

# Typography

## Typographers' Inn

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### 1 CAPitaliZaTiOn

The first time I used BIBTEX I was horrified to find it had capitalized — by itself — all the titles which I had so carefully typed with a single initial capital and subsequent continuous lowercase. Fortunately it didn't take much reading of the fine manual and the FAQ<sup>1</sup> to discover that enclosing the title in an additional pair of curly braces would stop this until such time as I could identify a suitable bibliographic style that didn't use capitalization (or learn how to hack BIBTEX styles myself).

Recently there have been discussions on Usenet about this topic (in `alt.usage.english` as well as `comp.text.tex` and elsewhere) which led Markus Kuhn to ask if there were any good standards or rational preferences.

Standards there certainly are: the FAQ mentioned above refers to the *Chicago Manual of Style* as BIBTEX's source for the behavior of its default styles, and Markus himself referred to the various ISO standards which recommend a different approach.

But it's hard to be rational about preferences in style which are essentially æsthetic. While there may be a separate rationality in the approach each standard takes, the choice between them is largely a matter of convention and history. As in other areas of typography, there seems to be a clear Atlantic Divide between the Pros on the North American side preferring the capitalization of each word except pronouns, prepositions, articles, and conjunctions; and the Antis on the European side going for capitalization only of the first word and any proper nouns.

The first method is perhaps more formal than the second, but tends to look slightly dated nowadays (it always reminds me of the chapter summaries in books of an earlier period, *In which the Author Betakes himself to London to Procure a Sufficiency of Cutlery against Dining with Friends*), but it has the advantage that it stands out as a title without the need for bold or sans-serif type: just a larger size is enough. Where the title is in a sans or a contrasting face, the second method looks less strained.

<sup>1</sup> The present UKTUG FAQ has a good answer at <http://www.tex.ac.uk/cgi-bin/textfaq2html?label=capbibtex>.

The overriding problem for BIBTEX users, however, is not the style itself, but the automation of capitalization. When all the titles of a bibliography are in common English, without technical phrases, foreign words, scientific terms, or quoted titles, automated capitalization works very well most of the time. But technical, research, and academic bibliographies typically use many words in a special sense, or draw them from a specialist vocabulary, making automation less reliable. This, and not any inherent dislike of capitalization itself, seems to be what triggers the user to declare, "I don't like|want|need capitalized titles."

Perhaps less well documented (and certainly mentioned only rarely in training) is that if the user is writing for a publisher, using the publisher's styles, it's not the user's choice whether or not the titles are capitalized: it's dictated by the class or package.

### 2 Compliments

At TUG'2001 in Delaware I showed a draft brochure I had put together to publicise L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X in my area.<sup>2</sup> This document includes the font sampler I mentioned last time, albeit as an illustration at a much reduced size. Regrettably, the PDF version used in the PDF leaflet has been badly blurred by Acrobat in conversion from the original PostScript as it contains several bitmap fonts, but there is also a `.ps.gz` version at the location given, which is much clearer. It appears that if an EPS file is converted to PDF by Acrobat, and it contains at least one bitmap font, *all* the fonts in the EPS get blurred.

The comments I made in my presentation at the time are in the *Proceedings* issue (*TUGboat* 22.3), but I ended with an appeal which I repeat here:

**If you know or encounter users who are pleased and happy with L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X, especially about what it can do typographically, get them to write a sentence or a paragraph saying why, and send it to me (email address at end) for use in publicity.<sup>3</sup>**

We don't blow L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X's trumpet often enough, and we need quotable quotes from people with demonstrable experience.

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<sup>2</sup> The document is still available online at <http://www.silmaril.ie/documents/latex-brochure/leaflet.pdf>. US users should note this version is formatted to print on A3 paper.

<sup>3</sup> But please make sure they agree to being quoted in public!