



CAPITALIZATION

The misuse of capital letters is as serious as misspelling a word. Careless writers do not realize this and ignore the rules of capitalization. But if you apply the following easy-to-understand rules when you write, you should have few problems.

People	
the name of a particular person	Albert Einstein, Elizabeth Taylor
a title that precedes the name	President Lincoln, Admiral Dewey
a title that replaces the name	the Pope, the Secretary of State
the pronoun I	Then I turned the key.
the name of a race of people	Negro, Indian, Caucasian

Places & Organizations	
the name of an organization or department of the government	the Knights of Columbus, Republicans, Democrats, Congress, the Coca-Cola Company
the name of a particular place, region, street or building	New York, Great Britain; the South, the Northeast; Fifth Avenue, Elm Street; the Sears Tower, Independence Hall
the names of the planets and stars with the exception of earth, sun, and moon	Mars, Venus, the Milky Way
the names of languages	English, French, Spanish
the names of publications	the <i>New York Times</i> , <i>Look</i> magazine
the name of a particular school or college the name of a particular course	Yale University, Van Buren High School Physics 14A, Geometry 26D
brand names	Heinz Ketchup, Ford Mustang

Time	
the days of the week and the months of the year	Monday, Tuesday, July, September
the names of particular holidays	Christmas, New Year's Day
the names of historical events and particular periods/eras	World War II, the Renaissance, the Depression

Religion	
all words denoting a particular deity	God, Buddha, Allah
all words referring to God	We cannot understand God's ways, but He surely understands ours.
all names of religions and religious writings and reference to followers	Christianity, Islam, the Bible, the Koran, Jews, Christians, Buddhists

Literature	
the first word of a sentence and the first word of a direct quotation.	The actor exclaimed, "Do not touch me!"
the first word and all important words in the title of a book, play, short story, essay, poem	"The Fall of the House of Usher," <i>Catcher in the Rye</i> , "Acquainted with the Night"
the first word and all nouns in the salutation of a letter	Dear Mr. Lyons: My dear Sir:
the first word of the close of a letter	Sincerely yours,

DO NOT CAPITALIZE:

- seasons or academic years or terms.
- geographical directions unless they refer to specific regions. i.e. west or the West
- names for relationships unless they are used **INSTEAD** of the proper name or **WITH** the proper name. i.e. my father, my mother, Uncle Harry, I'm going shopping with Mother; would Father like to go too?

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College Writing Center
at Meramec