

Salt Sold as Smartphones in Moscow's Metro

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The phones being sold by a gang on the Moscow metro were worth their weight in salt, though not much more.

Five people have been detained on suspicion of selling boxes filled with table salt with the promise that they actually contained popular smartphone brands, police said in a statement Thursday.

Police were approached by a man at the Mendeleyevskaya metro station who said an unknown man sold him two boxes with smart phones worth 38, 000 rubles (\$1,150). When the victim opened the boxes later, he found salt instead of mobile phones.

Metro police initially detained three suspects and found 49 name-brand phone boxes filled with salt in their northern Moscow apartment. A few days later, two more suspects were detained at the Nakhimovsky Prospekt metro station. Three of the five have been charged

with fraud and, if convicted, face up to five years imprisonment.

Police believe the detainees may have been previously involved in similar crimes.

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