Natural examples based on real language

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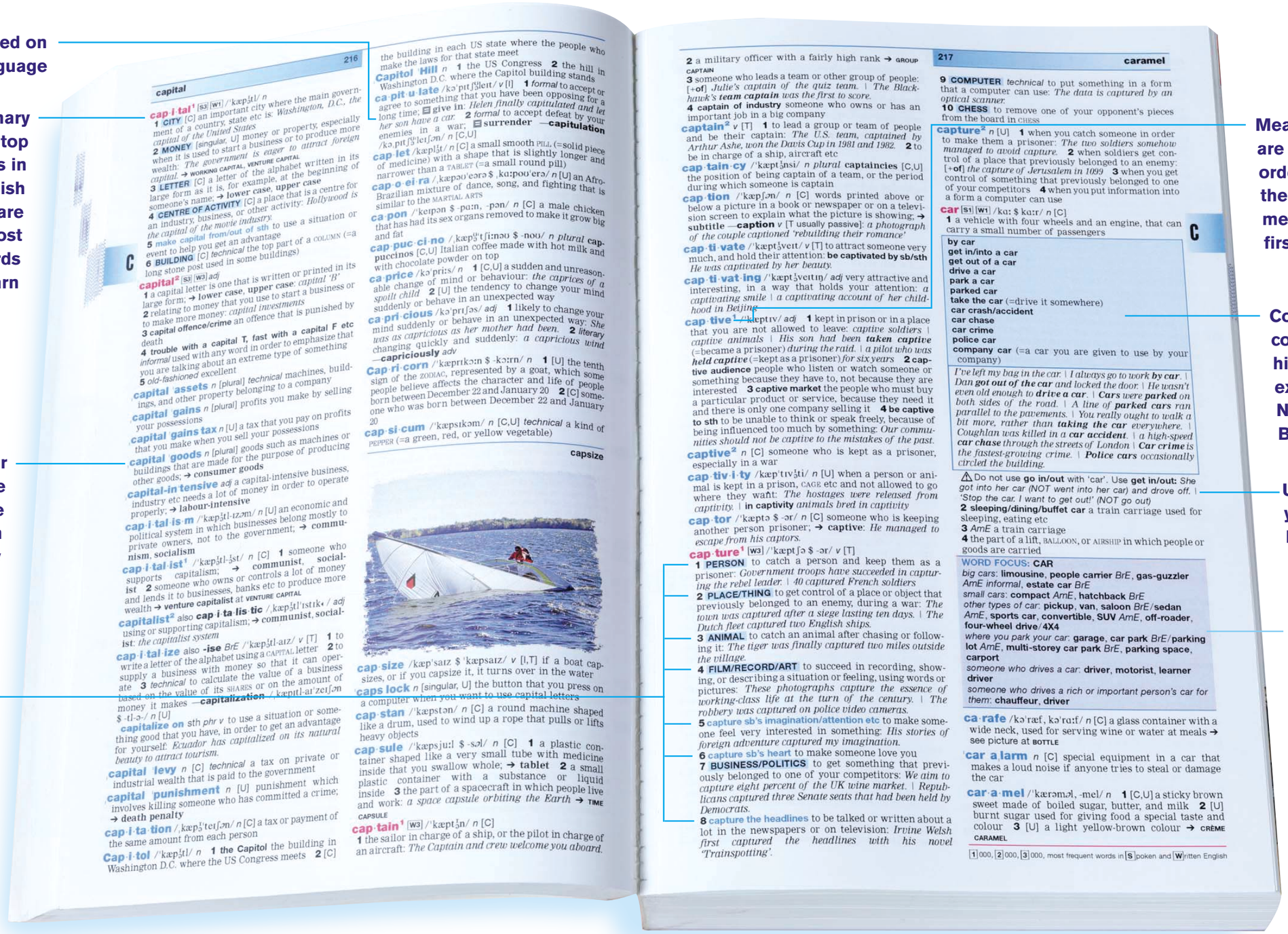
Simple, clear definitions are written using the 2,000-word Longman Defining Vocabulary

'Signposts' in longer entries help you find the meaning you want fast!



