



## Beginner S1

Italian Lessons 1-25

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1-25

A large, thick green circular arc that starts on the right edge and curves upwards and to the left, framing the text '1-25'.

## Introduction

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This is Innovative Language Learning.

Go to [InnovativeLanguage.com/audiobooks](https://InnovativeLanguage.com/audiobooks) to get the lesson notes for this course and sign up for your FREE lifetime account.

The course consists of lessons centered on a practical, real-life conversation.

In each lesson, first, we'll introduce the background of the conversation.

Then, you'll hear the conversation two times:

One time at natural native speed and one time with the English translation.

After the conversation, you'll learn carefully selected vocabulary and key grammar concepts.

Next, you'll hear the conversation 1 time at natural native speed at the end of the lesson.

Finally, practice what you have learned with the review track. In the review track, a native speaker will say a word or phrase from the dialogue, wait three seconds, and then give you the English translation. Say the word aloud during the pause. Halfway through the review track, the order will be reversed. The English translation will be provided first, followed by a three-second pause, and then the word or phrase from the dialogue. Repeat the words and phrases you hear in the review track aloud to practice pronunciation and reinforce what you have learned.

Before starting the lessons, go to [InnovativeLanguage.com/audiobooks](https://InnovativeLanguage.com/audiobooks) to get the lesson notes for this course and sign up for your FREE lifetime account.

## Beginner Lesson

The Importance of Introductions in Italian!

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## Italian

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Peter	Salve, mi chiamo Peter Grant.
Elena	Salve, sono Elena Rossi.
Peter	Come?
Elena	E-l-e-n-a. Per piacere, mi chiami Ele.
Peter	Piacere di conoscerLa, Ele.
Elena	Altrettanto.

## English

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Peter	Hello, my name is Peter Grant.
Elena	Hi, I'm Elena Rossi.
Peter	I'm sorry?
Elena	E-l-e-n-a. Please, call me Ele.
Peter	It's nice to meet you, Ele.
Elena	It's nice to meet you, too.

## Informal Italian

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Peter	Ciao, mi chiamo Peter.
Elena	Ciao, sono Elena.
Peter	Come?
Elena	E-l-e-n-a. Per piacere, chiamami Ele.
Peter	Piacere di conoscerti, Ele.
Elena	Altrettanto.

## Informal English

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Peter	Hello, my name is Peter.
Elena	Hi, I'm Elena.
Peter	I'm sorry?
Elena	E-l-e-n-a. Please, call me Ele.
Peter	It's nice to meet you, Ele.
Elena	You, too.



## Vocabulary

Italian	English	Class
ciao	hello, hi, bye	greeting expression
Piacere di conoscerti.	Pleased to meet you.	greeting expression
per piacere	please	expression
chiamami	call me (informal)	verb
salve	hello (formal or informal)	greeting expression

## Vocabulary Sample Sentences

<i>Ciao mamma!</i>	"Hi, mom!"
<i>Ciao, Laura.</i>	"Hello, Laura."
<i>Piacere di conoscerti. Mi chiamo John.</i>	"Pleased to meet you. My name is John."
<i>Un gelato per piacere.</i>	"An ice cream, please."
<i>Sono Elena, ma chiamami Ele.</i>	"I am Elena, but call me Ele."
<i>Salve, mi chiamo Francesco Russo.</i>	"Hello, my name is Francesco Russo."

## Grammar Points

### The Focus of This Lesson is Introducing Yourself in Italian

*Ciao, mi chiamo Peter.*

"Hello, my name is Peter."

### *chiamarsi* "to be called"

Italian (singular)	English	Italian (plural)	English
<i>(io) mi chiamo</i>	"my name is"	<i>(noi) ci chiamiamo</i>	"our names are"
<i>(tu) ti chiami</i>	"your name is"	<i>(voi) vi chiamate</i>	"your names are"
<i>(lui/lei) si chiama</i>	"his/her name is"	<i>(loro) si chiamano</i>	"their names are"

*Chiamarsi* is a reflexive verb. This means that the action of the verb happens to the subject of that verb. Literally, *mi chiamo* means, "I call myself..." Because it is a reflexive verb, the object pronoun (in this case, myself, yourself, etc.) has to change to match the subject of the verb, *Io mi chiamo* ("I call myself"), or *tu ti chiami* ("you call yourself"), among others as you can see in the chart above. People use the expression *come* very often when a person doesn't catch what someone says. It is a polite way to ask someone to repeat what he or she has just said.

*Altrettanto* has no good literal translation. It means "and you" or "you, too." You can use it to return good wishes to the other person. For example, Peter says, "*piacere di conoscerti*," and Elena responds, "*altrettanto*." Another example would be if someone said, "have a nice day," (*buona giornata*), an appropriate response is *altrettanto*.

## Cultural Insight

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### Italian Nicknames

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Just as in English, Italians like to give and use nicknames. The Italian word for nickname is *soprannome*. The most common way to create a nickname in Italian is to take the first two syllables of someone's name-just as Elena does. Other examples are Lore, which is short for Lorenzo, and Eli, short for Elisa. For people with two-part names, such as MariaTeresa, they often take the first syllables of each part and put them together. MariaTeresa, for example, becomes MariTé.

## Beginner Lesson

Asking About Occupations in Italy Could be Very Profitable

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## Italian

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Elena Che lavoro fa?  
Peter Sono studente. E Lei, cosa fa?  
Elena Sono commessa in una panetteria  
Peter Davvero? Interessante...  
Elena Che cosa studia?  
Peter Studio ingegneria!

## English

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Elena What do you do?  
Peter I'm a student. And you, what do you do?  
Elena I'm a shop clerk in a bakery.  
Peter Really? Interesting...  
Elena What do you study?  
Peter I study engineering!

## Informal Italian

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Elena Peter che lavoro fai?  
Peter Sono studente. E tu, cosa fai?  
Elena Sono commessa in una panetteria.  
Peter Davvero? Interessante...  
Elena Che cosa studi?  
Peter Studio ingegneria!

## Informal English

---

Elena Peter, what do you do?  
Peter I'm a student. And you, what do you do?  
Elena I'm a shop clerk in a bakery.  
Peter Really? Interesting...  
Elena What do you study?  
Peter I study engineering!





## Vocabulary

Italian	English	Class
commessa	shop clerk, shop assistant	noun
davvero	really, truly, indeed	adverb
ingegneria	engineering	noun
interessante	interesting	adjective
lavoro	work, job	noun
panetteria	bakery	noun
studiare	to study	verb
fare	to do, to make, to build	verb
studente	student	noun

## Vocabulary Sample Sentences

*Sono una commessa.*

*Hai davvero ventinove anni?*

*Ho davvero caldo!*

*Davvero stai bene?*

*Devo davvero andare.*

*Davvero?*

*Studi ingegneria?*

*Questa conferenza è molto interessante.*

*È interessante studiare l'italiano.*

*Sto cercando un nuovo lavoro.*

*Oggi vado a lavoro in macchina.*

*L'Italia è una Repubblica democratica, fondata sul lavoro.*

*Che lavoro fa Luigi?*

*Lavoro in una panetteria.*

*È interessante studiare l'italiano.*

*Peter studia ingegneria.*

*Cosa facevi quando eri in Italia?*

*Vorrei fare un viaggio in Thailandia.*

*Faccio una telefonata.*

*Che lavoro fai?*

*Sono studente.*

*Quando ero studente giocavo a calcio.*

"I am a shop clerk."

"Are you really twenty-nine years old?"

"I'm really hot!"

"Are you really feeling well?"

"I really have to go."

"Really?"

"Do you study engineering?"

"This conference is very interesting."

"Studying Italian is interesting."

"I'm looking for a new job."

"Today, I am going to work by car."

"Italy is a democratic Republic based on work."

"What does Luigi do?" / "What job does Luigi do?"

"I work in a bakery."

"Studying Italian is interesting."

"Peter studies engineering."

"What did you do when you were in Italy?"

"I would like to make a trip to Thailand."

"I'm making a phone call."

"What do you do?" / "What job do you do?"

"I am a student."

I used to play soccer when I was a student.

## Grammar Points

### The Focus of This Lesson is Asking About Someone's Occupation in Italian

*Che lavoro fa?*

"What do you do?"

#### Verb Conjugation Charts:

##### *fare* "to do"

<i>Italian (singular)</i>	"English"	<i>Italian (plural)</i>	"English"
<i>(io) faccio</i>	"I do"	<i>(noi) facciamo</i>	"we do"
<i>(tu) fai</i>	"you do"	<i>(voi) fate</i>	"you do"
<i>(lui/lei) fa</i>	"he/she/it does"	<i>(loro) fanno</i>	"they do"

##### *studiare* "to study"

<i>Italian (singular)</i>	"English"	<i>Italian (plural)</i>	"English"
<i>(io) studio</i>	"I study"	<i>(noi) studiamo</i>	"we study"
<i>(tu) studi</i>	"you study"	<i>(voi) studiate</i>	"you study"
<i>(lui/lei) studia</i>	"he/she/it studies"	<i>(loro) studiano</i>	"they study"

Although *fare* is not exactly irregular, it does have some peculiarities due to its shortness. If you look at the charts above, you will notice that most of the endings are regular (-o, -i, -a, -iamo, -ate, -anno). The third person ending has a double -n, which happens with all the short verbs like *dare*, *stare*, and *fare*. The primary differences occur in the first person (I and we) where the base, or the stem, of the word changes to *facci-*. Often, we refer to these kinds of verbs as stem-changing verbs.

Also, note that in Italian, it is not necessary to put the indefinite article in front of the profession. While in English, we say "I'm an engineer" or "I'm a student," in Italian, it's common to hear *sono insegnante*, or *sono ingegnere*.

## Cultural Insight

### Italian University Students

In Italy, university students don't live on a campus where they attend classes and eat in a cafeteria.

Instead, the university is spread over the city in various *facoltà*, or "departments," that are each in a separate building, often very far from the other *facoltà*. (Peter, for example, says that he is studying *ingegneria*. Therefore, he is studying in the *facoltà di ingegneria*.) While attending school, most students live with their parents because apartments for rent in big cities are very difficult to find. Others live in the university housing, which is often very hard to obtain due to its low cost. Some even rent rooms from families or other students until they have passed all of the *esami* (exams) required for their *laurea*, or "degree."

## Beginner Lesson

An Italian Dilemma: To Kiss or Not to Kiss

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## Italian

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Elena Peter, Le presento Anna.  
Anna Salve, Peter. È un piacere conoscerLa.  
Peter Salve. Altrettanto. Di dov'è?  
Anna Sono di Firenze. Siamo tutte e due di Firenze.

## English

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Elena Peter, this is Anna.  
Anna Hello, Peter. Nice to meet you.  
Peter Hello, nice to meet you, too. Where are you from?  
Anna I'm from Florence. We're both from Florence.

## Informal Italian

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Elena Peter, ti presento Anna.  
Anna Ciao, Peter. È un piacere conoscerti.  
Peter Ciao. Altrettanto. Di dove sei?  
Anna Sono di Firenze. Siamo tutte e due di Firenze.

## Informal English

---

Elena Peter, this is Anna.  
Anna Hello, Peter. Nice to meet you.  
Peter Hello, nice to meet you, too. Where are you from?  
Anna I'm from Florence. We're both from Florence.

## Vocabulary

Italian	English	Class
Ti presento...	This is... (literally, I present to you.) (informal)	expression
Le presento...	This is... (literally, I present to	expression

Di dove sei?	you.) (formal)	
Di dov'è?	Where are you from? (informal)	expression
tutte e due	Where are you from? (formal)	expression
Firenze	both (female-female case only)	expression
	Florence	noun

## Vocabulary Sample Sentences

<i>Ti presento Anna.</i>	"This is Anna."
<i>Le presento Peter.</i>	"This is Peter."
<i>Di dove sei?</i>	"Where are you from?" (informal)
<i>Di dov'è?</i>	"Where are you from?" (formal)
<i>Siamo tutte e due di Firenze.</i>	"We are both from Florence."
<i>Sono di Firenze.</i>	"I am from Florence."

## Grammar Points

### The Focus of This Lesson is Italian Introductions

*Peter, ti presento Anna.*

"Peter, this is Anna."

