

Revised and Expanded
The Canadian

Style

A Guide to Writing and Editing

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4.21 Geographical terms

- (a) Capitalize the names of countries, regions, counties, cities and other official and specified political, administrative and geographical divisions and topographical features:

El Salvador	the Grassy Narrows Reserve
the Northern Hemisphere	the Pacific
the International Boundary	Lanark County
the Prairies	Sherbrooke
the Canadian Shield	Pickle Lake
the Maritimes	Elm Street West
the Atlantic provinces	the Okanagan Valley
the Ontario Region (sector of government department)	the South Saskatchewan River
the Crow's Nest Pass	the Northwest Territories

- (b) Capitalize a generic term when it is an accepted short form of the proper noun:

the Continent	the States
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- (c) Do not capitalize a generic term such as *city*, *county*, *state* or *province* when it precedes the proper noun or stands alone, unless it is used in a corporate sense:

She lives in the city of Regina. (*place*)
I have travelled all over the province of Ontario. (*place*)
The states of Switzerland are called cantons.
the newly created state of Palestine

but

Buy Province of Ontario bonds. (*provincial government*)
The City of Regina took him to court. (*municipal government*)
The State of New York has revamped its social assistance programs.
(*state government*)

- (d) Do not capitalize a generic term used in the plural unless it is part of a geographical name:

lakes Huron and Ontario
the Thompson and Fraser rivers

but

the Rocky Mountains
the South Seas

- (e) In general, do not capitalize the names of compass points or similar descriptive terms unless they have taken on political or other connotations or form the titles of administrative regions:

northern New Brunswick
the west of Saskatchewan