cap·i·tal¹ [S3] [W1] /ˈkæpɪtl/ *n*
1 CITY [C] an important city where the main government of a country, state etc is: *Washington, D.C., the capital of the United States*
2 MONEY [singular, U] money or property, especially when it is used to start a business or to produce more wealth: *The government is eager to attract foreign capital.* → WORKING CAPITAL, VENTURE CAPITAL
3 LETTER [C] a letter of the alphabet written in its large form as it is, for example, at the beginning of someone's name; → **lower case, upper case**
4 CENTRE OF ACTIVITY [C] a place that is a centre for an industry, business, or other activity: *Hollywood is the capital of the movie industry.*
5 make capital from/out of sth to use a situation or event to help you get an advantage
6 BUILDING [C] *technical* the top part of a COLUMN (=a long stone post used in some buildings)

capital² [S3] [W3] *adj*
1 a capital letter is one that is written or printed in its large form; → **lower case, upper case**: *capital 'B'*
2 relating to money that you use to start a business or to make more money: *capital investments*
3 capital offence/crime an offence that is punished by death
4 trouble with a capital T, fast with a capital F etc *informal* used with any word in order to emphasize that you are talking about an extreme type of something
5 *old-fashioned* excellent

capital ˈassets *n* [plural] *technical* machines, buildings, and other property belonging to a company

capital ˈgains *n* [plural] profits you make by selling your possessions

capital ˈgains tax *n* [U] a tax that you pay on profits that you make when you sell your possessions

capital ˈgoods *n* [plural] goods such as machines or buildings that are made for the purpose of producing other goods; → **consumer goods**

ˌcapital-inˈtensive *adj* a capital-intensive business, industry etc needs a lot of money in order to operate properly; → **labour-intensive**

cap·i·tal·is·m /ˈkæpɪtl-ɪzəm/ *n* [U] an economic and political system in which businesses belong mostly to private owners, not to the government; → **communism, socialism**

cap·i·tal·ist¹ /ˈkæpɪtl-ɪst/ *n* [C] **1** someone who supports capitalism; → **communist, socialist** **2** someone who owns or controls a lot of money and lends it to businesses, banks etc to produce more wealth → **venture capitalist** at VENTURE CAPITAL

capitalist² also **cap·i·ta·lis·tic** /ˌkæpɪtlˈɪstɪk◂/ *adj* using or supporting capitalism; → **communist, socialist**: *the capitalist system*

cap·i·tal·ize also **-ise** *BrE* /ˈkæpɪtl-aɪz/ *v* [T] **1** to write a letter of the alphabet using a CAPITAL letter **2** to supply a business with money so that it can operate **3** *technical* to calculate the value of a business based on the value of its SHARES or on the amount of money it makes —**capitalization** /ˌkæpɪtl-aɪˈzeɪʃən $ -tl-ə-/ *n* [U]

capitalize on sth *phr v* to use a situation or something good that you have, in order to get an advantage for yourself: *Ecuador has capitalized on its natural beauty to attract tourism.*

ˌcapital ˈlevy *n* [C] *technical* a tax on private or industrial wealth that is paid to the government

ˌcapital ˈpunishment *n* [U] punishment which involves killing someone who has committed a crime; → **death penalty**

cap·i·ta·tion /ˌkæpɪˈteɪʃən/ *n* [C] a tax or payment of the same amount from each person

Cap·i·tol /ˈkæpɪtl/ *n* **1 the Capitol** the building in Washington D.C. where the US Congress meets **2** [C] the building in each US state where the people who make the laws for that state meet

Capitol ˈHill *n* **1** the US Congress **2** the hill in Washington D.C. where the Capitol building stands

ca·pit·u·late /kəˈpɪtʃʊleɪt/ *v* [I] **1** *formal* to accept or agree to something that you have been opposing for a long time; [E] **give in**: *Helen finally capitulated and let her son have a car.* **2** *formal* to accept defeat by your enemies in a war; [E] **surrender** —**capitulation** /kəˌpɪtʃʊˈleɪʃən/ *n* [C,U]

cap·let /ˈkæplɪt/ *n* [C] a small smooth PILL (=solid piece of medicine) with a shape that is slightly longer and narrower than a TABLET (=a small round pill)

cap·o·ei·ra /ˌkæpəʊˈeərə $ ˌkɑːpoʊˈerə/ *n* [U] an Afro-Brazilian mixture of dance, song, and fighting that is similar to the MARTIAL ARTS

ca·pon /ˈkeɪpɒn $ -pɑːn, -pən/ *n* [C] a male chicken that has had its sex organs removed to make it grow big and fat

cap·puc·ci·no /ˌkæpʊˈtʃiːnəʊ $ -noʊ/ *n plural* **cappuccinos** [C,U] Italian coffee made with hot milk and with chocolate powder on top

ca·price /kəˈpriːs/ *n* **1** [C,U] a sudden and unreasonable change of mind or behaviour: *the caprices of a spoilt child* **2** [U] the tendency to change your mind suddenly or behave in an unexpected way

ca·pri·cious /kəˈprɪʃəs/ *adj* **1** likely to change your mind suddenly or behave in an unexpected way: *She was as capricious as her mother had been.* **2** *literary* changing quickly and suddenly: *a capricious wind* —**capriciously** *adv*

