

## Rules for Capitalization

Capitalizing the first letter of a word indicates the word is being used in a special way. Here are guidelines which will help you capitalize correctly.

**1. Capitalize the first word of a sentence and the pronoun I in any location.**

ex. The agency bought a computer, and I learned how to use it.

**\*Note:** The first word of a main clause following a colon may be capitalized for emphasis.

ex. The decision of the council was this: Taxes will be increased.

**2. Capitalize the first word in a quotation.**

ex. Mr. Marsh exclaimed, "Let's do the best we can!"  
"Come see me soon," requested his mom.

**3. Capitalize the first word and all titles and nouns in the salutation of a letter and the first word in the complimentary close.**

ex. Dear Miranda                      Sincerely yours                      Very truly yours

**4. Capitalize the names of the days of the week, special days (holidays), months of the year, historic events, and eras.**

ex. Tuesday                      Memorial Day                      American Revolution  
Fourth of July                      December                      Paleozoic Era

**5. Capitalize the first, last, and all other important words in the titles of written works (documents, books, journals, newspapers, reports) and their contents (chapters, sections, articles), works of art and music, and movies.**

**\*Note:** Capitalize articles (a, an, the), conjunctions, or prepositions only when they are the first or last words in a title or subtitle.

ex. *The Wealth of Nations*                      *A Day at the Races*  
The Declaration of Independence                      Whitney Houston's *The Greatest Love of All*

**6. Capitalize nouns and abbreviations referring to parts of a written work only when the reference is followed by a number.**

ex. Book IX                      Chapter 6                      Section 2                      Volume III

**7. Capitalize words referring to the Deity and a specific religion.**

ex. the Creator                      Buddhism                      Christian                      Allah

**8. Capitalize the names of people and words associated with the name (places, diseases, etc.)**

ex. Joyce M. Wexler                      Hodgkin's disease                      David Ponitz Center