



Capitalization Rules

Use capital letters in the following ways:

- The first words of a sentence
 - When he tells a joke, he sometimes forgets the punch line.
- The pronoun "I"
 - The last time I visited Atlanta was several years ago.
- Proper nouns (the names of specific people, places, organizations, and sometimes things)
 - Worrill Fabrication Company
 - Golden Gate Bridge
 - Supreme Court
 - Livingston, Missouri
 - Atlantic Ocean
 - Mothers Against Drunk Driving
- Family relationships (when used as proper names)
 - I sent a thank-you note to Aunt Abigail, but not to my other aunts.
 - Here is a present I bought for Mother.
 - Did you buy a present for your mother?
- The names of God, specific deities, religious figures, and holy books
 - God the Father
 - the Virgin Mary
 - the Bible
 - the Greek gods
 - Moses
 - Shiva
 - Buddha
 - Zeus

**Exception: Do not capitalize the nonspecific use of the word "god." The word "polytheistic" means the worship of more than one god.

- Titles preceding names, but not titles that follow names
 - She worked as the assistant to Mayor Hanolovi.
 - I was able to interview Miriam Moss, mayor of Littonville.
- Directions that are names (North, South, East, and West when used as sections of the country, but not as compass directions)
 - The Patels have moved to the Southwest.
 - Jim's house is two miles north of Otterbein.
- The days of the week, the months of the year, and holidays (but not the seasons used generally)

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/592/1/>



- Halloween
- October
- Friday

**Exception: Seasons are capitalized when used in a title.

- The Fall 1999 semester
- The names of countries, nationalities, and specific languages
 - Costa Rica
 - Spanish
 - French
 - English
- The first word in a sentence that is a direct quote
 - Emerson once said, "A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds."
- The major words in the titles of books, articles, and songs (but not short prepositions or the articles "the," "a," or "an," if they are not the first word of the title)
 - One of Jerry's favorite books is *The Catcher in the Rye*.
- Members of national, political, racial, social, civic, and athletic groups
 - Green Bay Packers
 - African-Americans
 - Anti-Semitic
 - Democrats
 - Friends of the Wilderness
 - Chinese
- Periods and events (but not century numbers)
 - Victorian Era
 - Great Depression
 - Constitutional Convention
 - sixteenth century (don't capitalize)
- Trademarks
 - Pepsi
 - Honda
 - IBM
 - Microsoft Word
- Words and abbreviations of specific names (but not names of things that came from specific things but are now general types)
 - Freudian
 - NBC
 - UN (United Nations)