Proper Nouns A

13d. Capitalize proper nouns.

A proper noun is the name of a particular person, place, thing, or idea. Proper nouns are capitalized. A common noun is the name of a type of person, place, thing, or idea. A common noun generally is not capitalized unless it begins a sentence or is part of a title.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROPER NOUNS</th>
<th>COMMON NOUNS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sandra King</td>
<td>Tillsdale Middle School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>singer</td>
<td>middle school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PROPER NOUNS IN SENTENCES**

My cousin Lucinda sings in the choir. [Lucinda names a specific person and is capitalized.]

The baseball team at Williams High School is excellent. [Williams High School names a specific place and is capitalized.]

The book has a photo of the Statue of Liberty. [Statue of Liberty names a specific thing and is capitalized.]

**NOTE** Some proper nouns have more than one word. In these names, short prepositions (those of fewer than five letters) and articles (a, an, the) are generally not capitalized. Some common prepositions are at, in, from, of, on, to, and with.

**EXAMPLES** Catherine the Great  Pirates of Penzance  Romeo and Juliet

**EXERCISE A** Circle the correctly capitalized word group in each pair below.

Example 1. Laura jackson  Terence Cohen [Both first names and last names should be capitalized, so Terence Cohen is the correctly capitalized word group in this pair.]

1. canada  France

[Which word is a proper noun that is capitalized correctly?]

2. Raul Gonzalez  Kevin robinson

3. new mexico  South Dakota

4. santa fe  San Francisco

5. Julie london  Carol Sloane

**TIP** To tell whether a noun is common or proper, try placing a, an, or the in front of the noun. If you cannot, then the noun is probably a proper noun. It makes sense to say a city, so the word city is a common noun. It does not make sense to say a Houston, so Houston is a proper noun that should be capitalized.
EXERCISE B Write a proper noun that goes with each common noun below. Be sure to capitalize the proper nouns that you write. You can make up a name if you don’t know one.

Example 1. cat Taffy

6. city __________________________
7. friend _________________________
8. month __________________________
9. state __________________________
10. school __________________________

Capitalize the names of people and animals. When a name has initials, capitalize the initials.

PERSONS Roberto Sanchez Jeri Southern J. P. Morgan
ANIMALS Fluffy Spot Trigger
PROPER NOUNS IN SENTENCES The journalist James L. Berkowitz gave a speech. [James L. Berkowitz names a specific person. His name, including the middle initial, is capitalized.]
My pet bird Coco is a parakeet. [Coco names a specific animal and is capitalized.]

EXERCISE C Circle the correctly capitalized word group in each pair below.

Example 1. our poodle Princess poodle princess [Princess is capitalized because it is the name of a specific poodle.]

11. katy Parker Katy Parker
12. his dog scout his dog Scout
13. Ida M. Brown Ida m. Brown
14. a bird named Lola a bird named lola
15. T. j. Warren T. J. Warren
Proper Nouns B
Geographical Names

Capitalize proper nouns.

Geographical names are proper nouns and should be capitalized. Geographical names include places such as countries, states, street names, and natural landmarks.

**EXAMPLES**
- Antarctica [continent]
- California [state]
- Pacific Ocean [body of water]
- Mount Whitney [mountain]
- Nicaragua [country]
- San Diego [city]
- Century Boulevard [street]
- Redwood National Park [park]

**NOTE** When words like north, south, eastern, or southwest are used as the name of a region, they are capitalized. When you use these words to show a direction, don’t capitalize them.

**EXAMPLES**
- My father grew up in the Midwest. [region]
- That highway runs from east to west. [directions]

**EXERCISE A** Circle any letter that should be capitalized in each of the following sentences.

**Examples**

1. The city of Tulsa, Oklahoma, always has a big parade on Independence Day. [The words Tulsa and Oklahoma name specific places and should be capitalized.]

2. According to the map, Sherman Street is north of the highway. [The words Sherman and Street name a specific place and should be capitalized. The word north is lowercase because it is used here as a direction, not a region.]

1. One of the most beautiful cities in Europe is Paris. [Which words name specific places?]

2. Last year, I saw the Atlantic Ocean for the first time. [Which words name a specific place?]

3. Turn north on Cartwright Avenue.

4. My sister’s husband is from Panama.

5. Yellowstone National Park has many hot springs and geysers.

6. Have you ever climbed Mount Shasta?

7. I like to read stories that are set in the southwest or the west.

8. Is Boise the capital city of Idaho?

9. I was really excited when our plane flew over the Mississippi River.

10. The United States is not the only country in North America.

*Developmental Language Skills*
Organizations

The names of organizations, teams, institutions, and government bodies are proper nouns and should be capitalized.

**EXAMPLES**
- American Library Association [organization]
- Hamilton High School Hornets [team]
- Skyline Memorial Hospital [institution]
- Senate [government body]

**NOTE**
Abbreviations of the names of organizations, institutions, and government bodies are often a set of capital letters.