Introductions are an important part of socializing in any country. While In English, we usually say, "this is...", the Italian version, *ti presento*, literally translates as "I present to you."

<b><i>presentare</i> "to present"</b>	
<b><i>Italian</i></b>	<b>"English"</b>
<i>Io presento</i>	"I present"
<i>Tu presenti</i>	"You present"
<i>Lui-lei presenta</i>	"He/she/it presents"
<i>Noi presentiamo</i>	"We present"
<i>Voi presentate</i>	"You present"
<i>Loro presentano</i>	"They present"

<b>Indirect Object Pronouns</b>	
<b>Singular</b>	<b>Plural</b>
(a me) - mi	(a noi) - ci

(a te) - ti	(a voi) - vi
(a lui) - gli	(a loro) - gli
(a lei) - le	

If introducing someone to a group of people, the indirect object pronoun *ti* becomes *vi*. For example, *vi presento Anna*. In a formal setting, we use *le* (*a Lei*). The indirect object pronoun is to whom or for whom the action of a verb is performed. See the chart above for other examples of indirect object pronouns.

## Introducing Multiple People

*Siamo tutte e due di Firenze.*

"We're both from Florence."

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*Tutte e due* is the feminine form of "both." In order to say "both," for two males or a mixed group, you use *tutti e due*. Note that it declines (changes to become masculine, feminine, and plural) like all regular nouns. Another useful trick to know is that you can also transform this phrase to mean all of any number of people. For example, to say "all three," you just change *due* to *tre* as in *tutti e tre*.

## Cultural Insight

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### What's an Appropriate Italian Greeting?

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Many foreigners are uncertain of the proper decorum when meeting Italians for the first time. It is fairly well-known that Italians greet each other with a kiss on each cheek (or they press cheeks and kiss the air). What is less clear is when and where this is appropriate. For example, in an office or any other business environment, Italians usually does not take place. Most Italians prefer a handshake to say hello and then another when they part ways. This is also true of people that they are meeting for the first time or that they don't know very well. With more intimate friends and family, they expect a kiss on the cheek when they haven't seen each other for a long time and they welcome one at any time. It is a warm welcome when greeting guests and an appreciative thank you when receiving gifts.



## Beginner Lesson How are you?

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\* Audio Conversation





## Formal Italian

Elena Salve Luca. Come sta?  
Luca Sto bene, grazie. E Lei?  
Elena Non c'è male.

## Formal English

Elena Hello Mr. Marini. How are you?  
Luca I'm fine, thanks. And you?  
Elena I'm all right.

## Informal Italian

Elena Ciao Luca. Come stai?  
Luca Sto bene, grazie. E tu?  
Elena Non c'è male.

## Informal English

Elena Hey Luca. How are you?  
Luca I'm fine, thanks. And you?  
Elena I'm all right.

## Vocabulary

Italian	English	Class
come	how	interrogative adverb
stare	to be, to stand, to lie, to be located, to be situated	verb
bene	well, good, fine	adverb
tu	you	adverb
male	bad, badly, ill, not well	adverb

### Sample Sentences

Come stanno? (How are they?)  
Come state? (How are you? - second person plural)  
Stiamo bene! (We are fine!)  
Anche tu? (Even you?)



Sto male. (I am ill. I am not well.)

## Grammar Points

*Stare* is an important verb to know and use. Although often used as a near synonym for *essere*, it does not carry the same underlying meaning as *essere*.

*Stare* is a more temporary state or characteristic, while *essere* defines or describes how something is characteristically.

For example, *Come stai?* is asking “How are you?” while the same question using *essere*, *Come sei?* is asking “What are you like?”

*Stare*: to be, to stand, to lie, to be located, to be situated and many more meanings.

Italian	English
1st person singular (io) sto	I am
2nd person singular (tu) stai	You are
3rd person singular (lui/lei) sta	He/she/it is
4th person plural (noi) stiamo	We are
5th (voi) state	You are
6th (loro) stanno	They are

Another way to answer “How are you?” is *Non c'è male*, which also means “I’m fine.”

Being fairly neutral, Italians use it to avoid revealing anything too personal or thinking too much. Because it does not refer directly to the person speaking, it can also be used when responding to questions about food, places, and events.

For example: *Com'è il vino? Non c'è male*. Do note that the phrase does not change in any way.

## Cultural Insight

Asking how someone is doing is very common in Italy. Italians like to chat about anything and especially know what other people feel and like. You will always hear people enquiring about someone else’s health even if they meet every morning. This is especially true between neighbors and old friends. Furthermore in the case of parents and grandparents it is very common to ask them about their children or grandchildren, so a simple greeting like *Come sta?* “How are you?”



can often become a twenty minute long conversation.



## Beginner Lesson

Talk About Being Hungry...and Thirsty...and Tired in Italian!

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## Italian

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Elena Luca, stai bene?  
Luca No, non sto bene.  
Elena Che c'è?  
Luca Ho fame! Ho sete! Sono stanco. Sono...  
Elena OK, OK... A dopo.

## English

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Elena Luca, are you okay?  
Luca No, I'm not [okay].  
Elena What's wrong?  
Luca I'm hungry! I'm thirsty! I'm tired. I'm...  
Elena Okay, okay...! See you later.

## Vocabulary

Italian	English	Class
Stai bene?	Are you okay?	expression
Non sto bene.	I am not well. I am not feeling well.	expression
Che c'è adesso?	What's wrong now? (literally, What is it now?)	expression
fame	hunger	noun
sete	thirst	noun
stanco	tired	adjective

## Vocabulary Sample Sentences

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<i>Luca, Stai bene?</i>	"Luca, are you all right?"
<i>Professore, non sto bene.</i>	"Professor, I am not feeling well."
<i>Che c'è adesso mamma?</i>	"What is it now, Mom?"
<i>Oggi non ho molta fame.</i>	"Today, I'm not very hungry."
<i>Luca ha fame.</i>	"Luca is hungry."



*Elena non ha sete.  
Sembri proprio stanco.  
Lui è stanco.*

"Elena isn't thirsty."  
"You look very tired."  
"He is tired."

## Grammar Points

### The Focus of This Lesson is Asking How People Feel in Italian

*Che c'è?*

"What's wrong?"

*Che c'è* is one way to ask what's wrong. More specifically, it means, "what is it?" Sometimes you will also hear *che c'hai* (pronounced [ke chai]). You may also use *che c'ha* either when asking about the symptoms of an illness or when someone seems to be in a bad mood.

In formal speech it is best to use *cos'ha*, literally meaning, "what do you have," but also translatable as "what is the matter?" You may use the more informal *cos'hai* with people whom you are acquainted.

Avere "to have"		
Person	Italian	English
First person singular	<i>Io ho</i>	"I have"
Second person singular	<i>Tu hai</i>	"You have"
Third person singular	<i>Lui/lei ha</i>	"He/she/it has"
First person plural	<i>Noi abbiamo</i>	"We have"
Second person plural	<i>Voi avete</i>	"You have"
Third person plural	<i>Loro hanno</i>	"They have"

### Hunger, Thirst, and Temperature

*Ho fame! Ho sete! Sono stanco.*

"I'm hungry! I'm thirsty! I'm tired."

With hunger, thirst, and temperature, instead of using *essere* + adjective, we use the verb *avere* + noun. Look at when Luca says, "I'm hungry." In Italian he says, *ho fame* (I have hunger). It is important to observe that fame is not an adjective. Luca has hunger. This is true for *fame*, *sete*, *caldo*, and *freddo*.

## Cultural Insight

## **The Most Important Phrase in Italy?**

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*Ho fame* is arguably the most important sentence in Italian culture. Daily schedules revolve around breakfast, lunch, dinner, and coffee breaks. Many families eat three meals a day together, making the table a quintessential element in family life.

A typical breakfast consists of cookies and *caff  latte* at home or a croissant and cappuccino at the bar (which is usually a small cafe that serves coffee, pastries, and sometimes-light pasta dishes). Lunch is the most substantial meal of the day for most Italians. Around one o'clock, businesses close and people return home for pasta and/or a meat dish with vegetables. After about four o'clock, shops and offices reopen for business until eight thirty or nine o'clock when everyone goes home for dinner. Almost every meal ends with a cup of espresso to help keep energy levels high throughout the day and to help digestion along.

## Beginner Lesson

What Will Shopping in Italy Cost You Without this Lesson?

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## Italian

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Peter	Mi scusi, quanto costa questo?
Commesso	Un euro.
Peter	Quanto costa quello?
Commesso	Anche quello costa un euro.
Peter	Wow! Solo un euro...è molto economico!
Commesso	È normale in Italia, Signore
Peter	Wow! I fiori sono molto economici in Italia!
Anna	Quanto costano negli Usa?

## English

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Peter	Excuse me, how much is this?
Clerk	One euro.
Peter	How much is that?
Clerk	That's also one euro.
Peter	Wow! Just a euro...that's very cheap!
Clerk	It is normal in Italy, Sir.
Peter	Wow! Flowers are very cheap in Italy!
Anna	How much are they in the U.S.A?

## Vocabulary

Italian	English	Class
Mi scusi	Excuse me. (formal)	expression
costare	to cost	verb
Euro	Euro	noun
quello	that	adjective
solo	only	adverb
economico	cheap, economic	adjective
normale	normal, regular, ordinary	adjective
Usa	U.S.A.	noun
questo	this (masculine singular)	demonstrative adjective

## Vocabulary Sample Sentences

*Mi scusi, quanto costa questa bottiglia?*  
*Questo libro costa dodici euro.*  
*Questi stivali costano duecento cento euro.*  
*La giacca costa cento euro.*  
*Quanto costa quello?*  
*Cinque euro.*  
*Andiamo a vedere quello spettacolo?*  
*Quello costa un euro.*  
*Questa maglia costa solo cinque euro.*  
*Solo tre euro.*  
*Questo supermercato è molto economico.*  
*Questo posto è molto economico.*  
*È normale?*  
*Quanto costano negli Usa?*  
*Questo è un fiore.*  
*Questo libro è interessante.*  
*Questo panino.*

"Excuse me, how much is this bottle?"  
"This book costs twelve euros."  
"These boots cost two hundred euros."  
"The jacket costs one hundred euros."  
"How much is that?"  
"Five euros."  
"Shall we go see that show?"  
"That costs one euro."  
"This shirt costs only five euros."  
"Only three euros."  
"This supermarket is very cheap."  
"This place is very cheap."  
"Is it normal?"  
"How much are they in the U.S.A.?"  
"This is a flower."  
"This book is interesting."  
"This sandwich."

## Grammar Points

**The Focus of This Lesson is Saying "to cost," "this," and "that," in Italian**

*Costare, Questo/a, Quello/a*

**To cost, This, That**

Regardless of your reason for being in Italy-work, travel, school, or relocating-you will have to buy things while you are there.

**Costare "To cost"**

*Mi scusi, quanto costa questo?*

**"Excuse me, how much is this?"**

We usually only use *costare* ("it/they") in third person. Look at the following conjugations:

<i>Costare</i>		
Form	Italian	"English"
First Person Singular	<i>Io costo</i>	"I cost"

Second Person Singular	<i>Tu costi</i>	"You cost"
Third Person Singular	<i>Lui/lei costa</i>	"He/she/it costs"
First Person Plural	<i>Noi costiamo</i>	"We cost"
Second Person Plural	<i>Voi costate</i>	"You cost"
Third Person Plural	<i>Loro costano</i>	"They cost"

Another phrase for asking how much something costs, also usually in the third person, is *quanto viene* or *quanto vengono*. This is more like asking, "how much does it come?" *Quanto* in these cases is an adverb and does not change form.

## Commenting on Prices

### Questo/a

#### "This"

"This"		
Form	Italian	"English"
Masculine Singular	<i>questo</i>	"this"
Feminine Singular	<i>questa</i>	"this"

#### Examples:

1. *questo fiore*  
"this flower"
2. *questa bottiglia*  
"this bottle"

### Quello/a

#### "That"

"That"		
Form	Italian	"English"
Masculine Singular	<i>quello</i>	"that"
Feminine Singular	<i>quella</i>	"that"

#### Examples:

1. *quello student*  
"that student"

*quella bottiglia*  
"that bottle"

*Quello* and *questo* decline like normal nouns.

