GOOD BEGINNINGS & GOOD ENDINGS

How to begin and end a sentence.
GOOD BEGINNINGS, GOOD ENDINGS

- Capital letters are good beginnings—not only for sentences, but also for a variety of words.
- Periods are good endings, both for most sentences and also for abbreviations and other uses.
- Question marks and exclamation points can provide a little spice in your writing.
MEMO FROM MIKE

I need a New router and Band saw. Wards has them on sale this week. A skil saw would be nice sometimes one isn’t enough since there are three of us who use it. Black and decker is also okay? If you want, I can pick them up at the store for you.

Mike
MEMO FROM MIKE

What exactly does Mike want?

- The first sentence makes it clear that he wants a router and a saw.

- The rest of the memo leads to nothing but questions:
  - Does he want a band saw made by Skil,
  - or a circular saw (sometimes called a skill saw) by Band?

This confusion comes up because Mike has not punctuated his memo properly or put capital letters where they belong.
CAPITAL LETTERS: RULES

- Capitalize the first word of a sentence.
- If the first word is a number, write it as a word.
  - That was a wonderful party
  - Five of us finished the project.
CAPITAL LETTERS: RULES

- Capitalize the pronoun I or any contraction made using I (I’m, I’d, I’ve, I’ll).
  - The mail carrier stopped when I asked for help.
  - My mother thought that I’d be home for her sentencing.
  - I know I’ll be finished by noon.
CAPITAL LETTERS: RULES

- Capitalize proper nouns, but not common nouns.
- A proper noun refers to a specific person, place, or thing.
- A common noun refers to a general class of people, places, or things.
  
  - For example: microwave is a common noun. It is the general name for a kitchen appliance.
  - However, Sharp is a proper noun because it names a specific kind of microwave.
# Capital Letters: Rules

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Proper Nouns</th>
<th>Common Nouns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Janice</td>
<td>aunt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baton Rouge</td>
<td>city</td>
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<td>Roosevelt High School</td>
<td>school</td>
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<td>Buick</td>
<td>car</td>
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<tr>
<td>Walmart</td>
<td>store</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
CAPITAL LETTERS: RULES

- Capitalize the first word of a quotation.
  - “When will you be finished?”
  - “Good morning,” said my new neighbor as I approached the door.
  - “Good morning!” I answered, somewhat surprised. “You must be Satan.”
Do **not** capitalize the first word of a partial quotation.

- He called her “the best problem solver alive.”
- “The new edition,” Ari explained, “will be available in two months.”
PROPER NOUNS

- All proper nouns—words that name a specific person, place or thing—must be capitalized.
- Remembering which nouns are proper can be difficult.
- The table includes the most common categories of proper nouns...
An adjective is a word that describes or tells us more about a person, place, or thing.

A proper adjective is derived from a proper noun.

Many proper adjectives refer to a nationality.

Most proper adjectives should be capitalized:

- English muffin
- Polish sausage
- French customs
WHEN NOT TO CAPITALIZE

- Avoid unnecessarily capitalizing compass directions.
- Direction words that refer to a specific area of the country should be capitalized.
- Direction words are not capitalized unless they specifically refer to a part of the country.
  - We headed east to avoid the storm.
  - The computer industry flourished in the West
WHEN NOT TO CAPITALIZE

- Avoid unnecessarily capitalizing the words referring to family members.
- Capitalize them only when they are used as names.
  - Although Aunt Matilda has arrived, my other aunts are late.
  - After my mother lectured me, Father yelled.
Look closely at the second example:

After my mother lectured me, Father yelled.

- If a word such as my, our, your, his, her, or their comes before the word referring to the family member, it is not capitalized.
- The word mother is not capitalized because the word my comes before it.
- However, no such word comes before father.
- In fact, Father is used in place of the man’s name, making it a proper noun.
- That is why it is capitalized.
WHEN NOT TO CAPITALIZE

- Avoid unnecessarily capitalizing seasons of the year or parts of the academic year.
  - The university offers Basic Computing 405 in the spring semester.
  - Marge plants her perennials in the early fall.
WHEN **NOT** TO CAPITALIZE

- Avoid unnecessarily capitalizing school subjects.
- They should be capitalized only if they are part of the name of a specific course.
  - I try to avoid science courses because I’m squeamish.
  - Bob is taking Biology II next semester.
WHEN NOT TO CAPITALIZE

- Avoid unnecessarily capitalizing words modified by proper adjectives.
  - Polish sausage, not Polish Sausage.
  - Italian restaurant, not Italian Restaurant.
END PUNCTUATION
WHEN TO USE?

