

Words of Wisdom from The Words Workshop

Ask Wordsworth ... *When do I need to use capital letters?*

It may seem like this question has an obvious answer, however it is not as simple as saying, "After full stops and at the beginning of a name". What about the seasons of the year and religious and public holidays?

Every letter within the English alphabet can be used either as a capital letter (ABC) or as lower case letters (abc). The main use for capital letters is for the first letter that starts a sentence, names of people and places, months and days, and certain abbreviations. However, the letter 'i' when used as a first person pronoun, is shown as a capital letter (I).

When To Use Capital Letters

- Always use a capital letter for the first person personal pronoun, 'I'
- Always use a capital letter to start a sentence
- Always use a capital letter when beginning speech. Even if it is in the middle of a sentence, a capital letter is required:

I went to speak to him yesterday and he said, "Go away."

- When using abbreviations, capital letters will be used; the same goes for any acronyms:

NASA
GMT
NATO

- The first letter of any days, public holidays and months need to be in capital letters:
Easter
Good Friday
Christmas
New Year (when referring to the event itself rather than the beginning of a new year.)
- When writing the name of a country, religion, place, language and nationality, the first letter should always be a capital letter:

English, Chinese, French
Great Britain, China, France
Christianity, Sikhism, Islam

- All names of people past and present should be capitalised. If a person has a title, this should also be capitalised:

Dr Jones
King Arthur
Mrs S Vesey

- All companies, trademarks, organisations and corporations should have the first letter of each word capitalised:

Apple
Microsoft
Coca Cola

- If something such as a ship, train or other object has an actual name, this should start with a capital letter:

The Titanic



The Flying Scotsman
The Orient Express

Wordsworth's management speak to avoid ...

People often use complicated jargon and management speak to make themselves appear as though they know what they are talking about. A good example of this is the phrase 'three dimensional relative capability'. Everyone knows that this means ... actually what does this mean? Answers on an e-mail please!

Wordsworth's quote of the month ...

""Classic". A book which people praise and don't read."

Mark Twain

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