## Cultural Insight

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### Shopping in Italy

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Shopping in Italy is a favorite pastime for residents and tourists alike. During the weekends and especially during holidays, Italians love to walk through the city center looking in shop windows and chatting. Italians, unlike most Anglo-Saxons, shop with their eyes and not with their hands. They tend to look in windows until they find something that interests them and then enter the shop to ask for it. Anglo-Saxons on the other hand, generally enter the shop to see and touch the things they are looking at more closely. Many Italian shopkeepers are still a little unnerved by this habit and prefer that friendly shoppers don't touch their goods without permission.

The city center is always full of clothing and accessory shops and markets. Each city has its own flair and personality. Some cities have permanent outdoor markets where you may find anything from socks to ham at lower prices. With the change to the euro, this price gap is shrinking drastically, however. Smaller cities have markets that open once a week in their *piazze del mercato*, or market squares. Markets are a fun way to mingle and meet people while searching for a bargain.

## Beginner Lesson

Hurry! Listen To This Italian Lesson before You Are Late!

7

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## Italian

---

Elena Pronto?  
Peter Ciao, sono Peter. C'è Anna?  
Elena Ah, ciao! Certo, aspetta un attimo. Anna, è per te!  
Peter Chi è?  
Elena È Peter.  
Anna Bene, arrivo!  
Elena Anna, sbrigati!  
Anna Pronto, ciao Peter!

## English

---

Elena Hello?  
Peter Hello, this is Peter. Is Anna there?  
Elena Oh, hello! Sure, hold on. Anna, it's for you!  
Anna Who is it?  
Elena It's Peter.  
Anna Okay, coming!  
Elena Anna, hurry up!  
Anna Hello, hi Peter!

## Vocabulary

Italian	English	Class
pronto	ready, hello (when picking up the phone)	interjection
Chi è?	Who is it?	expression
sbrigarsi	to hurry up	verb
arrivare	to arrive, to come	verb
un attimo	a moment	expression
chi	who	pronoun

## Vocabulary Sample Sentences

---

*Siamo pronti per uscire?*

*Pronto. Chi parla?*

*Chi è la tua insegnante di italiano preferita?*

*Marco sbrigati!*

*Siamo arrivati a Roma.*

*Sono arrivati i vicini.*

*Arrivo!*

*Un attimo per favore.*

*Chi è Marta?*

*Chi semina vento raccoglie tempesta.*

*Chi ha mangiato la mia torta?*

*Chi vuole un gelato?*

"Are we ready to leave?"

"Hello. Who's speaking?"

"Who is your favorite Italian teacher?"

"Marco, hurry up!"

"We've arrived in Rome."

"The neighbors have arrived."

"I'm coming!"

"One moment, please."

"Who is Marta?"

"making your bed and having to sleep in it"

Who ate my cake?

Who wants an icecream?

## Grammar Points

**The Focus of This Lesson is *Sbrigarsi* and *Arrivare***

**"to hurry" and "to Arrive"**

Being able to express that you are on your way...and sometimes, that you are hurrying in Italian...is very helpful! But, be careful that you know to use the reflexive verb *sbrigarsi*, as well as the correct way to say "I am coming" in Italian.

***Sbrigarsi***

***Anna, sbrigati!***

**"Anna, hurry up!"**

*Sbrigarsi* is a reflexive verb just as *chiamarsi* was in the first lesson. Remember that reflexive verbs are verbs that act on their own subject. Also, look at the *tu* and *noi* forms in the paradigm below. An -h is inserted between the -g and the -i in order to maintain the hard -g sound in the infinitive. This happens in many -gar and -car verbs, such as *sbrigarsi* and *cercare*.

<b><i>Sbrigarsi</i></b>		
<b>Form</b>	<b>Italian</b>	<b>"English"</b>
First Person Singular	<i>Io mi sbrigo</i>	"I hurry"
Second Person Singular	<i>Tu ti sbrighi</i>	"You hurry"
Third Person Singular	<i>Lui/lei si sbriga</i>	"He/she/it hurries"
First Person Plural	<i>Noi ci sbrighiamo</i>	"We hurry"
Second Person Plural	<i>Voi vi sbrigate</i>	"You hurry"
Third Person Plural	<i>Loro si sbrigano</i>	"They hurry"

## **Arrivare**

**Bene, arrivo!**

**"Okay, coming!"**

---

In English, Anna tells Elena that she's coming. Now, look at the Italian dialogues. She doesn't say *vengo* as she would in English. She says *arrivo* ("I'm arriving").

We use *arrivare* to express a very near arrival. For example, if you call a friend to say that you are almost at a meeting point, the appropriate expression is *arrivo*.

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## Cultural Insight

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### **Where Can You Get the Best Cell Phone Rates in Italy?**

---

Long before teenagers in America were texting, surfing, and chatting on their cell phones, every Italian had one in their pocket. Access to cellular phones is easy and relatively non-committal because there are two basic kinds of service: *abbonamento* (subscription) and *ricaricabile* (prepaid or literally, rechargeable). Different companies offer special rates on anything from texting between phones that carry the same service, to international calls. Because rates are often high between phones with competing services, many Italians have two or even three phones, each carrying different services with different advantages. Today, because many Italians are unsatisfied with landline services and costs, they are discontinuing phone service in their homes. Companies such as TIM, Vodafone, and Tre are now offering packaged deals to reduce rates for customers using their cell phones as home phones as well.



## Beginner Lesson

What Did You Do This Weekend in Italy?

8

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## Italian

---

Elena Allora? Che cosa ha detto?  
Anna Mi ha chiesto cosa faccio questo fine settimana.  
Elena Cosa gli hai detto?  
Anna Che non sono sicura di essere disponibile.

## English

---

Elena So? What did he say?  
Anna He asked me what I am doing this weekend.  
Elena What did you tell him?  
Anna That I am not sure if I am free.

## Vocabulary

Italian	English	Class
allora	so, then	conjunction
disponibile	available, free	adjective
chiedere	to ask	verb
fine settimana	weekend	noun
dire	to say, to tell	verb
sapere	to know	verb
sicura	sure, certain (feminine singular)	adjective

## Vocabulary Sample Sentences

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<i>Allora è deciso.</i>	"Then, it's settled."
<i>Allora? Che cosa ha detto?</i>	"So? What did he say?"
<i>Sei disponibile per una partita di calcio venerdì?</i>	"Are you available for a soccer match on Friday?"
<i>La camera è disponibile.</i>	"The room is available."
<i>Chiedi a mamma le chiavi di casa.</i>	"Ask mom for the key to the house."
<i>Chiediamo del pane?</i>	"Shall we ask for some bread?"
<i>Ho chiesto una bambola.</i>	"I asked for a doll."
<i>Posso chiederti una cosa?</i>	"Can I ask you something?"

*Hai chiesto?*

*I fine settimana lavoro.*

*Hai detto a Elisa che stiamo arrivando?*

*Mi ha detto che domani non viene.*

*Hanno detto che vanno al cinema.*

*Sai che ore sono?*

*Sai come prenotare un biglietto per il treno?*

*Sai dove andare?*

*Non so niente.*

*È sicura di andare stasera.*

"Did you ask?"

"I work on weekends."

"Have you told Elisa we are coming?"

"She told me she's not going to come tomorrow."

"They said they're going to the cinema."

"Do you know what time it is?"

"Do you know how to book a train ticket?"

"Do you know where to go?"

"I don't know anything."

"She is sure to go tonight."

## Grammar Points

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### **The Focus of This Lesson is Forming the Present Perfect**

*Che cosa ha detto?*

**"What did he say?"**

---

In order to express past actions and events, Italian language has a very rich and detailed variety of verbal modes and tenses.

In the dialogue, both Anna and Elena use a past verbal tense called *passato prossimo* (present perfect). The *passato prossimo* is a compound tense composed of two words: the auxiliary verb and the past participle. We use it to express finished actions and events at the time of speaking.

This tense corresponds to two different tenses in English: the simple past (e.g., I visited Italy last year.), and the present perfect (e.g., I have visited Italy for a month). Therefore, the English "I visited" and "I have visited" are the same in Italian.

Auxiliary verbs are *avere* ("to have") and *essere* ("to be"). In today's lesson, we will see the *passato prossimo* of transitive verbs (verbs that transfer action to a direct object). All transitive verbs require the auxiliary verb, *avere*.

To make the *passato prossimo*, you need the present tense of *avere* followed by the past participle of the verb you want. You should already know the present tense of *avere* (*Io ho, tu hai*, etc.), so you now need to learn how to make the past participle.

The table below explains how:

Form	Present Infinitive	Past Participle
First conjugation	parl- <b>are</b> (to speak)	parl- <b>ato</b>
Second conjugation	ricev- <b>ere</b> (to receive)	ricev- <b>uto</b>
Third conjugation	fin- <b>ire</b> (to finish)	fin- <b>ito</b>

So, the past participle of all regular verbs of the first conjugation (**-are**) end in **-ato** (*mangi-are* becomes *mangi-ato*), those of the second conjugation (**-ere**) end in **-uto** (*cred-ere* becomes *cred-uto*), and those of the third conjugation (**-ire**) end in **-ito** (*dorm-ire* becomes *dorm-ito*).

## The Focus of This Lesson is Irregular Forms of the Past Participle: Strong Verbs

**Mi ha chiesto cosa faccio questo fine settimana.**

**"He asked me what I am doing this weekend."**

It is important that you understand that you can only make the past tense in Italian with two words-the auxiliary verb and a past participle-and that the past participle does not change when the auxiliary verb is *avere*.

The vast majority of verbs make their past participle by following the pattern in the table above, but some do not follow the general rule; we call them strong verbs. In today's dialogue the verbs *chiedere* ("to ask") and *dire* ("to say, to tell") are strong verbs and their past participle forms are irregular, so you need to learn them by heart.

Here is the full past tense of the verb *chiedere* (to ask) and *dire* (to say, to tell):

Simple Present of Auxiliary <i>avere</i>	Past Participle of <i>chiedere</i>	Past Participle of <i>dire</i>
(io) ho		
(tu) hai		
(lui/lei) ha	chiesto	detto
(noi) abbiamo		
(voi) avete		
(loro) hanno		

## Cultural Insight

## Italian Weekends

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For many Italians, Saturdays are not days off work. Many public middle and high schools have classes on Saturday mornings, and many businesses still require employees to work a half-day. Students who do not have classes on Saturday are required to attend school a few afternoons a week, but others attend school only until around one o'clock when they go home for lunch. In turn, they must attend classes on Saturday as well. Sunday, however, remains a holiday, which means that most young people go out on Saturdays and not necessarily on Fridays.



# Beginner Lesson

## Do you have a pet?



*Informal Italian	2
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\* Audio Conversation



## Informal Italian

Anna: Peter, hai un animale domestico?  
 Peter: Sì ho un cane, due gatti e...un...come si dice "hamster?"  
 Anna: Hamster?  
 Peter: Sì, un animale piccolo come un topo.  
 Anna: Ahh! Un criceto!

## Informal English

Anna: Peter, do you have a pet?  
 Peter: Oh yes! I have a dog, 2 cats and...a...how do you say "hamster?"  
 Anna: Hamster?  
 Peter: Yes, a small animal like a mouse.  
 Anna: Ahh! A hamster!

## Vocabulary

Italian	English	Class
animale domestico	pet	noun
criceto	hamster	noun
cane	dog	noun
gatti	cats	noun
piccolo	small, tiny	adjective
topo	mouse	noun

### Sample Sentences

Hai un animale domestico? (Do you have a pet?)  
 Il criceto è piccolo. (The hamster is small.)  
 Il cane è un bel animale. (The dog is a nice animal.)  
 Peter ha due gatti. (Peter has two cats.)  
 Il topo è piccolo. (The mouse is small.)  
 Il gatto mangia il topo. (The cat eats the mouse.)

### Grammar Points



*Come si dice...?* is a useful phrase for asking about the meaning of words and phrases.

*Si dice* is the impersonal form of the verb *dire* and it stands for the English "How do you say...?".

The impersonal construction is commonly used in Italian when the action of a verb is performed by people in general or by a subject which is indefinite (in English "you" or "one"). This construction uses *si* + 3rd person of the verb and it is called *si impersonale*.

