

Vocabulary: Seasons Around the World



Vocabulary

- Arctic Circle – the parallel of *latitude* at 66.5° N.
 - The Arctic Circle is the lowest altitude that experiences 24 hours of darkness on the winter solstice and 24 hours of daylight on the summer solstice.
- Axis – an imaginary line around which an object rotates.
 - Earth's axis runs from the *North Pole* to the South Pole.
- Equator – the parallel of latitude at 0°.
 - The equator spans the widest part of the globe and is perpendicular to the axis.
- Equinox – one of the two days of the year in which the length of the day is equal to the length of the night.
 - On the equinoxes, neither the Northern *Hemisphere* nor the Southern Hemisphere is tilted toward or away from the Sun.
 - In the Northern Hemisphere, the spring equinox occurs around March 21, and the fall equinox occurs around September 22.
- North Pole – The northern end of Earth's axis of rotation.
 - The latitude of the North Pole is 90° N.
- Solar energy – amount of energy from the Sun that a location receives in a day.
 - Solar energy is measured in watts per square meter (W/m^2).
 - The term *solar energy* can also refer to any type of radiation from the Sun.
- Solar intensity – the amount of solar energy striking a location in a single hour.
- Solstice – one of the two days of the year on which the Sun reaches its greatest apparent distance north or south.
 - The longest day of the year is the summer solstice. The shortest day of the year is the winter solstice.
 - In the Northern Hemisphere, the summer solstice occurs around June 21, and the winter solstice occurs around December 21.
- Tropic of Cancer – the parallel of latitude at 23.5° N.
 - This is the furthest northern latitude at which the Sun reaches an altitude of 90°.
 - The *Tropic of Capricorn* (23.5° S) is the furthest southern latitude at which the Sun reaches an altitude of 90°.