

CAPITALIZATION

8

Capitalization means using capital, or upper-case, letters. Capitalization of place names, family names, and days of the week are all standard in English. Using capital letters at the start of a sentence and capitalizing all the letters in a word for emphasis are both examples of capitalization.

This unit aims at focusing the most common rules for capitalization. Learners will learn to identify proper and improper capitalization in their own and peer writing. They will be able to create their own sentences using proper capitalization.



Time of completion

2 weeks

Lessons of the Unit:

- Lesson-1 : Introduction and Definition
- Lesson-2 : Nouns or Naming Words
- Lesson-3 : Titles and Designations
- Lesson-4 : Various Genres
- Lesson-5 : Other Rules

Lesson-8.1 Introduction and Definition



Objectives:

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- learn definition of capitalization;
- learn common use of capitalization.

Definition:

Capitalization is the writing of a word with its first letter in capital letter and the remaining letters in smaller letters.

Examples:

- a. *Binoy* lives in *Dhaka*, the capital of *Bangladesh*.
- b. *I* got up early in the morning. *Then I* went to the market.

The basic rule is to begin a sentence in capital letter all the time. However, it becomes more complex when using numbers, abbreviations, proper nouns, and so on mix together while writing any paragraph or story or anything. Here are some basic rules of *capitalization* in English language.

RULE 1:

The most basic rule of capitalization is to capitalize the first word of a sentence.

Example:

- a. *Radhika* received a gift from the President of Bangladesh.
- b. *This* is a public place and you should behave yourselves.

RULE 2:

Capitalize the pronoun “I” always no matter wherever it is used in a sentence.

Example:

- a. *I* invited him to come to my house.
- b. *I* do not know him but *I* will receive him from the airport.

RULE 3:

Capitalize the first word of a quoted sentence.

Example:

The father said to the teacher, “*T*each my daughter treating her as your own daughter.”

RULE 4:

Capitalize the days of the week, the months of the year, and holidays, but not the seasons.

However, seasons are capitalized when used as a proper title. Some examples are given below:

- I will attend that conference in the fall.
- I have registered for three classes for Spring Semester 2013.
- We celebrate Valentine’s Day on 14th February.

RULE 5:

Capitalize members of national, political, racial, social, civic, and athletic groups.

Example:

“Texas Longhorns”, “Libertarians”, “Chinese” etc.

RULE 6:

Capitalize words derived from proper nouns. For example: Binoy loves English and math.

Here English is capitalized because it comes from the proper noun England, but math does not come from mathland. That means math does not refer to any proper noun rather it is merely a subject.

RULE 8:

Capitalize the names of specific course titles. For example: Ron likes World History.



Summary

Capitalization is the writing of a word with its first letter in capital letter and the remaining letters in smaller letters. In general, learners should capitalize the first word, all nouns, all verbs (even short ones, like is), all adjectives, and all proper nouns. That means you should lowercase articles, conjunctions, and prepositions.

Lesson-8.2 Nouns of Naming Words



Objectives:

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- learn to capitalize proper noun;
- learn other rules of capitalization.

RULE 1:

Proper nouns are needed to capitalize. Here are some examples of capitalizations of the proper nouns:

Kazi Nazrul Islam

Rabindranath Tagore

T.S. Eliot

RULE 2:

Capitalize the nicknames of all cases.

Examples:

Meet my brothers, Junior and Scooter.

I just met two guys named Junior and Scooter.

RULE 3:

Capitalize relations when they are used alone in place of a personal name.

Example:

I found out that Mom is here.

However, these relations are not capitalized when they are used with possessive nouns or pronouns, or when they follow the personal name, or when they do not refer to a specific person.

Examples:

My mom is here.

Joe's grandpa looks well.

The James brothers were notorious robbers.

There's not one mother I know who would allow that.

RULE 4:

Capitalize specific geographical regions but do not capitalize points of the compass.

Examples:

We had three relatives visit from the West.

Go west three blocks and then turn left.

We live in the southeast section of town.