Let's have a look at the examples below for better understanding:

1. *Si mangia per vivere.*

People eat in order to live.

2. *Non si può pagare con la carta di credito.*

You can't pay by credit card.

3. *Come si dice "cane" in inglese?*

How do you say "cane" in English?

4. *Non si paga molto in quel ristorante.*

You don't pay much in that restaurant.

5. *Si vedono le montagne.*

You can see the mountains./The mountains can be seen.

Note that in the last example the verb is plural because the noun following it is plural. This usage is called in Italian the *si passivante* construction because, if transformed from impersonal into personal, the verb form would be passive.

## Cultural Insight

While hamsters are uncommon pets in Italy, cats and small dogs are quite prevalent. Because most of the population lives in apartments, large dogs are neither very practical nor economical. Many shops and even restaurants are dog friendly and it is not uncommon to see dogs on leashes or being carried inside in large totes.



## Beginner Lesson

Talking About Possessions in Italian: It's MY Coat!

10

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## Italian

---

Anna Ehi Peter, c'è Luca?  
Peter No. Perché?  
Anna Ha il mio libro di storia. Ehi, è una foto di famiglia quella?  
Peter Sì, lo è.  
Anna Chi è questo?

## English

---

Anna Hey, Peter. Is Luca here?  
Peter No, why?  
Anna He has my history book. Hey, is that a family picture?  
Peter Yes, it is.  
Anna Who is this?

## Vocabulary

Italian	English	Class
perché	why	interrogative adverb
libro	book	noun
famiglia	family	noun
storia	history	noun
mio	my (masculine singular)	possessive adjective

## Vocabulary Sample Sentences

---

*Perché ridi? Perché sei divertente.*  
*Perché sei felice?*  
*È un libro interessante.*  
*Luca ha una famiglia numerosa.*  
*La storia è interessante.*  
*Luca ha il mio libro.*

"Why are you laughing? Because you're funny."  
"Why are you happy?"  
"It's an interesting book."  
"Luca has a large family."  
"History is interesting."  
"Luca has my book."

## Grammar Points

### The Focus of This Lesson is Possessive Adjectives and Definite Articles

*Ha il mio libro di storia.*

"He has my history book."

Like all other adjectives in Italian, the possessive adjectives also change according to the gender (masculine/feminine) and the number (singular/plural) of the noun they precede. Today, we shall see only the singular forms of both masculine and feminine possessive adjectives in relation to the personal pronoun they refer to. The only exception is the possessive adjective "their" (*loro*), which never changes. Look at the following table:

<i>Personal Pronoun</i>	<i>Masculine Singular</i>	<i>Feminine Singular</i>	<i>"English"</i>
<i>io</i>	<i>mio</i>	<i>mia</i>	"my"
<i>tu</i>	<i>tuo</i>	<i>tua</i>	"your"
<i>lui/lei</i>	<i>suo</i>	<i>sua</i>	"his"/ "her"
<i>noi</i>	<i>nostro</i>	<i>nostra</i>	"our"
<i>voi</i>	<i>vostro</i>	<i>vostra</i>	"your"
<i>loro</i>	<i>loro</i>	<i>loro</i>	"their"

As you can see in the dialogue, most possessive adjectives (my, your, his, etc.) require a definite article (the) preceding them. Both the article and the adjective must agree in person and number with the noun.

### Here are some examples:

1. *Il mio libro*  
"My book"
2. *La tua giacca*  
"Your jacket"
3. *La sua penna*  
"His pen"
4. *Il suo computer*  
"Her computer"

Definite articles are not necessary with singular family nouns. However, with plural family nouns they are necessary.

## For example:

1. **Mia** madre si chiama Anna.  
"My mother's name is Anna."
2. **Mio** fratello ha dieci anni.  
"My brother is ten years old."
3. **Mio** padre è un dottore.  
"My father is a doctor."
4. **Mia** zia abita a Pisa.  
"My aunt lives in Pisa."

Exceptions to this rule occur when we use diminutive or endearment nouns instead of the plain ones. For instance, *madre* is the plain Italian word for "mother," while *mamma* is an endearment term for it (in English "mummy/mama/mommy"). In the latter case, both *mia mamma* and *la mia mamma* are correct forms (i.e., without or with the definite article). However, when using the term *madre*, the only correct form is *mia madre* (without the definite article).

Another exception to this rule occurs when a demonstrative adjective follows the family name. In this case, we commonly use the definite article.

## Examples:

1. *Il mio zio americano.*  
"My American uncle."
2. *Il mio fratello maggiore.*  
"My older brother."

## Cultural Insight

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### Where Do Italians Live?

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Homes in Italy are hard to find, and more often than not, are too expensive to live in alone. Young people opt to live at home into their late twenties and thirties. Many even share a room with siblings because housing is so difficult to obtain and costs more than they are willing to pay. While the average

paycheck of a recent university graduate is slightly more than 800€, one month's rent for an apartment can easily cost equally as much, and it is difficult to get a loan to buy a home. In addition, when buying an apartment it is also important to consider the cost of renovation in the price. Especially since most Italians also completely renovate before moving into a new home-from the kitchen to the bathroom. As a result, Italians are accustomed to living in apartments with two, three, even four roommates when they leave their parents' homes. None of which prevents most from dreaming of villas by the seaside or in the mountains.

## Beginner Lesson

Multiple Possessions: Stop the Plane! I Left My Glasses in Italy!

11

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## Italian

---

Antonio      Hai visto le mie chiavi della macchina?  
Maria        Umm...No!  
Antonio      E i miei occhiali?  
Maria        Umm...No!  
Antonio      E le mie sigarette, dove sono?  
Maria        Ehh...le tue sigarette sono finite!  
Antonio      Ma non hai smesso di fumare?!  
Maria        Umm...No!

## English

---

Antonio      Have you seen my car keys?  
Maria        Um...nope!  
Antonio      And my glasses?  
Maria        Um...nope!  
Antonio      And my cigarettes, where are they?  
Maria        Eh...you're out of cigarettes. (literally, "your cigarettes are finished.")  
Antonio      But haven't you quit smoking?!  
Maria        Um...nope!

## Vocabulary

Italian	English	Class
chiavi	keys	noun
occhiali	glasses	noun
sigarette	cigarettes	noun
dove	where	adverb
smettere	to quit, stop, end	verb
fumare	to smoke	verb
macchina	car	noun

## Vocabulary Sample Sentences

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*Le chiavi di casa.*  
*I tuoi occhiali sono molto belli.*  
*Antonio porta gli occhiali.*  
*Ho comprato le sigarette.*  
*Dove andiamo?*  
*Dove sei stato?*  
*Dove sei?*  
*Dove abiti?*  
*Smetti di fumare!*  
*Potresti smettere di lamentarti?*  
*Smetti di ridere!*  
*Mio padre non fuma.*  
*La mia macchina non è nuova.*  
*Sono venuto in macchina.*  
*Ieri ho provato una macchina nuova.*

"The house keys."  
"Your glasses are very nice."  
"Antonio wears glasses."  
"I bought the cigarettes."  
"Where are we going?"  
"Where have you been?"  
"Where are you?"  
"Where do you live?"  
"Stop smoking!"  
"Could you stop complaining?"  
"Stop laughing!"  
"My father does not smoke."  
"My car is not new."  
"I came by car."  
"Yesterday I tried a new car."

## Grammar Points

### The Focus of This Lesson is Plural Possessive Adjectives

*Hai visto le mie chiavi della macchina?*

**Have you seen my car keys?**

As you should know, possessive adjectives change according to not only the gender (masculine/feminine), but also the number (singular/plural) of the noun they precede. The only exception is the possessive "their" (*loro*), which never changes.

The following table should help you in clarifying this point:

<b>Personal Pronoun</b>	<b>Masculine Plural</b>	<b>Feminine Plural</b>	<b>"English"</b>
<i>io</i>	<i>miei</i>	<i>mie</i>	"my"
<i>tu</i>	<i>tuo</i>	<i>tue</i>	"your"
<i>lui/lei</i>	<i>suoi</i>	<i>sue</i>	"his/her"
<i>noi</i>	<i>nostri</i>	<i>nostre</i>	"our"
<i>voi</i>	<i>vostri</i>	<i>vostre</i>	"your"
<i>loro</i>	<i>loro</i>	<i>loro</i>	"their"

As you can see in the dialogue, possessive adjectives require a definite article ("the") preceding them. Both the article and the adjective must agree in person and number with the noun.



**For example:**

1. "My books" => *i miei libri*
2. "Your keys" => *le tue chiavi*
3. "His cigarettes" => *le sue sigarette*
4. "Her glasses" => *i suoi occhiali*

## Cultural Insight

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### Italian No-Smoking Ban

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Since January 10 2005, as Italy joined other European countries imposing strict restrictions on smokers, a ban on smoking in all enclosed public places such as bars, restaurants, hotels, schools, discotheques, and offices went into effect. According to this law, businesses face a fine of up to 2.000 Euros if they fail to ensure their customers do not smoke, while smokers could face a 275 Euro fine for ignoring the rules. At the very beginning, not everyone welcomed this ban, with some bar owners and smokers saying that cigarettes and smoking are an integral part of Italian bar and cafe culture. However, eventually even chain-smokers and the most dogged smokers got used to taking their cigarette breaks out in the open air, while appreciating the new, refreshed air inside all public places. The rules do allow smoking inside, but only in special sealed-off areas fitted with specific smoke extractors required by law, which are actually too expensive for the majority of bar owners to afford. So, for all public places that have no smoking areas of this kind, they only allow smoking in the outdoor areas.

## Beginner Lesson

### Italian Family Introductions: He is Your Brother?

12

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## Italian

---

Peter: Questo è il mio babbo, questa è la mia mamma e questi sono i miei fratelli. La mia sorella minore, Jennifer, e il mio fratello maggiore, Mike.

Anna: Tuo fratello Mike è davvero bello!

Peter: Cosa? Non è vero!

Anna: Sì, i suoi occhi sono molto belli. Anche il tuo babbo è un bell'uomo. E a te cos'è successo?!

## English

---

Peter: This is my dad, this is my mom, and these are my brothers, my younger sister Jennifer, and my older brother Mike.

Anna: Your brother Mike is very handsome!

Peter: What? It's not true!

Anna: Yes, he is. His eyes are very beautiful. Your dad is a handsome man, too. What happened to you?!

## Vocabulary

Italian	English	Class
babbo	dad, father	noun
mamma	mom, mother	noun
fratelli	brothers	noun
sorella	sister	noun
fratello	brother	noun
maggiore	greater (older)	comparative adjective
minore	lesser (younger)	comparative adjective
occhi	eyes	noun
uomo	man	noun

## Vocabulary Sample Sentences

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*Il mio babbo si chiama Enrico.*

"My dad's name is Enrico."

*La festa della mamma è l'otto maggio.*

*La tua mamma è giovane!*

*Ho tre fratelli.*

*Mia sorella si sposa.*

*La sorella di Peter è bella.*

*Tuo fratello è giovane.*

*Mia sorella maggiore ha vent'anni.*

*Mio fratello minore sta all'università.*

*Mike ha gli occhi verdi.*

*Richard è un uomo intelligente.*

"Mother's Day is on the eighth of May."

"Your mom is young!"

"I have three brothers."

"My sister is getting married."

"Peter's sister is beautiful."

"Your brother is young."

"My older sister is twenty years old."

"My younger brother is at the university."

"Mike has green eyes."

"Richard is a smart man."

## Grammar Points

### **The Focus of This Lesson is a Review of Italian Possessive Adjectives**

***Tuo fratello Mike è davvero bello!***

**"Your brother Mike is very handsome!"**

In today's lesson, we shall review all forms of the possessive adjectives previously seen. We use possessive adjectives for indicating to whom the noun they refer to belongs, and like all Italian adjectives, they need to be match in gender and number with the noun to which they refer. The following tables will help you clarify which one to pick.

The first table is for masculine possessive adjectives, both singular and plural.

"English"	<i>Masculine Singular</i>	<i>Masculine Plural</i>
"my"	<i>mio</i>	<i>miei</i>
"your"	<i>tuo</i>	<i>tuoi</i>
"his/her"	<i>suo</i>	<i>suoi</i>
"our"	<i>nostro</i>	<i>nostri</i>
"your"	<i>vostro</i>	<i>vostri</i>
"their"	<i>loro</i>	<i>loro</i>

The second table is for feminine possessive adjectives, both singular and plural.

