

PHP Constants

PHP constants are name or identifier that can't be changed during the execution of the script except for **magic constants**, which are not really constants. PHP constants can be defined by 2 ways:

1. Using `define()` function
2. Using `const` keyword

Constants are similar to the variable except once they defined, they can never be undefined or changed. They remain constant across the entire program. PHP constants follow the same PHP variable rules. **For example**, it can be started with a letter or underscore only.

Conventionally, PHP constants should be defined in uppercase letters.

Note: Unlike variables, constants are automatically global throughout the script.

PHP constant: `define()`

Use the `define()` function to create a constant. It defines constant at run time. Let's see the syntax of `define()` function in PHP.

```
define(name, value, case-insensitive)
```

1. **name**: It specifies the constant name.
2. **value**: It specifies the constant value.
3. **case-insensitive**: Specifies whether a constant is case-insensitive. Default value is false. It means it is case sensitive by default.

Let's see the example to define PHP constant using `define()`.

File: `constant1.php`

```
<?php  
define("MESSAGE","Hello JavaTpoint PHP");  
echo MESSAGE;
```

```
?>
```

Output:

```
Hello JavaTpoint PHP
```

Create a constant with **case-insensitive** name:

File: constant2.php

```
<?php  
define("MESSAGE","Hello JavaTpoint PHP",true);//not case sensitive  
echo MESSAGE, "</br>";  
echo message;  
?>
```

Output:

```
Hello JavaTpoint PHP  
Hello JavaTpoint PHP
```

File: constant3.php

```
<?php  
define("MESSAGE","Hello JavaTpoint PHP",false);//case sensitive  
echo MESSAGE;  
echo message;  
?>
```

Output:

```
Hello JavaTpoint PHP  
Notice: Use of undefined constant message - assumed 'message'  
in C:\wamp\www\vconstant3.php on line 4  
message
```

PHP constant: const keyword

PHP introduced a keyword **const** to create a constant. The const keyword defines constants at compile time. It is a language construct, not a function. The constant defined using const keyword are **case-sensitive**.

File: constant4.php

```
<?php
const MESSAGE="Hello const by JavaTpoint PHP";
echo MESSAGE;
?>
```

Output:

```
Hello const by JavaTpoint PHP
```

Constant() function

There is another way to print the value of constants using constant() function instead of using the echo statement.

Syntax



The syntax for the following constant function:

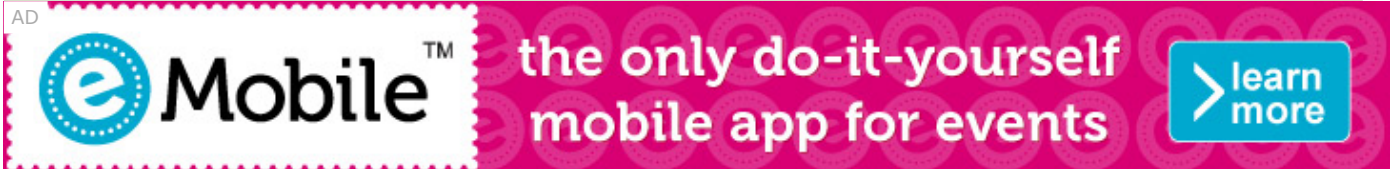
```
constant (name)
```

File: constant5.php

```
<?php
define("MSG", "JavaTpoint");
echo MSG, "<br>";
echo constant("MSG");
//both are similar
```

`?>`**Output:**

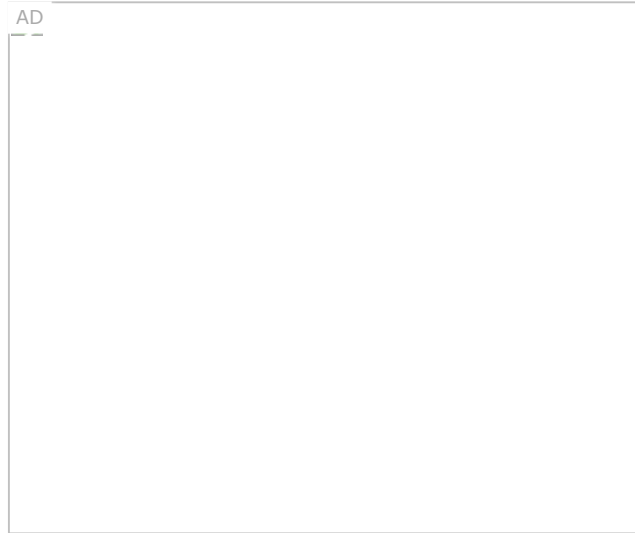
```
JavaTpoint  
JavaTpoint
```



Constant vs Variables

Constant	Variables
Once the constant is defined, it can never be redefined.	A variable can be undefined as well as redefined easily.
A constant can only be defined using define() function. It cannot be defined by any simple assignment.	A variable can be defined by simple assignment (=) operator.
There is no need to use the dollar (\$) sign before constant during the assignment.	To declare a variable, always use the dollar (\$) sign before the variable.
Constants do not follow any variable scoping rules, and they can be defined and accessed anywhere.	Variables can be declared anywhere in the program, but they follow variable scoping rules.
Constants are the variables whose values can't be changed throughout the program.	The value of the variable can be changed.
By default, constants are global.	Variables can be local, global, or static.

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