Most of the West Coast is rainy this time of year. (Referring to the United States)
The west coast of Scotland is rainy this time of year.

Some areas have come to be capitalized for their fame or notoriety:

Examples:

I'm from New York's Upper West Side.

I'm from the South Side of Chicago.

You live in Northern California; he lives in Southern California.

RULE 5:

In general, do not capitalize the word '*the*' before proper nouns.

Examples:

We visited the Grand Canyon.

They're fans of the Grateful Dead.

In special cases, if the word *the* is an inseparable part of something's official title, it may be capitalized.

Example:

We visited The Hague.

We want to visit the USA.

In the first sentence *the* is capitalized because it is part of the name while in the second sentence *the* is not part of the name of USA.

RULE 6:

Capitalize art movements.

Example:

I like Surrealism, but I never understood Abstract Expressionism.

RULE 7:

Do not capitalize the first item in a list that follows a colon.

Example:

Bring the followings: paper, a pencil and a snack.



Summary

Capitalizing proper nouns are pretty straightforward. First, though, it's important to understand the difference between *common nouns* and *proper nouns*. Common nouns are the general names of people, places, and things. These types of nouns are usually not capitalized (unless they begin a sentence or are part of a title). Proper nouns are the names of a specific person, place, or thing. The basic capitalization rule of proper nouns is that the first letters are capitalized.

Lesson-8.3 Titles and Designations



Objectives:

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- learn capitalizing titles;
- learn capitalizing designations.

When should you capitalize someone's title? Here are some rules and guidelines clarifying this confusion:

RULE 1:

Though there is no established rule on writing titles in the complimentary closing of a letter, but capitalizing a person's title is recommended when it follows the name on any address or signature line. Titles can be as simple as Mr., Mrs. or Dr., but they also apply to situations wherein you address a person by his or her position as though it were part of their name such as *Mr. Sakib, Dr. Hemonto* and so on.

Examples:

1. To Mr.
Yeats, Chairperson
2. Sincerely,
Ms. Rashida, Chairperson

RULE 2:

Capitalize the titles of high-ranking government officials when used with or before their names. But do not capitalize the word president if it wasn't being used as a title.

Example:

President Obama, Governor Connelly, Lieutenant Governor Martinez, and Senators James and Hennessy will attend the meeting.

"During the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln was the president of the United States."(Not as a title)

RULE 3:

Capitalize a title while using as a direct address even when the person is not named.

Example:

Will you be holding a press conference, Madame President?

Please give us your opinion of this latest development, Senator.



Summary

Knowing when to capitalize job titles can be tricky: is it an official title or just describing someone's role? The rules for the capitalization of job titles depend on the order of the words, the use of the words, and whether or not the job title is used as part of the person's name. Capitalize a job title that comes immediately before the person's name or is used as part of their name when addressing them. In this case, the job title is usually replacing their first name. Examples would be Professor Plum, Chairman Scarlett, or President Obama.

Lesson-8.4 Various Genres



Objectives:

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- learn capitalizing various genres including books, plays;
- learn other rules of capitalization.

The titles of compositions such as books, plays, films, songs, poems, essays, normally are always capitalized. Names of each of the books, plays, films, songs, poems, essays' titles begins with capital letter is the mostly common rule throughout the world, especially in English grammar. The words (can be noun, verb, adjective and adverb) begins with capital letters except prepositions and articles.

Examples:

The Planet of the Apes (The words “of” and “the” are not capitalized)

The God of Small Things (Here “the” is capitalized because the title begins with it)

The following rules for capitalizing composition titles are virtually universal.

- Capitalize the title's first and last word.
- Capitalize all adjectives, adverbs, and nouns.
- Capitalize all pronouns (including *it*).
- Capitalize all verbs, including the verb *to be* in all forms (*is, are, was, has been, etc.*).
- Capitalize *no, not*, and the interjection *O* (e.g., *How Long Must I Wait, O Lord?*).
- Do not capitalize an article (*a, an, the*) unless it is first or last in the title.
- Do not capitalize a coordinating conjunction (*and, or, nor, but, for, yet, so*) unless it is first or last in the title.
- Do not capitalize the word *to*, with or without an infinitive, unless it is first or last in the title.