"English"	<i>Feminine Singular</i>	<i>Feminine Plural</i>
"my"	<i>mia</i>	<i>mie</i>
"your"	<i>tua</i>	<i>tue</i>
"his/her"	<i>sua</i>	<i>sue</i>
"our"	<i>nostra</i>	<i>nostre</i>
"your"	<i>vostra</i>	<i>vostre</i>

"their"	<i>loro</i>	<i>loro</i>
---------	-------------	-------------

Remember that the definite article (*il* or *la*) usually precedes the **singular possessive adjectives** except for a few cases such as family members. Therefore, "my brother" in Italian, is *mio fratello*, whereas "my bag" is *la mia borsa*.

A definite article always precedes the **plural possessive adjectives**, also in the case of family members. Therefore, "my brothers" in Italian, is *i miei fratelli*, just as "my bags" is *le mie borse*.

Please note that *babbo* is a very common way to say *papà* (i.e., "father/dad") in the Tuscan region and in other parts of Italy. In a formal conversation, it is best to say *padre* ("father").

## Cultural Insight

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### Italian Relationships

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The average Italian relies primarily on his or her family to provide community and friendship. Because the family occupies so much time, friendships outside the family are usually lifetime friends met in high school, middle school, or even elementary school. It is often difficult (though not impossible) for new people to enter into an existing circle of friends simply because they have known each other for so long! When someone moves to a different city or country, Italians are very sensitive to that loss. Italians are always very friendly toward strangers, but real, strong friendship takes time to build.

## Beginner Lesson

Italian Commands: Do What I Say...Please!

13

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## Italian

---

Anna Raccontami di tuo fratello.  
Peter Non ci credo!  
Anna Dai raccontami! Ti prego!  
Peter Va bene. Mio fratello fa il web designer. Lavora per una ditta giapponese, e suona la chitarra.  
Anna La chitarra? Anch'io!

## English

---

Anna Tell me about your brother.  
Peter I don't believe this.  
Anna Come on tell me! I beg you! (Pretty please!)  
Peter Okay, my brother is a web designer. He works for a Japanese company and he plays the guitar.  
Anna The guitar? Me, too!

## Vocabulary

Italian	English	Class
raccontare	to tell, recount	verb
credere	to believe	verb
lavorare	to work	verb
suonare	to play (a musical instrument)	verb
ditta	company	noun
chitarra	guitar	noun

## Vocabulary Sample Sentences

---

<i>Raccontami una storia.</i>	"Tell me a story."
<i>Credo che qualcosa non vada.</i>	"I believe there's something wrong."
<i>Credo di sì.</i>	"I believe so."
<i>Non ci credo!</i>	"I don't believe it!"
<i>Non lavorare troppo.</i>	"Don't work too much."

*Lavoro in una fabbrica.*

*Non suono la chitarra.*

*Lavoro in una ditta di computer.*

*Sai suonare la chitarra?*

"I work in a factory."

"I don't play the guitar."

"I work in a computer company."

"Do you know how to play the guitar?"

## Grammar Points

### The Focus of This Lesson is the Italian Imperative Mode

*Raccontami di tuo fratello.*

"Tell me about your brother."

Today, we will learn about informal imperative verbal mode (*imperativo*, in Italian). We use imperative mode when commanding someone we know to do something. This order can be more or less strong according to the intonation or other polite words we use with it, such as *per favore* ("please"). However, we must use it anyway when talking to someone we know well, such as family members, friends, etc.

We normally use the imperative in the second person singular ("you" - *tu*), the first person plural ("we" - *noi*), and the second person plural ("you" - *voi*) persons.

	<b>I Conjugation -ARE Verbs raccont-are ("to tell")</b>	<b>II Conjugation -ERE Verbs prend-ere ("to take")</b>	<b>III Conjugation -IRE Verbs sent-ire ("to listen, hear, feel")</b>
<b>Second Person Singular</b>	raccont- <i>a</i>	prend- <i>i</i>	sent- <i>i</i>
<b>First Person Plural</b>	raccont- <i>iamo</i>	prend- <i>iamo</i>	sent- <i>iamo</i>
<b>Second Person Plural</b>	raccont- <i>ate</i>	prend- <i>ete</i>	sent- <i>ite</i>

Note that when the verb and phrase require a personal pronoun, we must attach this pronoun to the end of the verb to make a single word. In the dialogue for instance, we attach the personal pronoun *mi* ("me" or "to me" in English) at the end of the verb *racconta* ("tell") and they become the single word *raccontami* ("tell me").

## Cultural Insight



## Italian Conversation

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The best accompaniment to good food is good wine. The next best thing is a good conversation. Italians love to communicate. It is very rare for a family or a group of friends to plan to go to "dinner and a movie" simply because the conversation usually lasts long after dessert. In pubs, parks, and even in the streets, groups of people (young and old) stand in circles or walk together chatting away. Those in retirement often spend the afternoon taking their grandchildren for walks so they can catch up on life in the neighborhood. When it's not too cold, they sit at the park or on the balcony of their apartments and have a coffee together. Overall, it is a very social culture, and the best conversation starter is *E allora, cosa mi racconti?*



## Beginner Lesson

### Italian Negative Commands: Don't joke!

14

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## Informal Italian

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Peter Non scherzare!  
Anna Perché, qualcosa non va?  
Peter Bè ehm, vedi...  
Anna Dimmi!  
Peter E tu Anna, hai sorelle?  
Anna No, sono figlia unica.  
Peter Peccato!  
Anna Cosa vuoi dire?

## Informal English

---

Peter Don't joke!  
Anna Why is there something wrong?  
Peter Well, ehm, you see...  
Anna Tell me!  
Peter Anna, do you have any sisters?  
Anna No, I'm an only child.  
Peter That's too bad!  
Anna What do you mean?

## Vocabulary

Italian	English	Class
qualcosa	something	indefinite pronoun
scherzare	to joke, make fun of	verb
figlia unica	only child (feminine singular)	noun
peccato	too bad	exclamation

## Vocabulary Sample Sentences

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*Hai qualcosa da mangiare?*

Do you have something to eat?

*Sto solo scherzando, non ti arrabbiare.*  
*Scherzi sempre!*  
*Sto scherzando.*  
*Anna è figlia unica.*  
*È un peccato.*

I am just joking, don't get angry.  
You are always joking!  
I am joking.  
Anna is an only child.  
It's too bad.

## Grammar Points

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### Negative imperative

The make the negative form of imperative for *noi* (we) and *voi* (you, plural) you need to add *non* ("not") before the conjugated verb. (Ex. aff. *sentiamo* -> neg. *non sentiamo*; aff. *prendete* -> neg. *non prendete*).

The negative form of imperative for *tu* (you, singular) is built with *non*+infinitive of the verb we want. (Ex. aff. *racconta* -> neg. *non raccontare*; aff. *prendi* -> neg. *non prendere*; aff. *senti* -> neg. *non sentire*).

negative imperative	I conjug. -ARE raccont-are (to tell)	II conjug. -ERE prend-ere (to take)	III conjug. -IRE sent-ire (to listen, hear, feel)
noi	<i>non raccont - iamo</i>	<i>non prend - iamo</i>	<i>non sent - iamo</i>
voi	<i>non raccont - ate</i>	<i>non prend - ete</i>	<i>non sent - ite</i>
tu	<i>non raccont - are</i>	<i>non prend - ere</i>	<i>non sent - ire</i>

## Cultural Insight

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Teasing and joking is a favorite pastime among friends. While practical jokes are not so common, Italians love a good laugh. They will make fun of almost anything. Telling *barzellette*, or jokes, is an art form; and physical, slapstick humor, like that of Roberto Benigni (*Life is Beautiful*) is quite popular. There are hundreds of jokes about the Pope and even more about the *carabinieri*, an Italian military police force. Be aware, however, that teasing is a dangerous sport. Because English humor tends to be sarcastic and Italian humor is much less so, it is important to be aware of people's feelings. A good laugh is never worth offending someone and you might find yourself explaining.

## Beginner Lesson

Expressing Your Desires in Italy!

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## Italian

---

Elena	Buongiorno signore! Prego?
Ciente	Vorrei quattro rosette e dieci grissini.
Elena	Altro?
Ciente	Um, sì. Prendo anche due pezzi di quella pizza margherita... Sembra buona!
Elena	Sì, la nostra pizza è speciale!
Ciente	Ah, bene! Quant'è?
Elena	Sono 4 euro e cinquanta.
Elena	Grazie e buona giornata!
Customer	Arrivederci!

## English

---

Elena	Good day, sir. How can I help you?
Customer	I would like four rosettes and ten grissini.
Elena	Anything else?
Customer	Um, yes. I'll take also two slices of that pizza margherita...it looks delicious!
Elena	Yes, our pizza is special!
Customer	Ah, good! How much is it?
Elena	It's four Euros and fifty.
Elena	Thank you. Have a nice day!
Customer	Goodbye!

## Vocabulary

Italian	English	Class
volere	to want, wish, long, demand	verb
rosetta	Italian rose shaped dinner rolls (a kind of round bread cut to look like a rose when baked).	noun
grissino	a kind of hard breadstick	noun
altro	another, else	adjective

prendere	to take, get (figuratively, to buy)	verb
pezzi	pieces, slices	noun
sembrare	to seem, look, look like	verb
buona	good	adjective
speciale	special	adjective
Buona giornata	(Have a) Good morning, (Have a) Good day	greeting expression

## Vocabulary Sample Sentences

*Voleva solo salutarti.*

*Voglio comprare una macchina nuova.*

*Volere la botte piena e la moglie ubriaca.*

*Vorrei un cappuccino, per favore.*

*Vorrei una mela.*

*Vorrei una rosetta, per favore.*

*I grissini con il prosciutto sono buoni.*

*Prendo un altro cioccolatino.*

*Andiamo a prendere Luca.*

*Prendere due piccioni con una fava.*

*Hai preso il pane?*

*Anthony prende un gelato.*

*Prendi le chiavi per favore.*

*Mangio due pezzi di pane.*

*Questa borsa sembra carissima.*

*Le cose non sono sempre come sembrano.*

*Quegli spaghetti sembrano buoni.*

*Buona questa pasta al pesto.*

*È un'offerta speciale.*

*Grazie, buona giornata.*

"She just wanted to say hi."

"I want to buy a new car."

"To have your cake and eat it, too."

"I'd like a cappuccino, please."

"I would like an apple."

"I'd like a rosetta, please."

"Grissini and ham are good."

"I'll take another chocolate."

"Let's go get Luca."

"Kill two birds with one stone."

"Did you buy the bread?"

"Anthony gets an ice cream."

"Get the keys, please."

"I eat two pieces of bread."

"This bag looks very expensive."

"Things are not always what they seem."

"That spaghetti looks delicious."

"This pesto (genovese) pasta is tasty."

"It's a special offer."

"Thank you, have a good day."

## Grammar Points

**The Focus of This Lesson is Expressing Desires in Italian**

*Vorrei quattro rosette e dieci grissini.*

**"I would like four rosettes and ten grissini."**

*Volere* ("to want") in the *condizionale* ("conditional tense"), is most like "would like" in English. We use it to express our desires, whether they are real or dreamed.

**For example:**

1. *Ahhh vorrei una casa al mare.*  
"Ahhh I'd like a house by the sea."

Person	Italian	"English"
First Person Singular	<i>Io vorrei</i>	"I would like"
Second Person Singular	<i>Tu vorresti</i>	"You would like"
Third Person Singular	<i>Lui / lei vorrebbe</i>	"He/she would like"
First Person Plural	<i>Noi vorremmo</i>	"We would like"
Second Person Plural	<i>Voi vorreste</i>	"You would like"
Third Person Plural	<i>Loro vorrebbero</i>	"They would like"

When ordering in restaurants and cafés, using this phrase is a very polite way to speak to the people serving you. In some cases, Italians use the present tense *voglio* or *prendo* to place orders. While this seems abrupt at times to English speakers, they determine the level of politeness in Italian more by how friendly a person's behavior or tone of voice is than the verb tense they use.