**EXAMPLES**
- National Aeronautic and Space Administration (NASA)
- Public Broadcasting System (PBS)

**Exercise B**
Circle each letter that should be capitalized in each of the following sentences.

**Examples**

1. Where is the headquarters of the International Olympic Committee? [The words *international*, *Olympic*, and *committee* name a specific organization and should be capitalized.]

2. Many graduates of Martin Luther King High School go to college. [The words *high school* are part of the name of a specific institution and should be capitalized.]

11. Some doctors are members of the American Medical Association. [Which three words name a specific organization?]

12. My grandmother always watches the games of the Chicago Cubs. [Which word names a specific team?]

13. The Supreme Court of the United States has nine judges.

14. Our school’s team is the Fullmore Falcons.

15. Did you watch the news on NBC last night?

16. The Los Angeles City Council makes the city’s laws and approves the city’s budget.

17. My uncle works in the emergency room at Valley Ridge Children’s Hospital.

18. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was established in 1949.

19. The quarterback of the Detroit Lions will be speaking tonight at Wayne State University.

20. I hope to become a member of the National Honor Society.
Proper Nouns C

Events, Dates, and Nationalities

Capitalize proper nouns.

Be sure to capitalize the names of important events and periods in history. The names of other kinds of special events are also capitalized.

**EXAMPLES**
- War of the Roses [historical event]
- Reconstruction [historical period]
- World Series [special event]

Always capitalize days of the week, months, and holidays. The names of the seasons of the year are not usually capitalized.

**EXAMPLES**
- Sunday, Tuesday, Friday [days of the week]
- May, August, October [months]
- New Year's Day [holiday]
- spring, winter, autumn [seasons]

Words that name nationalities, races, or peoples begin with a capital letter.

**EXAMPLES**
- Canadian [nationality]
- Caucasian [race]
- Cherokee [people]

**EXERCISE A**
Circle the correctly capitalized word group in each pair below.

**Examples 1. Stone Age**
- U.S. Civil war
- [All words in a compound noun that name a specific period in history should be capitalized, so Stone Age is capitalized correctly.]

2. thursday  **Saturday**
- [Words that name days of the week should be capitalized, so Saturday is capitalized correctly.]

1. super bowl  Special Olympics
- [Which word group names a specific event and is capitalized correctly?]

- [Which word group names a specific date and is capitalized correctly?]

3. Independence day  Christmas

4. tuesday  Wednesday

5. european  Asian

Developmental Language Skills
6. spring
7. September
8. third week in November
9. World War II
10. Italian

Businesses, Buildings, and Awards
The names of businesses and brand names are capitalized. Do not capitalize the name of a type of product.

**EXAMPLES**
- Kimberly-Clark Corporation [business name]
- Kleenex [product brand name]
- tissue [product type]

The names of buildings and other structures are capitalized. Do not capitalize the name of a type of building unless the word is part of the building’s name. The names of monuments and memorials, which are often buildings or structures, are also capitalized. The names of special awards and prizes should begin with a capital letter.

**EXAMPLES**
- Kensington Palace [building name]
- the king’s palaces [type of building]
- Washington Monument [monument]
- Purple Heart [special award or prize]

**NOTE** Some proper nouns have more than one word. In these names, short prepositions (those of fewer than five letters) and articles (a, an, the) are generally not capitalized. Some common prepositions are at, in, from, of, on, to, and with.

**Exercise B** Circle any letter that should be capitalized in the following sentences.

**Example 1.** The Emmy Awards honor achievement in the television industry. [The words Emmy and Awards make a compound noun that names a specific award and should be capitalized.]

11. The scientist was honored to be nominated for a Nobel prize. [Which two words name a specific award?]
12. Does the book have a picture of Buckingham Palace?
13. My father eats Kellogg’s raisin bran cereal every morning.
14. My father has decided to sell our old Ford Taurus.
15. The Brooklyn Bridge is a famous landmark.
Proper Adjectives; School Subjects and Course Names

Proper Adjectives

13e. Capitalize proper adjectives.

A proper adjective is an adjective formed from a proper noun. If the noun is always capitalized, the adjective should also be capitalized.

- **PROPER NOUNS**: China, Rome, Jefferson
- **PROPER ADJECTIVES**: Chinese paintings, Roman architecture, Jeffersonian democracy

**Exercise A** Each of the following word groups contains a proper adjective. Circle each letter that should be capitalized.

**Examples**
1. a___spanish guitar [The adjective *spanish* is formed from the proper noun *Spain*. The *s* in *spanish* should be capitalized.]
2. a___elizabethan poet [The adjective *elizabethan* is formed from the proper noun *Elizabeth*. The *e* in *elizabethan* should be capitalized.]

1. the roman calendar [Which word is an adjective formed from the proper noun *Rome*?]
2. a shakespearean play [Which word is an adjective formed from a proper noun?]
3. a british accent
4. a greek restaurant
5. the chinese ambassador
6. an irish folk tale
7. the martian atmosphere
8. american history
9. victorian fashions
10. a mexican city

**School Subjects**

13f. Do not capitalize the names of school subjects, except names of language classes and course names followed by numerals.

