

Don'ts and Dos of Capitalization

Do not capitalize names of seasons (spring, summer, fall, autumn, winter). The only exception to this rule is a girl's name.

Ex. I love watching the fall leaves change their colors.

Ex. My friend Summer dropped by for a visit yesterday.

Do not capitalize north, south, east, and west when they refer to directions.

Ex. Traveling south on Interstate 65, I saw some beautiful cotton fields.

Sections of the country, however, are capitalized.

Ex. My family lives in the South.

Do not capitalize references to relatives if they are preceded by a possessive.

Ex. Her mother is a great cook.

Because the word "mother" is preceded by the possessive "her," it is not capitalized.

Ex. She learned to cook from Aunt Rose.

Ex. She learned to cook from her aunt Rose.

Do not capitalize names of school subjects unless they are names of languages or unless they are preceded or followed by letters or numbers.

Ex. Latin, Algebra II, AP Chemistry, and Physics 101 can be challenging courses.

Ex. My favorite classes include music, basket weaving, keyboarding, and general science.

Do not capitalize words such as democratic, republican, and socialist when these words refer to types of societies rather than to political parties.

Ex. Many foreign students are interested in studying the democratic process.

Ex. Although Marie once worked for the Democratic Party, she is now a Republican.

Do not capitalize words such as hotel, theater, or college unless they are part of the proper noun.

Ex. the Roosevelt Hotel a hotel in New York

Ex. Marietta College a college in Georgia

Ex. Bayside High School a high school in Virginia

Do not capitalize the nouns which follow brand names.

Ex. Luden's cough drops, Timex watch, Apple computer

Do not capitalize sun, moon, or earth unless they are used along with other heavenly bodies which are all capitalized.

Ex. The earth revolves around the sun.

Ex. I'm glad I live on Earth and not Mars.

Do not forget to capitalize the first and all important words in titles. Is, because it is a verb, is an important word!

Ex. F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote the book *Tender Is the Night*.