



Capitalization

Always Capitalize:

The first word of a sentence.

The first word of a line of poetry.

The first word of a quotation when quoting a whole sentence.

Example 1:

- John said, “It’s about time we got to work!”

The first word in a parenthetical sentence, unless the parentheses are inside a sentence.

Example 2:

- John and I were not very close. (It’s hard to be that close with your boss.)

Capitalizing the first word of a sentence following a colon is **optional**.

Proper nouns and proper adjectives

Proper nouns are capitalized. These are nouns that refer to something specific.

Example 1:

- The director of *Avatar* is James Cameron.
Both *Avatar* and James Cameron are capitalized because they are proper nouns.

An adjective that is derived from a proper noun is called a proper adjective.

- America → American
- Spain → Spanish

Certain things are capitalized as a rule:

Names of brands

- Example 2: iPod, eBay, FedEx.
Follow the style, spelling, and capitalization that you see on the product.

Religious terms such as God, The Bible, and other such things

Titles, such as professor, Dr., and president are capitalized when referring to a specific individual in that role.

- Example 3:
- President Obama or Doctor Jenkins

Not all capitalization is correct. For instance, when referring to a compass direction, you will not capitalize unless you are referring to a specific geographic region:

- People in the South and parts of the West are used to wide open spaces.
- You must go north to reach Canada.