

Capitalization Rules

- 1: Capitalize the pronoun *I* *no matter where it appears*.
2. The first word of *every* sentence, line of poetry, or direct quotation
 - There was no need to think about the fate of the city right now.
 - She felt strong and speedy and surefooted.
 - She bent down so that her ear was close to his whiskery mouth.
 - It took Lina three times to get this right.
3. Proper nouns
 - (a) Names of persons
 - George Washington, Miles Davis, Abraham Lincoln
 - (b) Geographical names
 - Ohio River, Idaho, the South, Canada, Pacific Ocean, Italy, Pennsylvania)
 - (c) Names of organizations, business firms, institutions, and government bodies
 - Hudson Parent Teacher Organization, Chipotle, Kent State University, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Cleveland Browns, Columbus Blue Jackets
 - (d) Names of special events and calendar items
 - Halloween, Christmas, New Year's Eve, Presidents' Day
 - (e) Historical events and periods
 - Great Depression, French and Indian War, Independence Day, Middle Ages, the Renaissance
 - (f) Names of nationalities, races, and religions
 - Mexican, African-American, Judaism
 - (g) Brand names
 - Tide soap, Pepsi Cola cans, Doritos, Lysol cleaner
 - (h) Do NOT capitalize seasons unless they are used in a title
 - the Winter Formal, spring, summer
 - (i) Do NOT capitalize directions (north, south, east, west) unless they are describing a region of the country
 - the Deep South, the Pacific Northwest
 - (j) Names of ships, planets, monuments, awards
 - Titanic, Saturn, Washington Monument, Nobel Prize
 - The words *sun* and *moon* are never capitalized. The word "earth" is capitalized when we're referring to it as a planet, but not when we mean "earth" as a synonym for "soil".
 - Scientists are now finding distant planets that are just like Earth.
 - The farmer scooped up a handful of fertile earth and smiled.

4. Proper adjectives – these are made from proper nouns

- Greece (noun) **G**reek (proper adjective)
- Congress (noun) **C**ongressional (proper adjective)
- China (noun) **C**hinese (proper adjective)
- America (noun) **A**merican (proper adjective)

5. Titles

- (a) Capitalize the title of a person when it comes before a name
- **P**rofessor **A**nderson, **C**ongresswoman **S**harp, **P**resident **B**illings
- (b) Capitalize a title used alone or following a person's name if it refers to a high official
- Did you have anything to add, **S**enator?
 - Step right this way, **M**adame **P**resident.
 - If you come this way, **C**ongressman **S**weeny, I'll show you to the meeting room.
- (c) Capitalize words showing family relationship when used with a person's name
- **A**unt **S**ally, **U**ncle **F**runk, **G**randma **C**layton
- (d) In titles of books, magazines, poems, stories, movies, paintings and other works of art, capitalize the first and last words, as well as other "important" words. (In the middle of titles, do not capitalize articles (a, an, the), conjunctions (and, but, or, nor), or prepositions of four or fewer letters (of, with, for, from, in, etc.)
- ***L**ord of the **F**lies* (BIG works (books, movies, records) are *italicized*)
 - ***T**he **G**rapes of **W**rath*
 - ***H**arry **P**otter and the **S**orcerer's **S**tone*
 - "**H**ere **C**omes the **S**un" (small works (poem, short story, song) get quotes)
 - "**A**ll **S**ummer in a **D**ay"
 - "**W**alking **A**cross the **A**tlantic"

6. The months and days of the week

- **M**onday, **W**ednesday, **J**une, **F**ebruary

7. When the words mother, father, mom, and dad are used in place of a proper name, they are capitalized. Otherwise, they are not.

- I knew **F**ather would coach the team.
- I knew that my **d**ad would coach the team.
- Can we stop for ice cream, **M**other?
- My **m**om said that we couldn't stop for ice cream.

8. Capitalize school subjects which are languages or which have numbers after them. Do not capitalize other subjects

- He is taking **R**ussian.
- Jen is going to take **a**rt and **a**lgebra.
- I will take **G**eometry 101.
- I have **m**ath in the morning and **l**anguage **a**rts and **s**ocial **s**tudies after lunch.