

Capitalization Policy Worksheet

Not all of the choices on this worksheet are mutually exclusive. For instance, you might decide that in general you will capitalize all words of four or more letters but also capitalize the “little words” on a special list.

Capitalization Principles Common to Major Styles

- Capitalize the first and last words
- Capitalize nouns, pronouns, verbs, and adjectives
- Lowercase the infinitive *to*
- Lowercase the articles *a*, *an*, and *the* except where this conflicts with another rule

Capitalization Decisions

Prepositions

- Lowercase all prepositions
- Lowercase prepositions of three or fewer letters
- Lowercase prepositions of three or fewer letters, with specified exceptions

Exceptions

- Capitalize compound prepositions
- Capitalize complex prepositions
- Capitalize short prepositions when they occur in compound expressions with longer ones

Adverbs

- Capitalize all adverbs
- Lowercase adverbs of three or fewer letters
- Follow specific list of little words always to be capitalized

Four-letter rule

- Yes
- No

If Yes, any exceptions?

- Capitalize adverbs of three words or fewer
- Capitalize conjunctions of three words or fewer
- Follow specific list of little words always to be capitalized
- Follow exceptions to preposition rule as specified above

Capitalization Policy Worksheet

Conjunctions

- Capitalize all conjunctions
- Capitalize all conjunctions of four or more letters
- Follow specific list of little words always to be capitalized

After Em Dashes

- Always capitalize the first word, even articles
- Capitalize the first word unless it is an article
- Capitalize according to the other rules you have chosen to follow

After Colons

- Always capitalize the first word after a colon, even articles
- Capitalize the first word after a colon unless it is an article
- Capitalize according to the other rules you have chosen to follow

Hyphenated Compounds

- Always capitalize the first element
- Capitalize the first element unless the next element is a proper noun or adjective
- Capitalize elements according to the other rules you have chosen to follow

Proper Nouns with Initial Lowercase Letter

- Always capitalize the first letter
- Capitalize the first letter only when it starts a title or sentence
- Leave the initial lowercase letter

Notes