## The Focus of This Lesson is Asking How Much Something Costs in Italian

### Quant'è?

#### "How much is it?"

*Quant'è* is made of the phonetic union of *quanto* ("how much") and *è* (the third person singular of the verb *essere*). In the question, the verb is singular because it's impersonal. But when answering, *essere* needs to be conjugated depending on the amount of money. If the amount is singular then the verb is *è*.

**For example:**

1. *È un euro.*  
"It's one euro."

If the amount is plural then the verb is *sono*.

**For example:**



1. *Sono quattro euro e cinquanta.*  
"It's four Euros fifty."

*A posto* (sometimes written *apposto*) literally means "in place" or "in order." When ordering in shops and restaurants, the person taking the order will most often ask, *È a posto così?* In English, this means, "will that be all?"

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## Cultural Insight

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### Italian Bread

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Bread serves as a staple in Italian dining. While you can find many shapes, sizes, and kinds in any *panificio* or *panetteria* ("bakery"), each region has its own specialty. For example, they traditionally make Tuscan bread without salt and bake it in a wood-burning oven. Typically, they purchase it by weight fresh every morning to eat with the midday and evening meals. They use any leftover bread to make thick soups and stews, like *ribollita*, which is tomato-based soup using stale bread. As a government subsidized product, it was once quite cheap. However, recent rises in bread prices have been making headlines and causing much worry, especially among people already in retirement who live on a fixed income.

## Beginner Lesson

Discussing Time Frames in Italian: How Often Do You Call?

16

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## Italian

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### Form A

Anna Ogni quanto chiami i tuoi genitori?  
Peter Intendi con skype?  
Anna Si.  
Peter Circa una volta alla settimana. E tu?

-----

### Form B

Anna Quante volte alla settimana chiami i tuoi genitori?  
Peter Intendi con skype?  
Anna Si.  
Peter Circa una volta. E tu?

## English

---

### Form A

Anna How often do you call your parents?  
Peter Do you mean using Skype?  
Anna Yes.  
Peter About once a week. What about you?

-----

### Form B

Anna How many times a week do you call your parents?  
Peter Do you mean using Skype?  
Anna Yes.  
Peter About once. What about you?

## Vocabulary

Italian	English	Class
ogni	every	adjective
quanto	how much	adjective
chiamare	to call, to phone	verb
tuoi	your	possessive adjective
genitori	parents	noun
intendere	to intend, mean	verb

con	with	preposition
circa	about, around, nearly, circa	adverb
volta	time	noun
settimana	week	noun

## Vocabulary Sample Sentences

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<i>Ogni giorno.</i>	"Every day."
<i>Vado in pizzeria ogni Sabato.</i>	"I go to the pizzeria every Saturday."
<i>Quanto costa questo fiore?</i>	"How much does this flower cost?"
<i>Quanto costa quello?</i>	"How much is that?"
<i>Quanto costano negli Usa?</i>	"How much are they in the U.S.A.?"
<i>Quanto costa una mela?</i>	"How much does an apple cost?"
<i>Quanto costa un panino?</i>	"How much does a sandwich cost?"
<i>Quanto pane mangi al giorno?</i>	"How much bread do you eat in a day?"
<i>Quanto costa?</i>	"How much does it cost?"
<i>Ti chiamo domani sera.</i>	"I'll call you tomorrow evening."
<i>Chiama la polizia!</i>	"Call the police!"
<i>I tuoi occhiali sono rotti.</i>	"Your glasses are broken."
<i>I miei genitori vanno in vacanza alle Maldive.</i>	"My parents go on holiday to the Maldives."
<i>I tuoi genitori sono giovani.</i>	"Your parents are young."
<i>Intendi domani?</i>	"Do you mean tomorrow?"
<i>Mangio la zuppa con il cucchiaino.</i>	"I eat the soup with the spoon."
<i>Con chi esci?</i>	"Who are you going out with?"
<i>Studio circa 3 ore al giorno.</i>	"I study about two hours a day."
<i>Luca ha circa trent'anni.</i>	"Luca is nearly thirty years old."
<i>Questa volta paghi tu!</i>	"This time you pay!"
<i>Questa è l'ultima volta che ti aspetto!</i>	"This is the last time I wait for you!"
<i>Ogni volta!</i>	"Every time!"
<i>La prossima settimana.</i>	"Next week."

## Grammar Points

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**The Focus of This Lesson is Asking "How Often" in Italian**

**Ogni quanto chiami i tuoi genitori?**

**"How often do you call your parents?"**

---

It is important to notice that forms A and B are perfectly equivalent and are interchangeable. However, we should keep the syntactical structure of the question answer when we answer.

In form A, "how often" corresponds to *ogni quanto*. Note that in Italian, *ogni* may also mean "every, any," but when it is associated with *quanto* it becomes a fixed expression such as the English "how often." Since the question does not refer to any specific period, you can freely formulate the answer, "once a week" as well as "thrice a month," And so on.

In Italian, there is no equivalent of "once, twice, thrice," instead we use "one time, two times, three times," (*una volta, due volte, tre volte*). Note the difference between the singular *volta* and the plural *volte*.

In form B, the initial question refers to a specific period, therefore we shall have to formulate our answer within that particular scheme. Given that we state the period in the question, there is no need to duplicate it again in the answer because it would be an unnecessary repetition. *Circa una volta* implies *alla settimana*.

## Cultural Insight

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### Italian Communications

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Although Italy has never been amongst the most technologically developed countries, long-distance communication has recently seen a considerable growth, especially among the new generations. Almost every family owns a personal computer or has access to one in Internet cafes or at their workplaces. Italians use many different programs to communicate. The most frequent ones are Skype, MSN (Windows Messenger), and many public chat lines in particular. Due to the nature of the parent-child relationship in Italy, mothers tend to call their children more often than fathers do, thus expressing their care and tenderness towards their sons and daughters. This family bond is particularly strong between females. Therefore, it is quite common to see daughters spending a good deal of time on the phone. Italian males tend to keep their calls short, preferring to spend time together, maybe having an *aperitivo* after they finish working.

## Beginner Lesson

When Does Your Vacation in Italy Begin?

17

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## Italian

---

Peter                      Quando iniziano le tue vacanze estive?  
Elena                     Iniziano il cinque luglio.  
Peter                     E quando finiscono?  
Elena                     Il cinque agosto.  
Peter                     Sul serio?

## English

---

Peter                      When do your summer vacations start?  
Elena                     They start on the fifth of July.  
Peter                     And when do they finish?  
Elena                     On the fifth of August.  
Peter                     Really?

## Vocabulary

Italian	English	Class
quando	when	adverb
iniziare	to begin	verb
vacanze	holidays, vacations	noun
estive	summer, summer's	adjective
luglio	July	noun
finire	to finish, end, stop	verb
agosto	August	noun
sul serio	really, seriously	expression

## Vocabulary Sample Sentences

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*Quando mangiamo il gelato?*  
*Iniziamo a mangiare.*  
*Come sono andate le vacanze?*  
*Vacanze invernali.*  
*Piogge estive.*

"When are we eating the ice cream?"  
"Let's start to eat."  
"How were your holidays?"  
"Winter vacations."  
"Summer rains."

*Il ventuno luglio.*  
*Hai finito i compiti?*  
*Non finisci mai di sorprendermi!*  
*Finisco subito.*  
*Il diciannove agosto.*  
*Sul serio hai vinto alla lotteria?*  
*Usciamo sul serio?*

"The twenty-first of July."  
"Did you finish your homework?"  
"You never cease to amaze me!"  
"I will finish right away."  
"The nineteenth of August."  
"You really won the lottery?"  
"Are we really going out?"

## Grammar Points

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**The Focus of This Lesson is Asking "When" and Talking About Dates in Italian**

**Quando iniziano le tue vacanze estive?**

**"When do your summer vacations start?"**

---

Since we use *quando* ("when") in Italian to refer to both definite and indefinite periods, Peter can ask his first question without specifying any particular day. It is important to notice that we can use *quando* for past, present, and future actions. Therefore, the form of the question stays the same with only the verb tense informing us about the time to which Peter is referring.

When Peter formulates his second question, he does not need to repeat the object *vacanze estive*, since it is already implied by the fact that he did not mention any other period in between his inquiries. If he had mentioned another period, he should have restated the object.

When talking about dates and months, in English we use ordinal numbers (first, second, third, and so on). In Italian, we use cardinal numbers instead, followed by the month with or without the preposition *di* ("of"). Since cardinal numbers are masculine, we shall use the definite masculine article.

**For example:**

1. *il due (di) luglio*  
"the second of July"
2. *il tre (di) luglio*  
"the third of July"

The only exception is the first day of the month, which in Italian is *il primo (di) luglio* ("the first of July").



We use the Italian expressions, *sul serio?* (informal), *davvero?* (formal), and *veramente?* (formal), to express surprise and astonishment, and they are utterly equivalent. Additional questions normally follow these utterances. In the dialogue, they regard the length of Elena's summer vacations and most likely, what she planned to do during her vacations.

## Cultural Insight

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### Italian Vacations

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Italians love talking about their summer and winter vacations. This is an important topic and people usually plan them months ahead. For their winter vacations, Italians prefer to go to popular ski resorts such as *Cortina d'Ampezzo*, or *Valle del Monte Bianco* (White Mountain Valley). These vacations are generally quite short, rarely lasting more than a week. There are many different popular summer vacation resorts in Italy, too many to mention here. Basically, there is one in every Italian region. The average length of those vacations is normally three to four weeks. Instead of spending this rather long period (rather than the average two weeks per year in the U.S.A.) in a single place, it has become common recently to travel around different cities. Vacationers enjoy visiting museums and famous Italian villas, as well as getting a tan on beautiful, well-known Italian shores. Italy is a country in which cultural interests and sheer fun are not separate, but cohabit peacefully in every city and in many individuals!

## Beginner

Using the Italian Imperative: Wake Them Up!

18

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## Italian

---

Elena Anna, svegliati! Oggi hai molte cose da fare!  
Anna Che ore sono?  
Elena Sono le sette. Devi andare al museo.  
Anna Ahh... Ho sonno.  
Elena Dai, dai, svegliati!

## English

---

Elena Anna, wake up! Today you have many things to do!  
Anna What time is it?  
Elena It's 7  
Anna Ahh...I'm sleepy.  
Elena Come on, come on, get up!

## Vocabulary

Italian	English	Class
svegliati	wake up (you)	verb
oggi	today	adverb
molte	many	adjective
cose	things	noun
ore	hours	noun
dovere	to have to/must	verb
andare	to go	verb (irregular)
museo	museum	noun
sonno	sleep	noun

## Vocabulary Sample Sentences

---

*Svegliati perchè è tardi!*  
*Oggi mi sento bene.*  
*Oggi non vado a scuola.*  
*Oggi devo andare dal dentista.*

"Wake up because it's late!"  
"Today I feel good."  
"Today, I'm not going to school."  
"Today, I have to go to the dentist."

*Molte famiglie italiane hanno due macchine.*

*Quante cose portiamo?*

*Torno tra due ore.*

*Quante ore di lezione hai?*

*Devo proprio andare, scusami.*

*Devi mangiare la nutella.*

*Devi fare i compiti.*

*Dovresti lavorare.*

*Dobbiamo parcheggiare qui.*

*I miei amici vanno in vacanza in Sardegna.*

*Siamo andati a Venezia.*

*Siamo andati in vacanza.*

*Vai a casa?*

*Vorrei andare a ballare.*

*Andiamo al cinema?*

*Vorrei visitare il museo del Prado.*

*Non ho per niente sonno.*

"Many Italian families have two cars."

"How many things do we bring?"

"I'll be back in two hours."

"How many hours of lessons do you have?"

"I really have to go. Sorry."

"You have to eat Nutella."

"You must do your homework."

"You should work."

"We have to park here."

"My friends go on holiday to Sardinia."

"We went to Venice."

"We went on vacation."

"Are you going home?"

"I would like to go dancing."

"Shall we go to the cinema?"

"I would like to visit the Prado Museum."

"I'm not sleepy at all."

## Grammar Points

### The Focus of This Lesson is the Diverse Uses of the Italian Verb *Dovere*

*Devi andare al museo.*

"You have to go to the museum."

We shall first see the diverse uses of the important verb *dovere*, which we call *verbo servile* in Italian.