Otherwise, styles, methods, and opinions vary; for instance, certain short conjunctions (e.g., *as, if, how, that*) are capped by some, lowercased by others.

A major bone of contention is prepositions. *The Associated Press Stylebook* recommends capitalizing all prepositions of more than three letters (e.g., *with, about, across*). Other authorities advise lowercase until a preposition reaches five or more letters. Still others say not to capitalize any preposition, even big words like *regarding* or *underneath*.

Hyphenated words in a title are also a problem nowadays. There is no fixed rules, to capitalize the first element always, even if it would not otherwise be capitalized, such as *to* in *My To-go Order* (some would write *My To-Go Order*). Some writers, editors, and publishers choose not to capitalize words following hyphens unless they are proper nouns or proper adjectives (*Ex-Marine* but *Ex-husband*). Others capitalize any word that would otherwise be capped in titles (*Prize-Winning, Up-to-Date*).

Many books have subtitles. When including these, put a colon after the work's title and follow the same rules of composition capitalization for the subtitle.

Example:

The King's English: A Guide to Modern Usage (Note that *A* is capitalized because it is the first word of the subtitle.)



Summary

The titles of compositions are always capitalized. Names of each of the books, plays, films, songs, poems, essays' titles begins with capital letter is the mostly common rule throughout the world, especially in English grammar.

Don't capitalize articles, conjunctions, or prepositions. Avoid capitalizing a person's title when used generically or when it comes after a person's name. ("The mayor proposed budget cuts" and "Richard Wilkins, mayor of Sunnydale"). Don't capitalize the names of seasons or directions (spring, winter, east, west).

Lesson-8.5 Other Rules



Objectives:

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- learn capitalizing reference list;
- learn other rules of capitalization.

The main function of capitalization is to focus attention on particular elements within any group of people, places, or things. We can speak of *a lake in the middle of the country*, or we can be more specific and say *Lake Michigan*, which distinguishes it from every other lake on earth.

Capitalization reference list:

- a. Brand names
- b. Companies
- c. Days of the week and months of the year
- d. Governmental matters
Congress (but *congressional*), *the U.S. Constitution* (but *constitutional*), *the Electoral College*, *Department of Agriculture*. Note: Many authorities do not capitalize *federal* or *state* unless it is part of the official title: *State Water Resources Control Board*, but *state water board*; *Federal Communications Commission*, but *federal regulations*.
- e. Historical episodes and eras
the Inquisition, *the American Revolutionary War*, *the Great Depression*
- f. Holidays
Victory Day, *Independence Day*.
- g. Institutions
Oxford College, *the Juilliard School of Music*
- h. Manmade structures
the Empire State Building, *the Eiffel Tower*, *the Titanic*
- i. Manmade territories
Berlin, *Montana*, *Cook County*
- j. Natural and manmade landmarks
Mount Everest, *the Hoover Dam*
- k. Nicknames and epithets
Andrew "Old Hickory" Jackson; *Babe Ruth*, *the Sultan of Swat*
- l. Organizations
American Center for Law and Justice, *Norwegian Ministry of the Environment*

m. Planets

Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, but policies vary on capitalizing *earth*, and it is usually not capitalized unless it is being discussed specifically as a planet: *We learned that Earth travels through space at 66,700 miles per hour.*

n. Races, nationalities, and tribes

Eskimo, Navajo, East Indian, Caucasian, African American (Note: *white* and *black* in reference to race are lowercase)

o. Religions and names of deities

Note: Capitalize *the Bible* (but *biblical*). Do not capitalize *heaven, hell, the devil, satanic.*

p. Special occasions

the Olympic Games, the Cannes Film Festival

q. Streets and roads

Topkhana Road, Jasimuddin Road

Lowercase reference list

a. Here is a list of categories *not* capitalized unless an item contains a proper noun or proper adjective (or, sometimes, a trademark). In such cases, only the proper noun or adjective is capitalized.

