

# CAPITAL vs CAPITOL

Many words in English are commonly confused by both those learning the language and native speakers alike. Two such words are "capital" and "capitol". These words are commonly confused due to having identical pronunciations; however, these words have distinct meanings. In this guide, we'll take a look at the difference between "capital" and "capitol" and how to use them correctly in a sentence when speaking or writing.

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## Capital

"Capital" can be a noun or an adjective. As a noun, "capital" has multiple meanings. One of the most common uses is to refer to an important city. This can be the seat of government for a country or region, or a town or city considered significant for something specific, such as an industry or cultural aspect (for example, "New Orleans is the capital of jazz" or "London is the banking capital of the world"). It can also refer to the money, stock or assets an organisation or individual has available (for example, "Without the necessary capital, it will be difficult to expand the business"). Capital can also refer to uppercase letters. "Capital" can also act as an adjective in all of these cases (e.g., capital city, capital investment, capital letters) in addition to describing criminal offences that carry the death sentence (e.g., capital offence, capital punishment).

How to use "capital" in a sentence:

1. Washington, D.C. is the capital of the United States.
2. This is a capital idea!
3. Capital punishment is still practiced in some countries.
4. The company raised \$500,000 in capital.
5. The entrepreneur used her personal capital to start the business.
6. The capital letter 'A' is used to start a sentence.

## Capitol

“Capitol” refers to a specific building or group of buildings that houses a legislative body, such as the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. or the State Capitol in Sacramento, California. “Capitol” is always spelled with an ‘o’.

How to use “capitol” in a sentence:

1. The U.S. Capitol building is located in Washington, D.C.
2. Protesters stormed the capitol building in an attempt to disrupt the electoral process.
3. The governor will deliver his speech at the state capitol.
4. The capitol dome was designed by Thomas U. Walter.
5. The capitol has been under construction for two years.
6. The tour of the capitol building was very informative.

## Why are “capital” and “capitol” commonly confused?

“Capital” and “capitol” are commonly confused because they are both related to government and politics (a capitol is often located in the capital), they are spelled similarly, and as homophones are pronounced the same (American pronunciation: /'kæp.ə.təl/; British pronunciation: /'kæp.ɪ.təl/).

## Summary

**capital** – a noun or adjective that refers to a city that serves as the seat of government, wealth or financial assets, or uppercase letters

**capitol** – a specific building or group of buildings that houses a legislative body

## Do you know the difference between “capital” and “capitol”?

Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the word (“capital” and “capitol”):

1. The \_\_\_\_\_ building is the most recognizable landmark in Washington, D.C.
2. We need more \_\_\_\_\_ to fund this project.
3. California’s \_\_\_\_\_ building is located in Sacramento.
4. He invested all his \_\_\_\_\_ in the stock market.
5. The mayor of the \_\_\_\_\_ city is expected to resign soon.
6. The state’s new \_\_\_\_\_ building is being built downtown.
7. The company raised \$1 million in \_\_\_\_\_.
8. The protestors breached the \_\_\_\_\_ building during the riot.
9. The letter should begin with a \_\_\_\_\_ letter.
10. The \_\_\_\_\_ of Italy is Rome.

*Answers: 1. Capitol, 2. capital, 3. capitol, 4. capital, 5. capital, 6. capitol, 7. capital, 8. Capitol, 9. capital, 10. capital*