mounted on the external wall of the salt room. This important factor is easily overlooked when designing your room, ensure you have space on the outside of the room to mount and access your halogenerator.

Tip: Your halogenerator will stick out a little from the wall – ensure it is placed where it will not be bumped and is still easily accessible.

Note: There are more compact machines available for smaller rooms which are portable and can be placed inside the salt room and not fixed to the wall.

Tip: Calculate the size of your room before you purchase your halogenerator to ensure you get the correct one.

7. **Installation** – machines externally wall-mounted require a hole drilled into the wall to accommodate the input tube. You can achieve this quite easily with a drill and special hole cutter. Follow the manufacturer's requirements for correct installation.
8. **Maintenance** – check if the company has reliable service and support for your equipment. Ask about their warranty policy and spare parts procedures too.
9. **Dry your salt** – this is easily overlooked and rarely advised. Salt is hygroscopic meaning it absorbs moisture. The drier the salt the more effective the salt therapy experience will be.
Tip: Dry (do not cook) your salt in a small toaster oven, in daily batches on a low temperature.
10. **Costs** – the cost of a halogenerator will vary from USD \$2000 to \$15000 depending on the size of the machine you require. A halogenerator is required for each room.

Which one? My recommendation can be found on my website. There are new machines being developed as the industry grows, the higher the price is not always better and we have had issues with support on many machines.

For more details please contact Penny info@thesaltspot.com.au

Enclosed Room

A salt room **must** be sealable with no openings to other rooms. If you have an open area nearby or get drafts into the room, it will affect the halogenerator and alter the concentration of salt in the room.

The halogenerator grinds salt into a fine dust / powder which you want to remain airborne and suspended as long as possible. This is what creates the salty atmosphere and for your clients to breath in. Drafts, openings or fans in the room will detract from this atmosphere and drastically reduce the benefits of salt therapy.

Tip: If you have a window in your salt room, make sure it is closed during the salt session. It can be opened between sessions for ventilation.

Ventilation and Air Conditioning

Do not overlook the importance of keeping your room at a comfortable temperature and well ventilated.

Having a large number of people through the rooms will create extra body heat and plenty of different smells, like perfumes and body odour. Also, you will have people coming in with contagious illnesses which you do not want to pass on to the rest of your clientele.

You will need a separate out-vent to remove the salt air out from the room. Do not recirculate back through air conditioning or the building ventilation - it will cause rust and damage the unit very quickly. Also you are recirculating salty (potentially contagious) air back into the rest of the building.

The size of your salt room will determine the size of exhaust fan required. Inline motors used for ventilation come in many sizes and can fit into smaller roof spaces. If you don't have a roof space or ceiling space, you may need to create a small bulkhead in the room to move the air out. Check the cubic meter / feet of the exhaust fan, and what the right size for you space will be.

Tip: Consider fitting two smaller exhaust fans rather than one big one. Spread them through the room to clear the air faster.

Windows can used for both ventilation and fresh air. Be sure to close any windows during the salt session. (Note, you may still need an exhaust fan to thoroughly clear the salt air from the room). Exhaust fans are generally inexpensive and simple to install. Seek information online or consult a local ventilation specialist.

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Fresh air also needs to come into your salt room in some way, have either an in-vent to bring in some fresh air regularly or passive airflow into your premises.

If you have ducted air conditioning in the room, ensure it has an isolation switch, so you can turn the AC off in the salt room while the treatment is in progress, and then turn it on again between sessions to heat or cool the room between client sessions.

Exception – if you live in a hot and humid climate you will need to have air conditioning in the room for client comfort and to keep the salt dry (to help it remain airborne).

Remember, salt is hygroscopic (it absorbs moisture). If you have a humid room the salt therapy will not be effective. In this case you are best to have ducted air conditioning where you can leave the cool setting on and keep the room at an even temperature.

I would recommend that air vents are not placed near the halogenerator and remain on very low during salt therapy.

I **do not** recommend installing a reverse cycle air conditioning unit – salt air will be drawn back into the unit and cause it to rust, also there is water in the unit which may potentially leak into your salt room. If this is the only option you have, note that it will rust very fast and install high and have air vent pointed to skim across the ceiling to circulate instead of down into the room.