Cap·ri·corn /ˈkæprɪkɔːn $ -kɔːrn/ *n* **1** [U] the tenth sign of the ZODIAC, represented by a goat, which some people believe affects the character and life of people born between December 22 and January 20 **2** [C] someone who was born between December 22 and January 20

cap·si·cum /ˈkæpsɪkəm/ *n* [C,U] *technical* a kind of PEPPER (=a green, red, or yellow vegetable)

cap·size /kæpˈsaɪz $ ˈkæpsaɪz/ *v* [I,T] if a boat capsizes, or if you capsize it, it turns over in the water

ˈcaps lock *n* [singular, U] the button that you press on a computer when you want to use capital letters

cap·stan /ˈkæpstən/ *n* [C] a round machine shaped like a drum, used to wind up a rope that pulls or lifts heavy objects

cap·sule /ˈkæpsjuːl $ -səl/ *n* [C] **1** a plastic container shaped like a very small tube with medicine inside that you swallow whole; → **tablet** **2** a small plastic container with a substance or liquid inside **3** the part of a spacecraft in which people live and work: *a space capsule orbiting the Earth* → TIME CAPSULE

cap·tain¹ [W3] /ˈkæptɪn/ *n* [C]
1 the sailor in charge of a ship, or the pilot in charge of an aircraft: *The Captain and crew welcome you aboard.*

2 a military officer with a fairly high rank → GROUP CAPTAIN
3 someone who leads a team or other group of people: [+**of**] *Julie's captain of the quiz team.* | *The Blackhawk's* ***team captain*** *was the first to score.*
4 captain of industry someone who owns or has an important job in a big company

captain² *v* [T] **1** to lead a group or team of people and be their captain: *The U.S. team, captained by Arthur Ashe, won the Davis Cup in 1981 and 1982.* **2** to be in charge of a ship, aircraft etc

cap·tain·cy /ˈkæptɪnsi/ *n plural* **captaincies** [C,U] the position of being captain of a team, or the period during which someone is captain

cap·tion /ˈkæpʃən/ *n* [C] words printed above or below a picture in a book or newspaper or on a television screen to explain what the picture is showing; → **subtitle** —**caption** *v* [T usually passive]: *a photograph of the couple captioned 'rebuilding their romance'*

cap·ti·vate /ˈkæptɪveɪt/ *v* [T] to attract someone very much, and hold their attention: **be captivated by sb/sth** *He was captivated by her beauty.*

cap·ti·vat·ing /ˈkæptɪveɪtɪŋ/ *adj* very attractive and interesting, in a way that holds your attention: *a captivating smile* | *a captivating account of her childhood in Beijing*

cap·tive¹ /ˈkæptɪv/ *adj* **1** kept in prison or in a place that you are not allowed to leave: *captive soldiers* | *captive animals* | *His son had been* ***taken captive*** (=became a prisoner) *during the raid.* | *a pilot who was* ***held captive*** (=kept as a prisoner) *for six years* **2 captive audience** people who listen or watch someone or something because they have to, not because they are interested **3 captive market** the people who must buy a particular product or service, because they need it and there is only one company selling it **4 be captive to sth** to be unable to think or speak freely, because of being influenced too much by something: *Our communities should not be captive to the mistakes of the past.*

captive² *n* [C] someone who is kept as a prisoner, especially in a war

cap·tiv·i·ty /kæpˈtɪvɪti/ *n* [U] when a person or animal is kept in a prison, CAGE etc and not allowed to go where they want: *The hostages were released from captivity.* | **in captivity** *animals bred in captivity*

cap·tor /ˈkæptə $ -ər/ *n* [C] someone who is keeping another person prisoner; → **captive**: *He managed to escape from his captors.*

