

Capitalization

1. Capitalize proper nouns.

Proper nouns are the names of specific people, places, and things. All other nouns are common nouns; do not capitalize common nouns.

Proper Nouns

And **God** said, "Let there be light."

During World War II, many stores displayed posters of **Uncle** Sam.

Bill took **Highway** 18 from Des Moines to Waterloo.

Common Nouns

Many ancient peoples worshipped fertility **gods**.

My **uncle** owns an expensive fishing boat.

We drove on a **highway** to Kansas.

2. Capitalize titles of persons when used as part of a proper name.

Ex. District Attorney Johnson, Professor Johnson

3. Capitalize first, last, and all major words in titles and subtitles.

Capitalize major words – nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs; also capitalize the second part of a hyphenated word which needs capitalization.

Ex. Tom Jones: A Criticism Report
The F-Plan Diet
"I Want to Teach the World to Sing"

4. Capitalize the first word of every sentence.

This is a very basic, yet important, rule.

5. Capitalize the first word of a quoted sentence but not of a quoted phrase.

Ex. "Get busy reading," Dr. Scholtz said sharply, "this novel must be finished today."
Dr. Ohle wrote that Wartburg is "the ultimate of all institutions."
Joe wrote in a poem, "I am horrible at writing poetry."

6. Do **NOT** capitalize the first word after a colon.

Ex. These words are the colors of the American flag: red, white, and blue.

This we are forced to conclude: the federal government is needed to protect the rights of minorities.

7. Capitalize all letters of abbreviations.

Ex. FAC, PEC, IBM, FBI, KWAR, WRSL