- Use a question mark (?) after a word or group of words that asks a question.
  - Where?
  - Okay?
  - What did you do?
  - Will you cover the tomatoes so they don’t freeze?
WHEN TO USE?

- Sentences that begin with these words are usually questions:
  - Who
  - What
  - When
  - Where
  - Why
  - How
WHEN TO USE .

- Use a period (.) at the end of a sentence that makes a statement.
  - Many jobs require a working knowledge of computers.
  - Thomas Jefferson is the most famous American slave owner.
  - The tour bus leaves right after breakfast in the morning.
WHEN TO USE .

- Use a period (.) at the end of a sentence that makes a request, gives an instruction, or states a command.
  - Take this to the mailbox before you leave.
  - Open the cover, remove item B, and close the box.
  - Check the message board before you go home.
WHEN TO USE .

- Use a period (.) at the end of a sentence that asks an indirect question.
  - Have you seen my coat? (direct question)
  - My boss asked if I has seen her coat. (indirect question)
  - Will you help me? (direct question)
  - Rachel asked if I would help her. (indirect question)
  - How did you know what to do? (direct question)
  - Harry wanted to know how we knew what to do. (indirect question)
OTHER USES FOR

- Use a period (.) (also called a decimal point) before a decimal.
  - A gallon equals 3.875 liters.
  - Only 5.6% of our employees chose vision care.
OTHER USES FOR .

❖ Use a period (.) between dollars and cents.
  • The new paneling is $45.95 a sheet.
  • Do you have $4.50 that I can borrow?
OTHER USES FOR .

- Use a period (.) after an initial in a personal name.
  - The patient in room 202 is Ron P. Martel.
  - The book was written by J. R. R. Tolkien.
  - A. J. Foyt races cars.
OTHER USES FOR .

- Use a period (.) after an abbreviation.
  - The plane leaves at 3:17 on Jan. 1.
  - Smith Bros. is hiring subcontractors for this job.
  - The apt. complex at the corner of Woodland Ave. and 1st St. belongs to me.
WHEN NOT TO USE.

- If an abbreviation comes at the end of a sentence, only one period is needed.
  - We delivered the desk to Koch & Co.
  - This trailer was machined at Dee Zee Inc.
  - The box is 3 in. by 5 in.
WHEN NOT TO USE.

- If an abbreviation has become a commonly used name for something, no period is needed.
  - gym (gymnasium)
  - exam (examination)
  - auto (automobile)
WHEN NOT TO USE .

- If an abbreviation has become an acronym or a name widely recognized by its initials (TV, WHO, FBI, NATO, NASA), no period is needed.
  - Velma is scheduled for an MRI at 3 o’clock this afternoon.
  - The Smiths mailed their tax forms to the IRS.
  - My niece works for the CIA.
WHEN TO USE!

- Use an exclamation point (!) after an outcry or sentence that expresses strong feeling.
  - Darn it!
  - Good grief!
  - Watch out for that truck!
  - I do not think I can take this anymore!

- **Warning!** Exclamation points are a little bit like salt on food…be careful not to overdo them.
WHEN TO USE!

- Use an exclamation point (!) after an exclamation that begins with a question word (who, what, when, where, why, how) but doesn’t ask a question.
  - How forgetful I am!
  - What a lot of trouble for such a small result!
  - Watch out for that truck!
  - I do not think I can take this anymore!

- **Warning!** Exclamation points are a little bit like salt on food…be careful not to overdo them.
MEMO FROM MIKE

I need a new router and band saw. Sometimes one saw isn’t enough since there are three of us who use it. A Skil saw would be nice. Black and Decker is also okay. Wards has them on sale this week. If you want, I can pick them up at the store for you.

Mike

❖ rewritten using proper capitalization and endmarks.