PHP - Constant Arrays

It was not possible to declare a constant array before PHP version 5.6. From PHP 5.6 onwards, you can use the "const" keyword to declare a constant array. From PHP 7 onwards, constant arrays can also be formed with define() function.

A constant array is an array which cannot be modified after it has been formed. Unlike a normal array, its identifier doesn't start with the "$" sign.

The older syntax for declaring constant array is −

```
const ARR = array(val1, val2, val3);
```

Example

```php
<?php
   const FRUITS = array(
      "Watermelon",
      "Strawberries",
      "Pomegranate",
      "Blackberry",
   );
   var_dump(FRUITS);
?>
```

It will produce the following **output** −

```
array(4) {
  [0]=>
  string(10) "Watermelon"
  [1]=>
  string(12) "Strawberries"
  [2]=>
  string(11) "Pomegranate"
  [3]=>
```

```
    string(10) "Blackberry"
}
```

You can also use the conventional square bracket syntax to declar a constant array in PHP
−

```php
const FRUITS = [
    "Watermelon",
    "Strawberries",
    "Pomegranate",
    "Blackberry",
];
```

Example

It is not possible to modify any element in a constant array. Hence, the following code
throws a fatal error −

```
</>                                                          Open Compiler
```

```php
<?php
    const FRUITS = [
        "Watermelon",
        "Strawberries",
        "Pomegranate",
        "Blackberry",
    ];
    FRUITS[1] = "Mango";
?>
```

It will produce the following **output** −

```
PHP Fatal error:  Cannot use temporary expression in write context
```

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become a certified expert to boost your career.

Constant Arrays PHP 7 Onwards

The newer versions of PHP allow you to declare a constant array with define() function.

```
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<?php
   define ('FRUITS', [
      "Watermelon",
      "Strawberries",
      "Pomegranate",
      "Blackberry",
   ]);
   print_r(FRUITS);
?>
```

It will produce the following **output** −

```
Array
(
   [0] => Watermelon
   [1] => Strawberries
   [2] => Pomegranate
   [3] => Blackberry
)
```

You can also use the array() function to declare the constant array here.

```
define ('FRUITS', array(
   "Watermelon",
   "Strawberries",
   "Pomegranate",
   "Blackberry",
));
```

Example

It is also possible to declare an **associative constant array**. Here is an example −

```
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<?php
   define ('CAPITALS', array(
```

```php
        "Maharashtra" => "Mumbai",
        "Telangana" => "Hyderabad",
        "Gujarat" => "Gandhinagar",
        "Bihar" => "Patna"
    ));
    print_r(CAPITALS);
?>
```

It will produce the following **output** −

```
Array
(
    [Maharashtra] => Mumbai
    [Telangana] => Hyderabad
    [Gujarat] => Gandhinagar
    [Bihar] => Patna
)
```