

CAPITALIZATION

GUIDANCE FOR NPS STUDENTS



GENERIC WORDS

Lowercase common nouns

administration (the Clinton administration)
government (the U.S. government)
committee
nation
coalition
department
state
brigade
federal court
nation-state



OFFICIAL NAMES

Capitalize proper nouns

Agency for Global Media
Arab Spring
Department of Education
Senate Armed Services Committee
IEEE Standard 1547
3rd Brigade Combat Team

WRITING OUT ACRONYMS

Capitalize official names

Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
European Union (EU)
Department of Justice (DOJ)

Lowercase generic words

energy management system (EMS)
hybrid energy storage system (HESS)
software-defined network (SDN)
unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV)
improvised explosive device (IED)

PARTS OF YOUR OWN DOCUMENT

Capitalize when naming a specific part

Chapter II
Section B
Figures 2 and 3
Table 2
Appendix B

Lowercase the document type

thesis
capstone
joint applied project



POSITIONS AND TITLES

Lowercase when not part of a name

the **president**

Washington, the first American **president**

U.S. **president** George Washington

the **chief of naval operations**

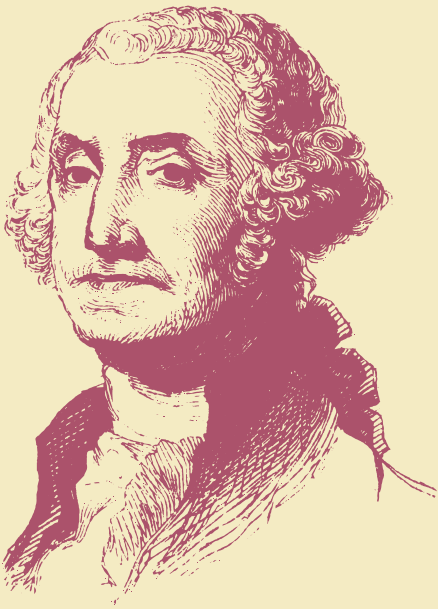
Admiral M. Gilday, **chief of naval operations**

former **chief of naval operations** Admiral...

Capitalize when part of a name

President George Washington

Chief of Naval Operations Admiral M. Gilday



DIRECTIONS

Capitalize when referring to a region

Iran wants to reduce pressure from the **West**.

The focus has shifted from the **Middle East** to the great power competition.

Lowercase when referring to a point on the compass

They entered from the **north**.

The current flows **west**.



SCIENTIFIC LAWS, THEORIES, MODELS, IDEOLOGIES & HYPOTHESES

Lowercase unless formed from a person's name

general relativity

Bernoulli's principle

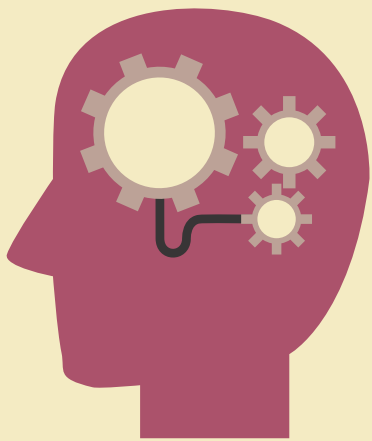
Euler method

utilitarianism

Trotskyism

communism

realism



ARMED FORCES

Capitalize official branch names

the U.S. Navy

the Chilean Army

the People's Liberation Army Navy

Capitalize only for U.S. forces

the Navy

the Army

the Marines

the Air Force

the Coast Guard



Sources:

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Department of the Navy. *U.S. Navy Style Guide*, 17-4. Washington, DC: Department of the Navy. 2017. <https://www.navy.mil/submit/navyStyleGuide.pdf>.

Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. *DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Term*. Washington DC: The Joint Staff, 2020. <https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/dictionary.pdf>.

Thesis Processing Office. "Thesis Style Capitalization Reference Sheet." Naval Postgraduate School. May 2018. <https://nps.edu/documents/105790666/106471207/Capitalization+Reference+Sheet.pdf/9b1faaa4-ba79-4944-a2ef-cee20e6a0b12?t=1525381712000>.

