

# Capitalization Rules

I can demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization . . . (L2).

Keep this list handy all year and refer to it when writing, revising, editing, and reviewing my comments. I expect you to use ALL these rules at a proficient level before leaving middle school.

#	Capitalization Rule	Example
1	<p><b>Calendar items:</b> capitalize the names of holidays, historical events, historical periods, special events, and other calendar items. <i>Seasons are not capitalized</i> unless they're part of a specific title (Canfield's Fall Carnival).</p>	<p>Easter, Christmas, World War II, Holocaust, Civil War, President's Day, Super Bowl, Age of Fishes.</p>
2	<p><b>Literary titles:</b> books, films, plays, songs, poems, essays, chapters, etc. Capitalize all the important words and the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the title's first and last word</li> <li>all adjectives, adverbs, and nouns</li> <li>all pronouns (including <i>it</i>)</li> <li>all verbs (actionable, helping, and linking)</li> <li>no, not, and the interjection O</li> </ul> <p><i>Don't capitalize an article (a, an, the), a coordinating conjunction (FANBOYS), or the word to (with or without the infinitive) UNLESS it is the first or last word of the title.</i></p> <p><i>Do not capitalize prepositions unless they are 3 or more letters.</i></p>	<p><u>Streams to the River, River to the Sea</u></p> <p><u>The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens</u></p> <p>"I Can't Help Falling <i>in</i> Love with You"</p> <p>"I Know Why <i>the</i> Caged Bird Sings"</p> <p>"The Age <i>of the</i> Essay"</p> <p>"How Long Must I Wait, O Lord?"</p> <p><u>The Prince <i>and the</i> Pauper</u></p> <p><u>To Kill a Mockingbird</u></p> <p><u>Homage to Catalonia</u></p> <p>United States Constitution</p>
3	<p><b>People's titles:</b> <i>Capitalize titles when they are followed by a name, part of a specific title, or instead of the person's name when you're directly addressing him/her.</i></p>	<p>Followed by a name - - - Mayor Widmyer <i>The mayor, Joseph Widmyer, will speak tomorrow.</i></p> <p>Specific - - - The President of the United States <i>The president will address Congress.</i></p> <p>Direct address - - -Yes, Judge, I concur. <i>I told the judge that I agreed.</i></p>
4	<p><b>Family relationships and nicknames:</b> capitalize relatives' family names when they come before a name, or when they are used alone in place of a person's name.</p> <p>*DON'T capitalize family titles when they are a common noun. "Generally, there will be a <u>possessive pronoun</u> (<i>my, her, his, our</i>) or an article (<i>the, a, an</i>) in front of the common noun" (<i>Grammarly Handbook</i>).</p> <p>Capitalize nicknames always.</p>	<p>Followed by a name - - - We visited Uncle Bob and Aunt Mary over the summer.</p> <p><i>We visited <u>my aunt and uncle</u> over the summer.</i> <i>*We visited <u>my aunt Ronna</u> in Cleveland, too.</i></p> <p>Replace name - - - You look good, Grandpa.</p> <p>Nicknames - - - This is my brother, John, but we call him Bubba.</p>
5	<p><b>Geographical regions:</b> capitalize specific geographical</p>	<p>We had relatives visit us from the West.</p>