### Presente indicativo

First, in its present indicative conjugation, the Italian verb *dovere* is the equivalent of the English expression "to have to/must" in its present tense. When we use this form in its imperative, we normally associate it with a dictation or a command. We cannot use it in the formal level of speech.

### For example:

1. *Devi andare piano!*

"(You must/have to) slow down!"

***dovere* ("to have to/must")**

<i>Italian</i>	<b>"English"</b>
<i>Io devo</i>	"I have to/must"
<i>Tu devi</i>	"You have to/must"
<i>Lui/lei deve</i>	"He/she has to/must"
<i>Noi dobbiamo</i>	"We have to/must"
<i>Voi dovete</i>	"You have to/must"
<i>Loro devono</i>	"They have to/must"

## More examples:

1. *Devi bere acqua.*  
"You have to drink water."
2. *Devo studiare Italiano.*  
"I have to study Italian."

## Waking Up with Svegliati!

---

The most common Italian phrase we use to wake up a friend (or many Italian mothers use it when waking their children up), is *svegliati* or *sveglia*, which means, "wake up." *Sveglia* also means "alarm clock."

In both the English and Italian dialogues, we conjugate the verb *svegliare* in the *imperativo* ("imperative") mode, which lacks the first singular and plural persons (since we do not give orders to ourselves).

## Cultural Insight

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### How to Wake Up an Italian

---

In Italian, the use of the verb *dovere* works slightly differently from its English equivalent with regard to the contexts in which use it. While people tend to be very warm and inquisitive when dealing with newcomers, they maintain a fair degree of respect when asking or advising someone on what, according to their opinion, they should do. Therefore, even close friends use the *condizionale* among themselves unless they have to communicate quickly or give a peremptory order. In general, we should avoid using the present form, unless in the aforementioned circumstances.

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In general, Italians don't like it when someone else wakes them up unless they come into their rooms with breakfast. Among couples and lovers, it is considered particularly nice to bring the partner's breakfast (the typical Italian breakfast, *colazione*, is a cup of tea or milk with coffee, along with some biscuits) when they are still sleeping. We should of course only do this with our partners since it is not common and this gesture expresses a closeness of which we have to be aware.



## Beginner Lesson

What Should You Know About Italian bakeries?

19

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## Informal Italian

---

Elena                      Guarda, c'è Peter!  
Anna                      Ciao Peter! Vuoi un grissino?  
Peter                      Sì, grazie. È molto buono.  
Anna                      Fanno due euro.  
Peter                      Stai scherzando?  
Elena e Anna              Haha, dovresti vedere la tua faccia.

## Informal English

---

Elena                      Look, it's Peter!  
Anna                      Hello Peter! Do you want a grissino?  
Peter                      Yes, thanks. It's very good.  
Anna                      That will be 2 euros.  
Peter                      Are you joking?  
Elena and Anna            Haha you should see your face.

## Vocabulary

Italian	English	Class
guardare	to look, watch	verb
grissino	breadstick	noun
grazie	thank you	exclamation
mangiare	to eat	verb
molto	very, really	verb
buono	good	adjective
scherzare	to joke, make fun of	verb
dovere	to have to/must	verb
faccia	face	noun



## Vocabulary Sample Sentences

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<i>Non guardare!</i>	Don't look!
<i>Guardo un film.</i>	I watch a movie.
<i>Guardi la tv?</i>	Are you watching tv?
<i>Mangio un grissino.</i>	I eat a breadstick.
<i>Grazie, ciao.</i>	Thank you, bye.
<i>Grazie dell'informazione.</i>	Thank you for the information.
<i>Hai mangiato bene?</i>	Did you eat well?
<i>È meglio non mangiare troppo.</i>	It's better not to eat too much.
<i>Mangio molto.</i>	I eat a lot.
<i>È molto caro.</i>	It's very expensive.
<i>Il cibo italiano è buono.</i>	Italian food is good.
<i>Non è buono.</i>	It isn't good.
<i>Sto solo scherzando, non ti arrabbiare.</i>	I am just joking, don't get angry.
<i>Scherzi sempre!</i>	You are always joking!
<i>Sto scherzando.</i>	I am joking.
<i>Devi mangiare la nutella.</i>	You have to eat nutella.
<i>Devi fare i compiti.</i>	You must do your homework.
<i>Dovresti lavorare.</i>	You should work.
<i>Dobbiamo parcheggiare qui.</i>	We have to park here.
<i>Lavati la faccia.</i>	Wash your face.

## Grammar Points

---

We shall first consider the correct expression we use in Italian to verbally indicate a person. When Elena sees Peter, she tells Anna *c'è Peter* (literally, "there is Peter").

Our second topic is the conditional form of the verb *dovere*. When the verb *dovere* is inflected in the *condizionale* (either present or past) mode, it corresponds to the English expressions: "should + verb"; "ought to + verb" and "might + verb", used to express polite suggestions and it is associated with the formal style.

Let us take a look at its conjugation:

### Condizionale presente

*dovere* (to have to/must)

## Italian

Io dovrei  
Tu dovresti  
Lui/lei dovrebbe  
Noi dovremmo  
Voi dovrete  
Loro dovrebbero

## English

I should/ought to  
You should/ought to  
He/she should/ought to  
We should/ought to  
You should/ought to  
They should/ought to

The expressions *tu dovresti*, informal, and *Lei dovrebbe*, formal, are the most used when referring to somebody. Even friends prefer to be addressed this way and don't like it too much when we use the *presente indicativo devi* or *deve*.

So we should try to employ the *condizionale*, since when used in its present tense it corresponds to “must + verb” (in the informal dialogue, *devi* + *andare*, which sounds in both languages as an order). So remember to limit the use of the present indicative tense to situations like waking up a well-known friend and such.

Depending on the context, the conditional of this verb can also be used to communicate our emotions to someone else, without offending them. When saying *dovresti vedere la tua faccia*, Elena and Anna in fact mean “you would laugh with us if you could see your facial expression”. This is therefore a metaphoric expression, commonly used in many European languages to convey our emotional status and not our opinions.

## Cultural Insight

Italian bakeries (*panifici*, from the word *pane*, “bread”) are quite characteristic and spread throughout the world, particularly in the United States and Australia. They are usually family-run, medium to small size business and may have historically established peculiarities. Depending on the region, and often on the city itself, these shops offer a spectrum of products that range from simple *grissini* (breadsticks, plural form of *grissino*) to elaborate cakes and pastry. Italians eat breadsticks as starters before their meals, although it is not unheard of to eat them even in the morning. According to the place we live in, we should ascertain the local bakery products and decide what we like most. Elena and Anna played a joke on Peter, who seemed to be puzzled by their attitude. Italians, like many other Latino people, are cheerful and tend to joke around even when working. This attitude is particularly strong in central and southern Italy, where even getting a sandwich often involves having a short conversation with the baker (or bar tender) about aspects of our life. Italians do not get offended

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by this attitude, which is in fact just a way to lighten the burden of working with flashes of wit and irony. When we are being played a joke on, we should play along with them and answer back with a short sentence. This way people will know we did not get offended and will start building a more intimate relation with us.



## Beginner Lesson

How Do You Tell Them you Are Sleepy in Italian?

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## Informal Italian

---

Elena Torniamo a casa?  
Anna Che ore sono?  
Elena Sono quasi le due, è tardi!  
Anna Restiamo ancora un pò.  
Elena No, ti prego! Ho sonno!

## Informal English

---

Elena Shall we go back home?  
Anna What's the time?  
Elena It's almost two, it's late!  
Anna Let's stay a bit more.  
Elena No, please! I'm sleepy!

## Vocabulary

Italian	English	Class
tornare	to go back/come back/get back	verb
casa	home, house, one's place	noun
ore	hours	noun
quasi	almost	adverb
tardi	late	adverb
restare	to stay	verb
ancora	still, yet, again	adverb
un po'	a little, a bit, a little bit, some	adjective
ti prego	please, I beg you	expression
sonno	sleep	noun

## Vocabulary Sample Sentences

*Ieri sono tornato a casa tardi.  
Torniamo insieme?  
Vorrei tornare a S. Gimignano.  
C'è una festa a casa di Mario.  
Torno tra due ore.  
Quante ore di lezione hai?  
Siamo quasi arrivati.  
È quasi pronto!  
Ieri notte sono tornato tardi.  
Scusa, ho fatto tardi.  
Resto con te.  
Non ho ancora letto il libro che mi hai prestato.  
Noah è ancora all'aeroporto.  
Luca non ha ancora comprato l'iPhone.  
Ho ancora sonno!  
Posso avere un pò d'acqua?  
Vuoi un po' di fragole?  
Ti prego portami al mare!  
Non ho per niente sonno.*

Yesterday I got back home late.  
Shall we go back together?  
I would like to go back to S. Gimignano.  
There's a party at Mario's place.  
I'll be back in two hours.  
How many hours of lesson do you have?  
We're nearly there.  
It's almost ready!  
Last night I came back late.  
Sorry, I'm late.  
I'm staying with you.  
I still haven't read the book you lent me.  
Noah is still at the airport.  
Luca still hasn't bought an iPhone.  
I am still sleepy!  
Can I have some water?  
Would you like some strawberries?  
Please take me to the beach!  
I'm not sleepy at all.

---

## Grammar Points

---

The English expression "I am sleepy" is translated in Italian with *ho sonno* which literally means "I have sleep". So in Italian we often use the verb *avere* "to have" and not the verb *essere* "to be" to describe a condition. For example "I am hungry" in Italian would be *ho fame* (literally translated: "I have hunger"), "I am thirsty" *ho sete*. Please take a look at Beginner lesson 5.

In Italian to ask for the time we have two different possibilities that have exactly the same meaning: *che ore sono?* which literally means "what hours are they?" and *che ora è?* which literally means "what hour is it?"; so both the singular and the plural are correct to ask: "What time is it?" or "What's the time?".

*Un pò* is a very common expression and is often used even in the formal level of speech, as a way to be kinder and less direct. For example *gradisce un pò di latte nel caffè?* "would you like some milk in the coffee?". So this expression can be used to translate many different English meanings, like as we have seen, "some", "a bit", "a little bit".

## Cultural Insight

---

San Gimignano rises on a hill dominating the Elsa Valley, situated in the heart of Tuscany, 40 km far from Florence; once it used to be the seat of a small Etruscan village of the Hellenistic period. It took its name from the Holy Bishop of Modena, St. Gimignano, who became a legend saving the village from the barbarian hordes. In 1199 it became a free municipality and fought against the Bishops of Volterra and the surrounding municipalities. On the 8th May 1300 Dante Alighieri went to San Gimignano as the Ambassador of the Guelph League in Tuscany. The construction of the towers dates back to the 11th and 13th centuries.

The architecture of the city was influenced by Pisa, Siena and Florence. There are 14th century paintings of the Sienese School to be seen and 15th century paintings of the Florentine School. Today San Gimignano is a famous tourist place full of typical farmhouses and hostels which used to be the old inns. Here you can taste the *Vernaccia* wine which is a local home-produced wine. The famous Dante Alighieri also mentioned this wine in his *Divina Commedia*. We can find it among the gluttons of his Purgatory when Foreste Donati points to Dante an old man (Pope Martino IV) who is paying the price for having stuffed himself with *anguille alla vernaccia* (eels cooked in *Vernaccia* wine).

## Beginner Lesson

What Part of Your Italian Vacation Do “You Like” Best?

21

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## Italian

---

Luca Vorrei trascorrere il week-end in quell'agriturismo... Come si chiama?  
Elena Dici "La tana del ghio"?  
Luca Sì sì, quello! Lì si possono fare anche passeggiate a cavallo, ti piacciono i cavalli?  
Elena Oh sì! Mi piacciono molto, ma c'è anche la piscina!  
Luca Uhm... Non mi piace nuotare  
Elena Ma puoi prendere il sole!  
Luca Mi piace prendere il sole!

## English

---

Luca I would like to spend the weekend in that farmhouse...what's it called?  
Elena You mean *La tana del ghio*?  
Luca Yes, yes, that one! There you can also do horse rides. Do you like horses?  
Elena Oh, yes! I like them a lot, but there is also the swimming pool!  
Luca Um...I don't like swimming  
Elena But you can sunbathe!  
Luca I like sunbathing!