To heat up the room in cooler months use a ceramic, oil or infrared heater. The outside strip heaters (in far red) are a good option as they are enclosed and salt cannot get into them to corrode them. Do not use heaters with open elements, flames or fans.

Decoration and Design

Now for the fun part! The finishing touch to your salt room is decoration and design. Once you have the above items ticked off, it's time to get creative! The way you decorate and design your salt room can have a big impact on your client's experience - you'll want them to feel relaxed, calm and comfortable.

Tip: You may want to start with the end in mind, what do you want your salt room to look like? Now you know what you need in your salt room, decoration will come down to budget and what you can build in the location you have.

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Let's start with options for the walls:

Salt blocks – Himalayan salt blocks are easy to source and look sensational backlit. Even one feature wall of these in your room will look lovely. The number of blocks you need and the price will depend on the size of your room/ wall. Glue or a dry mortar mix is used to hold the bricks together.

Himalayan salt blocks weight 7kg each, make sure you have the right structure to support the weight of a full or partial wall. Unstable salt bricks can cause injury to your clients if they fall, especially to children.

The number of blocks you need and the price will depend on the size of your room/ wall.

Tip: Salt bricks are also known as salt slabs for cooking.

Salt panels – these are ready made panels that you can fix to the wall to create a rough look. They are available in a variety of colours and sizes.

Plain walls – this is the simplest and the cheapest option. Simply choose your paint colour and away you go. Be sure to use to low toxic paint.

Salt grain walls – you can use a mix of coarse salt granules and non-toxic glue to stick salt all over the walls to create a salty vibe.

Tip – Sound travels through the walls into the salt room. This can be a distraction for those relaxing and may affect the ambience that you are wanting to create. When building your walls, consider getting insulation or using sound absorbers in noisier area's to help deaden noise transference.

Floor options - Your local salt supplier should be able to help you here. Any salt is ok to put on the floor, even most pool salts are ok to use. Take care the salt you select is natural any without added chemicals.

You don't have to have salt if you don't want to. If you do decide to go with the salt floor, you will need shoe covers to put over feet and keep the salt clean.

Tip: Choose very fine to small granules of salt - otherwise it will hurt to walk on!

Seating – Comfort is paramount! (Remember many clients feel so relaxed they fall asleep during a session!) Popular seating options include slimline massage chairs, bench seating and reclining chairs. Don't forget footstools for even more comfort.

Tip: Favour easy-to-clean fabrics and light colours - salt shows up on dark colours.

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Extra touches - Consider what little extras will add to the relaxing environment of your salt room. Cushions, reading lamps and salt lamps are all great options.

Tip: remember everything in the room will get covered with a dusty layer of salt and require regular cleaning.

Bonus tips and considerations

Power points – Salt is corrosive and may damage your power points. If you are building a new room, consider installing outside power points. For an existing room, place plastic child safety protectors into any unused outlets to prevent salt getting into the holes.

Locker Area – Invite clients to leave bags and personal belonging outside of the salt room in a designated locker. It is best to keep your salt room as sterile as possible - both shoes and bags carry a lot of dirt and germs. Shoe covers can easily be purchased on ebay, or ask clients to wear clean socks.

Contagious clients – For the health and comfort of all clients, you must accommodate contagious clients away from other clients.

Tip: If you are building a new business it is a great idea to have a minimum of 2 rooms so if any one comes in with a cold or flu they will not infect other clients.

Quick-start guide to converting a room into a salt room.

Is the room fully enclosed?

If not you may need to add a dividing wall or do some kind of construction.

Calculate the size of the room to determine the halogenerator size and the ventilation motor size required.

Ascertain the best place to mount the halogenerator. The halogenerator is mounted outside the room with a hole through the wall. You will need easy access for cleaning, maintenance and replacing salt.

Decide where you can install ventilation to outside. Contact a specialist if required. Do you need air conditioning?

Get creative with your design and inclusions.
Salt walls, salt floors, chairs, tables, lighting.

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An estimated cost for to convert an already enclosed room into a salt room with plain painted walls, install ventilation and no additional building costs with chairs and side table is approx. \$10,000 - \$20,000.

Portable salt room.

If the idea of converting a room into a salt room feels too complicated and expensive, consider going portable! A portable salt room makes a quick addition to your business and is perfect for home use.

