

Illustration
MEDIA SPOTLIGHT

Seasons

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A **season** is a period of the year **distinguished** by special **climate** conditions. The most **familiar** seasons are winter, spring, summer, and fall. However, many cultures also have a **monsoon** season, and still others only recognize **rainy seasons** and **dry seasons**.

Seasons occur because **Earth** is tilted on its **axis** as it **rotates** around the sun. Earth's axis is an invisible line that runs through its center from **pole** to pole. Places near the **Equator** experience little **seasonal variation**. They have about the same amount of daylight and darkness throughout the year. The angle of the sunlight also does not change much, so these places remain warm year-round.

VOCABULARY

Term	Part of Speech	Definition
axis	<i>noun</i>	an invisible line around which an object spins.
climate	<i>noun</i>	all weather conditions for a given location over a period of time.
distinguish	<i>verb</i>	to differentiate or recognize as different.
dry season	<i>noun</i>	time of year with little precipitation.
Earth	<i>noun</i>	our planet, the third from the Sun. The Earth is the only place in the known universe that supports life.
Equator	<i>noun</i>	imaginary line around the Earth, another planet, or star running east-west, 0 degrees latitude.
familiar	<i>adjective</i>	well-known.
monsoon	<i>noun</i>	seasonal change in the direction of the prevailing winds of a region. Monsoon usually refers to the winds of the Indian Ocean and South Asia, which often bring heavy rains.
pole	<i>noun</i>	extreme north or south point of the Earth's axis.
rainy season	<i>noun</i>	time of year when most of the rain in a region falls.
rotate	<i>verb</i>	to turn around a center point or axis.
season	<i>noun</i>	period of the year distinguished by special climatic conditions.

**seasonal
variation**

noun

differences in temperature, climate, and weather between seasons of the year.

For Further Exploration

Websites

- NASA: The Seasons of the Year
- NOAA: What Causes the Seasons?
- Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute: Antarctic Ecosystem—Seasons
- NASA: Sun for Kids
- NASA: Solar System Exploration—Kids



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