

Capitalization



**Capitalizing sentences,
quotations, and letter parts**

RULE #1

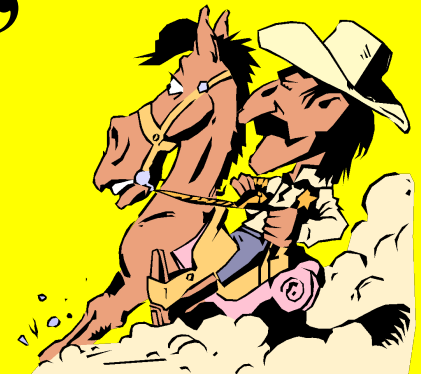
**Capitalize the first
word of a sentence**

**Pioneers pushed the American
frontier westward.**

RULE #2

Capitalize the first word of a direct quotation that is a complete sentence.

Tyrone said, “**T**he pioneers acted very bravely.”



RULE #3

When a quoted sentence is interrupted by explanatory words, such as she said, do not begin the second part of the sentence with a capital letter.

**“They left their homes,” said Lee,
“so they could improve their
lives.”**

RULE #3 continued

When the second part of a quotation is a new sentence, put a period after the interrupting expression, and begin the second part of the quotation with a capital letter.

“Many pioneers went west for the rich farmland,” said Maria.

“They also wanted to build new homes.”

RULE #4

Do not capitalize an indirect quotation. An indirect quotation does not repeat a person's exact words and does not appear in quotation marks. It is often introduced by the word *that*.

Tanya read *that* many pioneers traveled in Conestoga wagons.

RULE #5

Capitalize the first word in the salutation and closing of a letter. Capitalize the title and name of the person addressed.

Dear Mrs. Johnson,

Dear friend,

Yours truly, Sincerely,

Capitalizing people's names and titles

Rule #1

Capitalize the names of people and
the initials that stand for their
names.

Meriwether Lewis

Susan B. Anthony

J. F. Cooper

Rule #2

Capitalize a title or an abbreviation of a title when it comes before a person's name or when it is used instead of a name.

General Lee

Sen. John Glenn

Mrs. Adams

Did Lieutenant Clark say, “Yes, Captain, I’ll go with you”?

Rule #2 continued

Do not capitalize a title that follows a person's name or is used as a common noun.

Clark himself was later promoted to captain.

Thomas Jefferson, then president, planned the expedition.

Rule #3

Capitalize the names and abbreviations of academic degrees that follow a person's name.

Capitalize *Jr.* and *Sr.*

M. Katayama, M.D.

Jan Rangel, Ph.D.

Robert Ayers Jr.

Rule #4

Capitalize words that show family relationships when used as titles or as substitutes for a person's name.

**In 1960 Father retraced the steps of
Lewis and Clark.**

He was accompanied by Uncle Bill.

Rule #4 continued

Do not capitalize words that show family relationships when they follow an article, possessive noun or pronoun.

Sharon's aunt Janet wrote an article about the trip.



Possessive Noun



Rule #5

Always capitalize the pronoun I.

Social studies is the subject **I like.**



Capitalizing place names rule #1

Capitalize the names of
cities, counties, states
countries, and continents.

Houston

Orange County

Iowa

Japan

Capitalizing place names rule #2

Capitalize the names of
bodies of water and
geographical features.

Mediterranean **S**ea **G**ulf of **M**exico

Niagara **F**alls **A**tlantic **O**cean

Capitalizing place names rule #3

Capitalize the names of
sections of the country.

Midwest **N**ew **E**ngland

the **F**ar **W**est

Capitalizing place names rule #4

Capitalize compass points
when they refer to a
specific section of the
country.

the **W**est **C**oast the **N**orth

the **S**outheast

Capitalizing place names rule #4 continued

Do not capitalize compass points
when they indicate direction.

Los Angeles is south of San Francisco.

Do not capitalize adjectives derived
from words indicating direction.

easterly wind western Texas

Capitalizing place names rule #5 continued

Capitalize the names of streets and
highways.

Monroe Street Route 66

Mercury Boulevard

Candy Avenue

Capitalizing place names rule #6 continued

Capitalize the names of buildings,
bridges, and monuments.

Chrysler Building Brooklyn Bridge
Washington Monument

Capitalizing place names rule #7 continued

Capitalize the names of celestial
bodies.

Pluto

North Star

the Milky Way



Capitalizing other proper nouns and adjectives

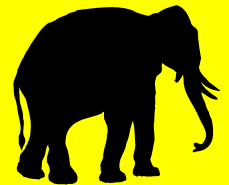
Rule #1

Capitalize the names of clubs,
organizations, businesses,
institutions, and political parties.

Data Corporation



Boy Scouts

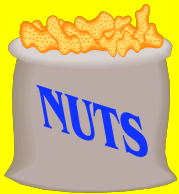


Republican party



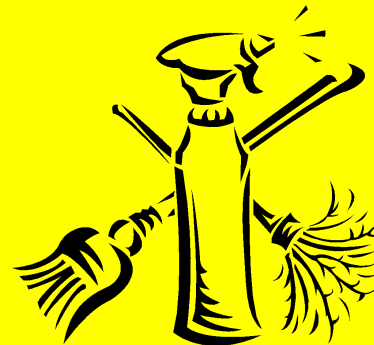
Rule #2

Capitalize brand names but not the nouns following them.



Cruncho peanut butter

Spiffy cleaning fluid



Rule #3

Capitalize the names of important historical events, periods of time, and documents

Battle of Yorktown

Bronze Age

Bill of Rights

Rule #4

Capitalize names of days of the week, months of the year, and holidays. Do not capitalize names of the seasons.

Thursday

April

Memorial Day

summer

Rule #5

Capitalize the first word, the last word, and all important words in the title of a book, play, short story, poem, essay, article, film television series, song, magazine, newspaper, and chapter of a book.

A Wrinkle in Time

“The Raven”

Washington Post

Rule #6

Capitalize the names of ethnic groups, nationalities, and languages.

Asian

German

Spanish

English

Rule #7

Capitalize proper adjectives that are formed from the names of ethnic groups and nationalities.

Asian languages

Italian food

English authors