There are a few different looks available - sauna booth style (without the sauna) or an all-glass style. Portable salt rooms are available in various sizes to accommodate one to six people. Halogenerators can be attached to the side of one of these rooms.

Tip: With a portable salt room, you avoid any building costs. Plus the room you put it in serves as change and locker area. Even better, if you move locations, just take it with you!

Recommendation: If you are looking at a portable option, contact Penny info@thesaltspot.com.au and I'll let you know who I recommend for this.

Starting a new salt therapy business

There is a LOT more involved when starting a new business.

Key considerations when starting a brand new salt therapy business:

- How many rooms do you want?
- How big do you want the rooms?
- Do you prefer to offer private or group experiences?
- What is your policy for contagious clients? (2 rooms)
- Will you offer other therapies / services? (eg; massage, naturopath)
- Do you want to sell products? What type of products? If so you may need storage.
- What design and decoration do you like? Is there room for the chairs you want to purchase?
- Is there room to build a salt wall or can you only have plain walls?

The ideas are limitless when you start your own salt room from scratch. You will need to have some idea of what you want to create when looking for premises if you don't already have one. Renting or purchasing a suitable property is one of the largest expenses for your business. It will also determine what you will need to do and what the costing will be to build a salt room.

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Extra essential considerations when looking for appropriate premises.

- Access – is it easy / flat? Does the premises have wheelchair / pram access?
- Does it currently have air conditioning? If yes, does it need to be adjusted or upgraded?
- Ease of ventilation installation?
- Does it have separate rooms? If no, do you need to build dividing walls?
- How many rooms do you want? How many does the premises currently have?
- Assess the noise transfer between the rooms - is soundproofing required?
- Where will you locate a reception area / lockers/ storeroom?
- Are bathroom facilities currently on the premises? (on-site bathroom is essential!)
- Adequate parking for you and your clients.
- Is the premises near other therapist? Doctors, gyms, naturopath etc...
- Be familiar with local laws and regulations relevant to opening a salt therapy room.
- Consult with your accountant or local business advisor to help you with any other associated costs with starting a new business. (Government websites can also help with the regulations you will need to adhere to).

Until you have your premises, it will be difficult to get a fixed budget on what it will cost you to set up. However having all this information before hand will help you find something that may not require as much building work for example.

Once you have your premises then you can determine the construction and installation costs for your salt room. Design the layout of your new salt therapy business with the ease of flow and operation in mind. Remember, you only require 1 person to run and operate the salt room.

Insurance and compliance

This will vary from country to country and you will need to check your local governing laws to ensure you meet any health regulations and requirements. For businesses within Australia, you will require normal business and public liability insurance. I also recommend medical malpractice insurance (also known as professional indemnity insurance). This covers you for any injury to the body that may be incurred from your service or from any advice you give (either written or verbal).

Be mindful that you are affecting the way people breathe and it is therefore vital to understand exactly how salt therapy works.

Need more support to get started?

I offer a personalised 1-2-1 mentoring consultancy to help you set-up your dream salt therapy business! My support packages depend on the level of assistance you require and can be useful at any stage of your business journey.

1-2-1 Mentoring could be used to help with:

- Accurate costing for converting or opening a salt room
- Getting started with building your room
- Electrical and building requirements
- Identifying what trades you need
- Designing your space
- Double checking everything to make sure you have what you need
- Business processes and procedures.
- Salt therapy training
- Anything at all you need to help you with your salt therapy business!

Mentoring can be used as much or as little as you like! For further details about 1-2-1 mentoring contact Penny at info@thesaltspot.com.au

Salt therapy training.

Building a salt room is one thing, however operating a salt room is another! Once you're on your way and creating your room, you and your staff will need to know all about salt therapy and how it works in the body before you open your doors.

Investing in salt therapy training is crucial to opening a salt room! A salt affects the respiratory system it is imperative you and your staff understand how salt therapy works and how to offer the best therapy for your clients.

I have created a downloadable training '**Become a salt therapist - A course in Salt therapy**'

This course is specific to salt therapy and covers:

- How salt therapy works.
- The natural healing properties of salt
- Contra-indications of salt therapy
- How to explain salt therapy
- What ailments it helps and how
- History of salt therapy

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More information about the additional training, products and services is available on my website www.thesaltspot.com.au or contact me via email info@thesaltspot.com.au

Good luck with your salty journey..... *Penny*