cap·ture¹ [W3] /ˈkæptʃə $ -ər/ *v* [T]
1 PERSON to catch a person and keep them as a prisoner: *Government troops have succeeded in capturing the rebel leader.* | *40 captured French soldiers*
2 PLACE/THING to get control of a place or object that previously belonged to an enemy, during a war: *The town was captured after a siege lasting ten days.* | *The Dutch fleet captured two English ships.*
3 ANIMAL to catch an animal after chasing or following it: *The tiger was finally captured two miles outside the village.*
4 FILM/RECORD/ART to succeed in recording, showing, or describing a situation or feeling, using words or pictures: *These photographs capture the essence of working-class life at the turn of the century.* | *The robbery was captured on police video cameras.*
5 capture sb's imagination/attention etc to make someone feel very interested in something: *His stories of foreign adventure captured my imagination.*
6 capture sb's heart to make someone love you
7 BUSINESS/POLITICS to get something that previously belonged to one of your competitors: *We aim to capture eight percent of the UK wine market.* | *Republicans captured three Senate seats that had been held by Democrats.*
8 capture the headlines to be talked or written about a lot in the newspapers or on television: *Irvine Welsh first captured the headlines with his novel 'Trainspotting'.*
9 COMPUTER *technical* to put something in a form that a computer can use: *The data is captured by an optical scanner.*
10 CHESS to remove one of your opponent's pieces from the board in CHESS

capture² *n* [U] **1** when you catch someone in order to make them a prisoner: *The two soldiers somehow managed to avoid capture.* **2** when soldiers get control of a place that previously belonged to an enemy: [+**of**] *the capture of Jerusalem in 1099* **3** when you get control of something that previously belonged to one of your competitors **4** when you put information into a form a computer can use

car [S1] [W1] /kɑː $ kɑːr/ *n* [C]
1 a vehicle with four wheels and an engine, that can carry a small number of passengers

by car
get in/into a car
get out of a car
drive a car
park a car
parked car
take the car (=drive it somewhere)
car crash/accident
car chase
car crime
police car
company car (=a car you are given to use by your company)

I've left my bag in the car. | *I always go to work* ***by car***. | *Dan* ***got out of the car*** *and locked the door.* | *He wasn't even old enough to* ***drive a car***. | ***Cars*** *were* ***parked*** *on both sides of the road.* | *A line of* ***parked cars*** *ran parallel to the pavements.* | *You really ought to walk a bit more, rather than* ***taking the car*** *everywhere.* | *Coughlan was killed in a* ***car accident***. | *a high-speed* ***car chase*** *through the streets of London* | ***Car crime*** *is the fastest-growing crime.* | ***Police cars*** *occasionally circled the building.*

⚠ Do not use **go in/out** with 'car'. Use **get in/out:** *She got into her car (NOT went into her car) and drove off.* | *'Stop the car. I want to get out!' (NOT go out)*

2 sleeping/dining/buffet car a train carriage used for sleeping, eating etc
3 *AmE* a train carriage
4 the part of a lift, BALLOON, or AIRSHIP in which people or goods are carried

WORD FOCUS: CAR
big cars: **limousine, people carrier** *BrE*, **gas-guzzler** *AmE informal*, **estate car** *BrE*
small cars: **compact** *AmE*, **hatchback** *BrE*
other types of car: **pickup, van, saloon** *BrE*/**sedan** *AmE*, **sports car, convertible, SUV** *AmE*, **off-roader, four-wheel drive**/**4X4**
where you park your car: **garage, car park** *BrE*/**parking lot** *AmE*, **multi-storey car park** *BrE*, **parking space, carport**
someone who drives a car: **driver, motorist, learner driver**
someone who drives a rich or important person's car for them: **chauffeur, driver**

ca·rafe /kəˈræf, kəˈrɑːf/ *n* [C] a glass container with a wide neck, used for serving wine or water at meals → see picture at BOTTLE

ˈcar aˌlarm *n* [C] special equipment in a car that makes a loud noise if anyone tries to steal or damage the car

car·a·mel /ˈkærəməl, -mel/ *n* **1** [C,U] a sticky brown sweet made of boiled sugar, butter, and milk **2** [U] burnt sugar used for giving food a special taste and colour **3** [U] a light yellow-brown colour → CRÈME CARAMEL

[1] 000, [2] 000, [3] 000, most frequent words in [S]poken and [W]ritten English

Meanings and phrases are listed in frequency order, so you find the most common meaning or phrase first

Common word combinations highlighted in examples and NEW Collocation Boxes

Usage Notes help you avoid typical learner's mistakes

NEW Word Focus Boxes help you expand your vocabulary