Writing Centre

Capitalization

The first word of a sentence should be capitalized, as well as **proper nouns**. A proper noun is a *specific* name for a person, place, or thing.

E.g. Samantha is taking Chemistry 1500 at Thompson Rivers University.

Additionally, the following words should also be capitalized:

- 1. The pronoun "I."
- 2. Titles (e.g. Mr., Mrs., Dr., etc.)
- 3. The names of days, months, and holidays (e.g. Wednesday, April, Christmas, etc.)
- 4. Time periods and events (e.g. Middle Ages, World War I, etc.)
- 5. Cities, countries, nationalities, and languages (e.g. English, Britain, Ottawa, etc.)
- 6. Terms to describe Indigenous Peoples, identities, institutions, and rights (e.g. Survivor, Elder, Indigenous Land, etc.)

And lastly, the following should be capitalized at *certain* times, but not others:

- 1. Directions (north, south, east, west) are capitalized when they act as names, but not as compass directions.
 - E.g. I moved to the East Village.
 - E.g. Adam's Lake is north of Kamloops.
- 2. The names of God, specific deities, and religious figures, but not the non-specific use of god.
 - E.g. I attend church to learn about God.
 - E.g. The word "monotheistic" means the worship of only one god.
- 3. The major words in a title should be capitalized, but not the prepositions or articles.
 - E.g. My favourite book is Stranger in a Strange Land.
- 4. The first word of a quote when it begins a sentence or when the quote is a complete sentence, but not if the quote is integrated into the sentence.
 - E.g. Chris asked Jenna: "Why are you eating my lunch?"
 - E.g. Bolivia experienced "rapid urbanization during the neoliberal period".

Note: The above rules may not apply if you are following specific formatting rules, such as title page rules in APA or MLA formatting.

Adapted From/Further Reading

- https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general writing/mechanics/help with capitals.html
- https://www.grammarly.com/blog/capitalization-rules/