



# GOOD BEGINNINGS & GOOD ENDINGS

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*How to begin and end a sentence.*



## GOOD BEGINNINGS, GOOD ENDINGS

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- ❖ 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

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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

## **Proper Nouns**

Janice

Baton Rouge

Roosevelt High School

Buick

Walmart

## **Common Nouns**

aunt


city

school

car

store






# CAPITAL LETTERS: RULES

❖ Capitalize the first word of a quotation.

- “**W**hen will you be finished?”
- “**G**ood morning,” said my new neighbor as I approached the door.
- “**G**ood morning!” I answered, somewhat surprised. “**Y**ou must be Satan.”



# CAPITAL LETTERS: RULES

- ❖ 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

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- ❖ 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...

# PROPER ADJECTIVES

- ❖ 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

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❖ Avoid unnecessarily capitalizing the words referring to family members.

❖ Capitalize them only when they are used as names.

- Although **A**unt Matilda has arrived, my other aunts are late.
- After my mother lectured me, **F**ather yelled.



# WHEN **NOT** TO CAPITALIZE

❖ Look closely at the second example:

After my mother lectured me, **F**ather 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

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❖ 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

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- ❖ 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

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❖ 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 .

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- ❖ 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 .

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❖ 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 .

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❖ 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 .

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❖ 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 1<sup>st</sup> St. belongs to me.





# WHEN NOT TO USE .

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❖ 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 .

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❖ 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 .

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❖ 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

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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.