

Capitalization

These are some common guidelines for capitalization. If you have any questions 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:

Examples:

The schedule for school changes every semester

My backpack is very heavy.

Capitalize the pronoun *I*:

Examples:

Driving to school every morning, I see the river.

Before I take a test, I like to study.

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

*Writing Language
Development Center*

Yuba College

Mount Rushmore

Sacramento, California

English C1000

The Whitehouse

George Washington

World War II

Federal Bureau of Investigation

Capitalize directions that are names of regions:

Examples:

*California is in the **Western United States**.*

*The original 13 colonies were all in the **Eastern United States***

However, don't capitalize simple directions that are not names of regions, as in "We have to go east to get to the mall".

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

Friday

Thanksgiving

July

Fall 2026 semester

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

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

Mexico

Islam

French

Americans

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

Of Mice and Men

The Catcher in the Rye

Romeo and Juliet

Lord of the Flies

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

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

Native American

Republican

Rotarians

Golden State Warriors

Pakistani

Capitalize periods and historical events:

Examples:

The Industrial Revolution

Victorian Era

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