Capitalization

General "down" style

As a general rule, use capitalization sparingly. This is known as "down" style.

If you can lowercase a word without losing clarity in what the word refers to, you should lowercase the word.

> *Cornell University is a land-grant institution. The **u**niversity has its main campus in Ithaca, New York.*
>
> *The Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art is a popular destination on campus. The **m**useum was designed by I. M. Pei.*
>
> *The Atkinson Center for a Sustainable Future runs a grants program. The **c**enter announced its faculty fellows recently.*
>
> *Martin Tang '70 is a lifelong member of the Cornell University Board of Trustees. The **t**rustee **e**meritus made a recent gift to name a welcome center for the **u**niversity.*

Overall use of sentence-case capitalization

Sentence-case capitalization (where the first letter is capitalized) is AAD's recommended style for most headings, subheadings, and captions, especially for the web. This style guide, for example, uses sentence-case capitalization.

A reminder: Omit the period at the end of your sentence-cased heading, even if the heading might be a full sentence. The exception to this rule are sentence headings that are exclamatory (where you end with "!") or that are in question form (where you end with "?").

> *Ithaca is a place like no other*
>
> *Come back to campus!*
>
> *What's in a name?*

Specific use of title-case capitalization for events

Title-case capitalization is reserved for events with proper names—where the first and last word is always capitalized along with any "important" words in between.

> *State of the University Address*
>
> *International Spirit of Zinck's Night*

If the event is just a generic event without a proper name, lowercase it. For more related guidelines, see names of events.

Very rare use of all caps

All caps is used in very rare instances. For example, the text inside call-to-action buttons and navigation buttons on a web page are often all-capitalized for legibility and emphasis. In general, avoid using all caps.