

# Capitalization Rules

## SECTION 1: CAPITALIZE THE FIRST WORD

1. The first word of a sentence. (*He likes to take a nap.*)
2. The first word in the greeting and closing of letters. (*Dear, Yours truly, Sincerely, etc.*)
3. The first, last, and important words in titles of literary works. (*books, songs, short stories, poems, articles, movie titles, magazines, newspapers, etc.*) (*Note: Conjunctions, articles, and prepositions with fewer than five letters are not capitalized unless they are the first or last words.*)
4. The first word of a direct quotation. (*Dad said, "We are going home."*)
5. The first word in the topics, subtopics, and details of an outline.

## SECTION 2: CAPITALIZE NAMES, INITIALS, AND TITLES OF PEOPLE

6. The pronoun I. (*May I go with you?*)
7. The names and nicknames of people. (*Sam, Joe, Jones, Slim, Junior, etc.*)
8. Family names when used in place of or with a person's name. (*Grandmother, Auntie, Uncle Joe, etc.*) (*Note: Do not capitalize family names when a possessive noun or pronoun is used with it: My mom, Kim's mom, Jim's father, His aunt, etc.*)
9. Titles used with, or in place of, people's names. (*Mr., Ms., Prime Minister, Dr. Lin, Captain, President, Sir, etc.*)
10. People's initials. (*J.D., C. Smith, K.C. Jones, etc.*)

## SECTION 3: CAPITALIZE DESIGNATIONS OF TIME

11. The days of the week and months of the year. (*Monday, Wednesday, July, February, etc.*)
12. The names of holidays. (*Christmas, Thanksgiving, New Year's Day, etc.*)
13. The names of historical events, periods, laws, documents, conflicts, and distinguished awards. (*Civil War, Middle Ages, Bill of Rights, Medal of Honor, etc.*)

## SECTION 4: CAPITALIZE NAMES OF PLACES

14. The names and abbreviations of cities, towns, counties, states, countries, nations, and continents. (*Dallas, Texas, Fulton County, Africa, America, USA, CA, TX, etc.*)
15. The names of avenues, streets, roads, highways, routes, and post office boxes. (*Main Street, Jones Road, Highway 89, Rt. 1, Box 2, P.O. Box 45, etc.*)
16. The names of lakes, rivers, oceans, other bodies of water, mountain ranges, deserts, parks, stars, planets, and constellations. (*Beaver Lake, New York Harbor, Rocky Mountains, Glacier National Park, Sahara Desert, etc.*)
17. The names of schools and specific school courses that are either numbered or name a language. (*Walker Elementary School, Mathematics II, French, English, etc.*)
18. North, South, East, and West when they refer to geographical regions of the country. (*up North, lives in the East, traveled out West, Southern gentleman, etc.*)

## SECTION 5: CAPITALIZE NAMES OF OTHER NOUNS AND PROPER ADJECTIVES

19. The names of pets. (*Spot, Tweety Bird, Muffin, etc.*)
20. The names of products. (*Dixie cups, Dove soap, Ford automobile, etc.*)
21. The names, abbreviations, or acronyms of companies, buildings, stores, monuments, ships, airplanes, spaceships. (*Empire State Building, Titanic, IBM, The Big Tire Co., Statue of Liberty, Challenger, etc.*)
22. Proper adjectives. (*the English language, Italian restaurant, French test, etc.*)
23. The names of clubs, organizations, groups, or teams. (*Lion's Club, Jaycees, Beatles, Dallas Cowboys, etc.*)
24. The names of political parties, religious preferences, nationalities, and races. (*Democratic party, Republican, Jewish synagogue, American flag, etc.*)