**Examples**
- band, keyboarding [subjects or classes]
- Concert Band II [course name with numeral]
- French, English [language classes]
**Exercise B** Circle any letter that should be capitalized in the following sentences. Draw a slash (/) through any letter that is capitalized but should not be.

**Examples**

1. My *Math* teacher also teaches French courses. [The word *Math* names a school subject and is not followed by a numeral. *Math* should not be capitalized. The word *French* names a language and should be capitalized.]

2. Are you in the *Choir* or in Band II this year? [The word *Choir* names a school subject and is not followed by a numeral. *Choir* should not be capitalized. The word *band* is followed by a numeral and should be capitalized.]

11. We are studying the history of California in my social studies I class. [Which words name a class? Is the subject a language? Is the name of the class followed by a numeral?]

12. For one of my electives, I have chosen *Art History*. [Which words name a school subject? Is the subject a language? Is the name of the class followed by a numeral?]

13. At our school, you can study Spanish, French, German, or Latin.

14. You have to complete biology I before you can take a Chemistry class.

15. The language arts 201 class will meet in the cafeteria this morning.

16. Will you sit next to me in Algebra next year?

17. Jeff takes a Physical Education course every semester.

18. My Geography teacher is originally from Korea.

19. In Music appreciation 101 we have been listening to folk songs.

20. The students in Journalism II design the school’s yearbook.
Titles of Persons and Creative Works

13g. Capitalize titles.

Titles of Persons

Always capitalize the title of a person when the title comes before the person’s name. Even if the title is abbreviated, capitalize it.

**EXAMPLES**

- I read a biography of General Colin Powell. [The title General comes before the person’s name.]
- When did he become a general? [The word general does not come before a person’s name.]
- This is the office of Dr. Sara H. Braun. [The title Dr., which is the abbreviation for Doctor, comes before the person’s name.]
- She always wanted to become a doctor. [The word doctor does not come before a person’s name.]

**Exercise A** Circle each letter that should be capitalized in the following sentences and phrases. Draw a slash through each letter that is capitalized but should be lowercase.

**Example 1.** Mr. and Mrs. Smith live across the street. [Both Mr. and Mrs. come before Smith, so they both should be capitalized.]

1. Our class talked to Miguel Martin, a well-known Doctor. [Which word is a title that does not come before a person’s name?]

2. Have you read professor Albright’s latest book?

3. That letter was addressed to ms. Fellows, our history teacher.

4. How long does it take to get the rank of Sergeant?

5. When she was downtown yesterday, Kim saw mayor Watson.

A word that shows a family relationship is capitalized when the word comes before the person’s name or is used in place of the person’s name.

**EXAMPLES**

- Please show this letter to Uncle Dave. [Uncle comes before the person’s name.]
- I asked Mom to drive us to the movies. [Mom is used in place of the name of the person.]

However, do not capitalize a word showing a family relationship when a possessive comes before the word.

**EXAMPLE**

- My aunt Alice lives in Oregon. [The word aunt is preceded by a possessive, so aunt is not capitalized.]
**Exercise B** Circle each letter that should be capitalized in the following sentences and phrases. Draw a slash through each letter that is capitalized but should be lowercase.

**Example 1.** Let me introduce you to Aunt Clara. [The word aunt comes before the name Clara and is not preceded by a possessive, so it should be capitalized.]

6. The photo of grandma and grandpa is sitting on the coffee table. [Which two words are used in place of someone’s name?]

7. Ask dad if he will drive us to the store.

8. I will write a letter to uncle Mike.

9. Did your Brother Jason replace the bike tire yet?

10. Please give a warm welcome to my Cousin Serena.

**Titles of Creative Works**

Whenever you write the title of a book, a poem, or any other creative work, be sure to capitalize the first word, the last word, and all other important words. Capitalize these words in subtitles, too. Do not capitalize an article (a, an, or the) or a short preposition (such as of, in, or with) unless the article or preposition is the first or last word in the title or subtitle.

**Examples**

- *The Once and Future King* [book]
- *Our Town* [play]
- *American Gothic* [painting]
- “The Star-Spangled Banner” [song]
- “The Second Coming” [poem]
- *Nova* [television series]
- *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* [movie]
- *The Washington Post* [newspaper]
- *Peanuts* [comic strip]
- Treaty of Versailles
- [historical document]

**Exercise C** Circle any letter that should be capitalized in the following phrases.

**Example 1.** John Steinbeck’s novel *The Grapes of Wrath* [The words grapes and wrath are important words in the title and should be capitalized. The word of is a short preposition and should not be capitalized.]

11. the Beatles song “a day in the life” [Which two words are important words in the title? Which word is an article that is the first word in the title?]

12. *Reader’s Digest*, my grandmother’s favorite magazine

13. one of the characters in the comic strip *Jump Start*

14. a story on the television program *60 Minutes*

15. “the fall of the house of usher,” a story by Edgar Allan Poe