	regions, but <i>don't capitalize compass points.</i>	<p><i>Go west three blocks and then go left.</i></p> <p>We live in the Southeast. <i>We live in the southeast section of town.</i></p> <p>We left Florida and drove north.</p> <p>Most of the East Coast is freezing during the winter. <i>The east coast of Africa is rainy this time of year.</i></p>
6	<b>Mountains, hills, volcanoes, and bodies of water:</b> capitalize the name of mountains, hills, volcanoes, and bodies of water when referred to specifically.	<p>We hiked to the top of Mount St. Helens. <i>I walked through caves of a volcano this summer.</i></p> <p>Boating on Coeur d'Alene Lake is the best! <i>The view from the lake is breathtaking.</i></p> <p>Windsurfing is popular on the Columbia River. <i>Let's go fishing on the river next weekend.</i></p>
7	<b>Buildings, monuments, structures:</b> capitalize specific names of buildings, monuments, and structures when referred to specifically. <i>Capitalize them just like you do literary titles: first word, last word, and any important words in the middle.</i>	<p>We saw The Statue of Liberty on our road trip this summer.</p> <p>I can't wait to visit the Washington Monument when we go to Washington D.C. in 8th grade.</p> <p>While visiting Seattle, you must go to the top of the Space Needle.</p>
8	<b>Streets, avenues, boulevards, etc.:</b> when a name comes before street, road, avenue, boulevard, way, etc., it must be capitalized.	<p>Dalton Avenue Northwest Boulevard Highway 95 Jordan Court Government Way</p> <p><i>Walk down the road, take a right at the light, and then left onto the freeway.</i></p>
9	<b>Schools:</b> capitalize the type of school (high school, middle school, elementary) when the name of the school precedes it.	<p>Canfield Middle School, University of Idaho, Coeur d'Alene High School, North Idaho College, Gonzaga Prep, Dalton Elementary</p> <p><i>I'll be in high school next year. I plan to go to a university after I graduate. I was nervous to start my first day in middle school.</i></p>
10	<b>Course names/subjects/classes:</b> capitalize the names of specific course titles that have a number after them, are proper adjectives, or are a language. <b>*Proper adjectives</b> <i>Don't capitalize general academic subjects.</i>	<p>has a # - - - Geology 101, History 275 has a proper adjective - - - American History Is a language - - - French, English, German</p> <p><b>*Proper adjectives</b> - - - Japanese ship, Chinese food, Mexican feast</p> <p><i>geometry, science, history, language arts, music</i></p>
11	<b>Quotations and dialogue:</b> always capitalize a complete quotation, even mid-sentence. <i>Don't capitalize quoted</i>	<p>Mr. Lilyquist said, "Work hard, and be nice."</p>

	<i>material that continues a sentence.</i>	<i>Mrs. Nelson said that our class “shows grit” and we are “resilient.”</i>
12	<b>Art movements:</b> these are considered proper nouns and need to be capitalized.	Surrealism, Romanticism, Renaissance, Abstract Expressionism
13	<b>Salutations/closing of letters:</b> capitalize the important words in the salutation (opening) and the first word in the complimentary closing of letters.	Dear Mr. White, To Whom It May Concern: Dear Sir or Madam,  Sincerely, Sincerely yours, With gratitude, Best wishes,
14	<b>The pronoun I:</b> <u>always</u> capitalize the pronoun I.	I love reading mystery novels. My parents and I went to the movies.. Mrs. Nelson, I will never forget to capitalize the pronoun I.
15	<b>First word in a sentence:</b> the beginning of the sentence always begins with a capital letter.	Don't forget to capitalize the beginning of the sentence.  Mrs. Nelson will go wild if you forget to capitalize the pronoun I.
16	<b>Colons:</b> When listing items one by one, one per line, following a colon, capitalization and ending punctuation rules <u>vary</u> . ALWAYS BE CONSISTENT.  1. <b>Complete sentences in a list:</b> capitalize the first word after the bullet point, number, or letter.  2. <b>Single words or simple phrases in a list:</b> don't capitalize the first word after the bullet point, number, or letter.  <i>Don't capitalize the first item in a list after a colon in the middle of sentence.</i>	<b>1. The following items are requested:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Always be prepared for class.</li> <li>● Make sure to bring your materials.</li> <li>● Give yourself time to revise, edit, and think about your work.</li> </ul> <b>2. Pack the following:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● sleeping bag</li> <li>● pillow</li> <li>● toothbrush</li> <li>● water bottle</li> </ul> For class, <i>bring the following: writer's notebook, pencil, and novel.</i>  <i>You know what to do: practice</i>
16a	<b>Colons and quotations:</b> capitalize the first word of a complete or full-sentence quotation that follows a colon.	The principal made an announcement: “No more Jamba Juices outside.”
16b	<b>Colons and multiple sentences that follow:</b> If the information following the colon requires two or more sentences, capitalize the first item.	Mrs. Nelson has three expectations for us: Be kind. Think big. Work Hard.
17	<b>Proper nouns</b> ( <i>people, places, things, ideas</i> ): capitalize religions, religious followers, deities, specific places, nationalities, races, tribes, political parties, historical movements, periods, events, documents, trade names, specific electronic sources.	Christianity, Catholicism, Semite God, Buddha Wrigley Field, MetLife Stadium Great Depression Treaty of Versailles The World Wide Web, the Internet
18	<b>Initialism and Abbreviations:</b> shorter versions of existing words or phrases	Mr., Ave., Corp, Blvd., Dr., Prof. NFL, U.S., MT