

Capitalization

Our language, unlike German and a few others, uses capital letters sparingly; and usually writers who have trouble with capitalization use too many rather than too few capital letters. Of the guidelines below, the two general ones are the most important. The others, while worth studying and learning, can be considered special conventions because their use is limited to a relatively small number of specialized situations.

GENERAL CONVENTIONS

1. *Capitalize the first letter of the first word in each sentence you write.*

Too much ketchup spoils the steak.

Why don't you order a hamburger.

2. *Capitalize the first letter of proper names and of adjectives derived from them.*

I thought Lennie was driving.

I've always wanted to visit Napal.

The English language is like a spaceship.

You have to hand it to Mr. Park.

SPECIAL CONVENTIONS

1. *Capitalize north, south, east, and west, and their compounds only when they designate an actual place, not when they point in a direction.*

I've always loved the beauty and freedom of the Southwest.

The East is heavily industrialized.

Go west two blocks and then head north.

2. *Capitalize the first word of a book, magazine, story, essay, or play; and capitalize all other important words also.*

We really enjoyed The taming of the Shrew

I want to renew my subscription to Ebony.

Have you ever read "A Good Man is Hard to Find"?

3. *Capitalize the official title of a person when you use it with the persons name.*

This award goes to Major Burckhardt.

I voted for Senator Wurgel.

You can get away with it if you're a general.

4. Capitalize the names of months and if days of the week.

I'll be going on Tuesday, November 23.

Supply capitalization to the following sentences.

- a. this new toyota belongs to my uncle myron.
- b. our drama club at shoreline college did an excellent performance of *the fantasticks*.
- c. i've always done better in math than in english.
- d. last night we saw *woman in the dunes*.
- e. i slipped the note to senator kaufman.
- f. the most beautiful city i've ever seen is san diego.
- g. to someone newly up from the south, detroit felt cold and frightening.
- h. my sister came back from miss valerie's school of dance with a dream of joining the pennsylvania ballet.