

The Proper Noun

Recognize a *proper noun* when you see one.

Nouns name people, places, and things. Every noun can further be classified as common or proper. A *proper* noun has two distinctive features: 1) it will name a specific [usually a one-of-a-kind] item, and 2) it will begin with a capital letter no matter where it occurs in a sentence.

Check out the chart below:

Common Noun	Proper Noun
writer	Herman Melville
teacher	Mrs. Hackett
beagle	Snoopy
cookie	Oreo
city	Orlando
restaurant	Tito's Taco Palace
document	Declaration of Independence
school	University of Southern California

Read the following sentences. Notice the difference between the common and proper nouns.

Tina offered Antonio one of her mother's homemade oatmeal *cookies* but only an *Oreo* would satisfy his sweet tooth.

Cookies = common noun; *Oreo* = proper noun.

Charlie had wanted an easy *teacher* for his composition class, but he got *Mrs. Hackett*, whose short temper and unreasonable demands made the semester a torture.

Teacher = common noun; *Mrs. Hackett* = proper noun.

Gloria wanted to try a new *restaurant*, so Richard took her to *Tito's Taco Palace*, where no one dips into the hot sauce until the drinks have arrived at the table.

Restaurant = common noun; *Tito's Taco Palace* = proper noun.



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