

## cAPitalIZatiOn

Here are some common guidelines for capitalization. If you have a question about a word that doesn't fit one of these rules, check a dictionary to see if the word is capitalized there.

Capitalize the first letter in every sentence:

*When we arrive, we can check the train schedule.*

Capitalize the pronoun *I*:

*The last time I saw him we had lunch together.*

Capitalize proper nouns (*specific* people, places, organizations, and sometimes things):

*Amelia Earhart*  
*Redding, California*  
*Yosemite*

*Mothers Against Drunk Driving*  
*House of Representatives*  
*Brooklyn Bridge*

*Golden State Freeway*  
*Lundberg Family Farms*  
*Yuba College*

However, notice that short prepositions such as *of* are not capitalized even in proper nouns and titles.

Capitalize directions that are names of regions:

*George and Barbara live in the Northeast.*

However, don't capitalize simple directions that are not names of regions, as in *The lake is thirty miles northeast of here.*

Capitalize days of the week, months of the year, and holidays. Only capitalize seasons if they are part of a title:

*Monday*     *Memorial Day*  
*May*         *Spring 2020 semester*

Don't capitalize simple seasons, like spring, summer, fall, or winter.

Capitalize names of countries, nationalities, languages, and religions:

*El Salvador*     *Punjabi*  
*Canadians*     *Catholicism*

Capitalize major words in the titles of books, articles, and songs (but not short prepositions, conjunctions, or articles unless they are the first word):

*The Winter of Our Discontent*     *"Politics and the English Language"*  
*Of Mice and Men*                     *"The Morning After"*

Capitalize members of national, political, racial, social, civic, and athletic groups:

*Lebanese*      *African Americans*      *Rotarians*  
*Libertarians*      *Daughters of the American Revolution*      *Dodgers*

Capitalize periods and historical events:

*Age of Exploration*  
*Great Depression*

However, don't capitalize century numbers like *the sixteenth century*.

*Contributed by Alex LaRoche*



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