

# THE PROPER NOUN

## Recognize a proper noun when you find one.

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**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, 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:

PROPER NOUN	COMMON NOUN
Herman Melville	writer
Professor Hayden	instructor
Snoopy	beagle
Oreo	cookie
Orlando	city
Tito's Taco Palace	restaurant
Declaration of Independence	document
University of Southern California	school

Read the following sentences. Notice the specificity of the proper nouns.

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

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

Charlie had wanted an easy **instructor** for his composition class. Unfortunately, he got **Professor Hayden**, whose short temper and unreasonable demands made the semester a torture.

***Professor Hayden*** = proper noun; ***instructor*** = common 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.

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