b. Animals

antelope, black bear, Bengal tiger, yellow-bellied sapsucker, German shepherd

c. Elements

Always lowercase, even when the name is derived from a proper noun: *einsteinium, nobelium, californium*

d. Foods

Lowercase except for brand names, proper nouns and adjectives, or custom-named recipes: *Tabasco sauce, Russian dressing, pepper crusted bluefin tuna, Mandy's Bluefin Surprise*

e. Things in the space

Never capitalize the *moon* or the *sun*.

f. Medical conditions

Epstein-Barr syndrome, tuberculosis, Parkinson's disease

g. Plants, vegetables, and fruits

poinsettia, Douglas fir, Jerusalem artichoke, organic celery, Golden Delicious apples



Summary

Learners need to practice common rules for capitalization more and more to identify proper and improper capitalization in their own and peer writing so that they can write sentence correctly. They will be able to create their own sentences using proper capitalization.



EXERCISE

Lesson-1

Correct the following sentences with proper capitalization:

1. He said to me, "i have often told you not to play with fire."
2. His parents named him hari.
3. Rana failed in English.
4. Ranu looks like a european.
5. Pradip was born in december, the coldest time of the Winter.
6. I will go home on Sunday.

Lesson-2

Correct the following sentences with proper capitalization:

1. Lalon shah bridge
2. Shere bangla Stadium
3. You look good, grandpa.
4. My Grandpa looks well.
5. We left Florida and drove North.
6. We live in the southeast.
7. We visited the himalayas

Lesson-3

Correct the following sentences with proper capitalization:

1. We need your response quickly, Mr. president.
2. We need your response quickly, president Obama.
3. Will you help me with my homework, dad?
4. The Prime Minister will be present at the inauguration.
5. Sincerely,
Mr. Binoy Roy, secretary

Lesson-4

Correct the following sentences with proper capitalization:

1. A perfect Spy is a book by Cooper
2. A doll's house is a book by Henrik Ibsen

3. The Way Of The World is a play William Congreve.
4. Hotel california is a music album by Eagles.
5. The bible is the holy book.
6. The Book of mormon
7. Van Gogh's Starry night
8. The Land that Time forgot

Lesson-5

Correct the following sentences with proper capitalization:

1. the moon looks beautiful.
2. french croissant is my favorite.
3. i will have a pomenarian dog
4. he is the sultan of baghdad
5. jupiter is too far.
6. i have submitted my film at the sundance film festival

Answer Key

Lesson-1

1. He said to me, "I have often told you not to play with fire."
2. His parents named him Hari.
3. Rana failed in English.
4. Ranu looks like a European.
5. Pradip was born in December, the coldest time of the winter.
6. I will go home on Sunday.

Lesson-2

1. Lalon Shah Bridge.
2. Shere Bangla Stadium.
3. You look good, Grandpa.
4. My grandpa looks well.
5. We left Florida and drove north.
6. We live in the Southeast.
7. We visited the Himalayas.

Lesson-3

1. We need your response quickly, Mr. President.
2. We need your response quickly, President Obama.
3. Will you help me with my homework, Dad?
4. The Prime Minister will be present at the inauguration.
5. Sincerely,
Mr. Binoy Roy, Secretary

Lesson-4

1. A Perfect Spy is a book by Cooper
2. A doll's House is a book by Henrik Ibsen
3. The Way of the World is a play William Congreve.
4. Hotel California is a music album by Eagles.
5. The Bible is the holy book.
6. The Book of Mormon
7. Van Gogh's Starry Night
8. The Land that Time Forgot

Lesson-5

1. The moon looks beautiful.
2. French croissant is my favorite.
3. I will have a pomeranian dog
4. He is the Sultan of Baghdad
5. Jupiter is too far.
6. I have submitted my film at the Sundance Film Festival