## Vocabulary

Italian	English	Class
trascorrere	to spend, pass (time)	verb
agriturismo	farmhouse holiday	noun
lì	there	adverb
passeggiate	walks	noun
cavallo	horse	noun
piacere	to like	verb
piscina	swimming pool	noun
nuotare	to swim	verb
prendere il sole	to sunbathe, sunbathing	verb

## Vocabulary Sample Sentences

---

*Ho trascorso davvero una bella vacanza.*  
*Trascorro le domeniche al mare.*  
*Vado in vacanza in un agriturismo in Toscana.*

*Lì puoi mangiare una buona pizza.*  
*Faccio molte passeggiate sulla spiaggia.*  
*Vado a cavallo una volta al mese.*  
*A Paola non piace il pollo.*  
*In piscina indosso sempre la cuffia.*

*Ieri ho nuotato per tre ore.*  
*Anche i cani nuotano.*  
*Mi piace prendere il sole in spiaggia.*

"I actually spent a very nice holiday."  
"I spend Sundays at the beach."  
"I'll go on vacation in a farmhouse holiday in Tuscany."  
"There you can eat a good pizza."  
"I take many walks at the beach."  
"I go horseback-riding once a month."  
"Paola doesn't like chicken."  
"I always wear the swimming cap in the swimming pool."  
"Yesterday, I swam for three hours."  
"Also, dogs swim."  
"I like sunbathing at the beach."

## Grammar Points

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### **The Focus of This Lesson is Saying "I Like" in Italian**

***Mi piace prendere il sole!***

**"I like sunbathing!"**

---

In Italian, as you have seen in the dialogue, the verbal structure we use to translate "I like" is based on a different pattern. The English subject in Italian becomes the indirect object and the English object becomes the subject. For example, "I like pasta" in Italian is conveyed with *mi piace la pasta*. If we have the subject "I" in English, then in Italian it becomes the indirect object and the expression *mi* (which literally means "to me").

We can also substitute the pronominal particle *mi* with *a me*. For example, *mi piace il mare* or *a me piace il mare* will have exactly the same meaning, which is "I like the sea."

<b><i>Italian</i></b>	<b>"English"</b>
<i>Mi piace / A me piace</i>	"I like"
<i>Ti piace / A te piace</i>	"You like"
<i>Gli piace / A lui piace</i>	"He likes"
<i>Le piace / A lei piace</i>	"She likes"
<i>Ci piace / A noi piace</i>	"We like"
<i>Vi piace / A voi piace</i>	"You like"

<i>A loro piace</i>	"They like"
---------------------	-------------

As you can see, the third person plural is the only exception and in fact it just holds the form *a loro*.

Since the subject can change in Italian, we have to make sure to use the plural form not only for nouns but also for the verb. So the plural of *mi piace* is *mi piacciono*.

### For example:

1. *Mi piacciono i cavalli.*  
"I like horses."
2. *Ci piacciono i gatti.*  
"We like cats."

The negative form is very straightforward because you just need to add *non*. But we will see it in the next lesson! The last important feature we should consider in the dialogue is how to answer questions. While in English it is sufficient to simply use the particle "do" (i.e., "Do you like cats? Yes, I do"), in Italian we have to restate the sentence without employing the interrogative high pitch of voice (*Ti piacciono i gatti? Sì, mi piacciono*). We always state the subject (in our case, *mi piacciono*), whereas the object is usually implied.

## Cultural Insight

### Italian Farmhouse Vacations

Nowadays, people consider a farmhouse vacation much better and more convenient than the usual beach-vacation in a crowded summer resort. Italian people as well as many foreigners today choose the *agriturismo*. An *agriturismo* is a place where you can relax, find many leisure activities, and enjoy a good time with friends, family, or a partner. A farmhouse-vacation can be a good idea during every period of the year. It has become a place to run to when escaping from the stress of the city, even if only for a weekend. It can be the perfect starting point for exploring and enjoying the culture and the natural beauty of Italy.

Tuscany is one of the most beautiful Italian regions and is full of *agriturismi*. When you imagine what you will experience while staying in your farmhouse, you become calm and your mind drifts off. You picture yourself sitting in a cozy antique chair in front of a fireplace and reading a book that details

why the local wine is so famous. Or maybe you are relaxing by the pool and sipping a glass of tantalizing Tuscan wine.

There are many farmhouses and cottages in Tuscany. Here you may have access to certain amenities you wouldn't receive in a hotel. For example, they can provide you with a barbeque, toaster, American-style coffee maker, dishwasher, washing machine, Satellite TV, CD player, stereo, and even mountain bikes for you to use. You may end up so comfortable that you won't even think of leaving your farmhouse in Tuscany.

Family farmhouse vacations in Italy are ideal because they are cheaper than a hotel where the cost of your trip increases as you usually eat out. In addition to that, you can't relax in your own setting with just family and friends surrounding you.

## Beginner Lesson

You “Don’t Like” What the Italian Hairdresser Did to Your Hair?

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## Italian

---

Elena: Ciao Luca. Mi piace il tuo nuovo taglio di capelli!  
Luca: Oh grazie, ma a me non piace.  
Elena: Perché? È così selvaggio e... interessante.  
Luca: Sei troppo gentile. Il parrucchiere è bravo, ma non mi piace il taglio. È troppo corto.

## English

---

Elena: Hi, Luca. I love your new hairstyle!  
Luca: Oh, thanks. But I don't like it.  
Elena: Why? It's so wild and...interesting.  
Luca: You're too nice. The hairdresser is good, but I don't like the haircut. It's too short.

## Vocabulary

Italian	English	Class
tuo	your, yours	possessive adjective, pronoun
nuovo	new	adjective
taglio di capelli	haircut	expression
selvaggio	wild, uncivilized, primitive	adjective
interessante	interesting	adjective
gentile	kind, nice, polite	adjective
troppo	too much	adverb and adjective
parrucchiere	hairdresser	noun
corto	short	adjective

## Vocabulary Sample Sentences

---

*Come sta tua nonna.*  
*Qual'è il tuo nome?*  
*Cosa fa tuo padre?*  
*Il merito è tuo.*

"How is your grandma doing?"  
"What is your name?"  
"What does your father do?"  
"The credit is yours."

*Ho perso il mio nuovo cellulare.  
Ho un appartamento nuovo al quinto piano.  
Hai visto la nuova puntata di "Friends"?  
Quel taglio di capelli è fuori moda.  
La lince è un animale selvaggio.  
Questa conferenza è molto interessante.  
È interessante studiare l'italiano.  
Grazie! Sei davvero gentile.  
È molto gentile da parte tua.  
Non dovresti bere troppo vino.  
Fa troppo caldo!  
Ho bevuto troppo.  
Mangi troppo!  
Vado dal parrucchiere prima del matrimonio.  
Quella gonna è corta.*

"I lost my new mobile."  
"I have a new apartment on the fifth floor."  
"Have you watched the new episode of 'Friends?'"  
"That haircut is out of fashion."  
"The lynx is a wild animal."  
"This conference is very interesting."  
"Studying Italian is interesting."  
"Thank you! You are very kind."  
"That's very kind of you."  
"You shouldn't drink too much wine."  
"It's too hot!"  
"I drank too much."  
"You eat too much!"  
"I am going to the hairdresser before the wedding."  
"That skirt is short."

## Grammar Points

---

**The Focus of This Lesson is Reviewing the Italian Phrase "I Like/ Don't Like"**

**Il parrucchiere è bravo, ma non mi piace il taglio.**

**"The hairdresser is good, but I don't like the haircut."**

---

First, we shall quickly revise the Italian structure *mi piace* and the verb *piacere* ("to like") we use to express our opinion about something.

In the dialogue, we have seen *mi piace il tuo nuovo taglio di capelli* ("I like your new hairstyle") in which *mi* corresponds to "I" in English. However, in Italian, it's an indirect pronoun and not a subject as it is in English. Furthermore, we conjugate the verb *piacere* according to the number of objects. The syntactic order is therefore: pronoun (*mi, ti, gli/le, ci, or vi*) + verb (*piace* if the object is singular, *piacciono* when the object is plural) + object.

We convey the negative form by adding *non*. You just need to be careful about its position.

**For example:**

1. **Affirmative sentence:** *Mi piacciono i gatti.* ("I like cats".)

**Negative sentence:** *Non mi piacciono i gatti.* ("I don't like cats.")

In this case, *non* goes before the indirect object (*mi*).

- **Affirmative sentence:** *A me piacciono i gatti.* ("I like cats.")

**Negative sentence:** *A me non mi piacciono i gatti.* ("I don't like cats.")

In this case, *non* goes after the indirect object (*a me*).

While the word "hair" in English is a singular noun, the Italian equivalent *capelli* is plural. Therefore, when we say, "I like your hair," we have to use the plural form of the article and verb as in, *mi piacciono i tuoi capelli*. When we explicitly refer to the hairstyle, we use *taglio di capelli*, which corresponds to the American expression "haircut."

This is a list of the most common adjectives we use with "hairstyle." They are all in the plural form (since the noun *capelli* is plural):

Italian	"English"
<i>lunghi</i>	"long"
<i>corti</i>	"short"
<i>marroni</i>	"brown"
<i>neri</i>	"black"
<i>biondi</i>	"blonde"
<i>rossi</i>	"red"
<i>selvaggi</i>	"wild"
<i>calvo</i>	"bald person"
<i>pettinati</i>	"well-combed"
<i>spettinati</i>	"ruffled"

Finally, we note that the expression *essere gentile* ("to be kind") works exactly as its English equivalent.

## Cultural Insight

### Italian Hairstyles

Italians love fashion in every form and hairstyle is not an exception. We have two types of hairdressers in Italy: *parrucchiere/a* ("hairdresser") and *barbiere* ("barber"). Whereas there is presently not much difference between them, in the past people thought the barber was cheaper and less skilled than a hairdresser was. The *barbiere* is still specialized in men's hairstyle only, while hairdressers are



specialized in either men's or women's hairstyles. It is quite common for Italian girls and women to spend a good deal of time at the hairdresser's shop, chatting sometimes even for more than an hour. Especially in medium-sized and large cities, young people tend to differentiate from the rest of the population by developing their own individual hairstyle. Sometimes they follow international trends, and other times they relate to cultural identities. For instance, members of the upper classes tend to have a more polished hairstyle that also matches their own style of dressing, while people of the lower classes often willingly decide to keep a less formal, more creative, style. The choice depends on the dialectic between difference and homologation and it is utterly personal.

Foreigners usually keep their own styles in their first period of stay and then take on an Italian one. Since the spectrum of possibilities is far too large to be thoroughly described, this choice depends ultimately on their social class and the city they live in as well as on their personal preferences.

## Beginner Lesson

Are Italian False Friends Catching You Off Guard?

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## Italian

---

Peter Niente sottotitoli?  
Anna No, mai. Be', effettivamente a volte si possono trovare i sottotitoli, ma solo in casi particolari.  
Peter Casi particolari?  
Anna Sì, per gli amanti della lingua originale.  
Sconosciuto Shhhh... Per cortesia, fate silenzio.

## English

---

Peter No subtitles!?!  
Anna No, never. Well, actually you can find subtitles sometimes, but only in special events.  
Peter Special events?  
Anna Yes, for original language lovers.  
Unknown person Shhhh...please, be quiet.

## Vocabulary

Italian	English	Class
niente	nothing	pronoun
sottotitoli	subtitles	noun
mai	never	frequency adverb
effettivamente	actually	adverb
casi	cases, events	noun
particolari	special, characteristic	adjective
amanti	lovers	noun
per cortesia	please	expression
fare silenzio	to be quiet	expression

## Vocabulary Sample Sentences

---

*Niente di speciale.*  
*Non vedo niente.*

"Nothing special."  
"I see nothing."

*Niente per te!*

*Perchè i film italiani non hanno i sottotitoli?*

*Effettivamente non so cosa dirti.*

*Non è mai in orario.*

*Mai dire mai.*

*Effettivamente non so cosa dirti.*

*In certi casi.*

*Segni particolari.*

*Ginevra e Lancillotto erano amanti.*

*Mi passeresti il vino per cortesia?*

*Ora che entriamo in aula fa' silenzio.*

"Nothing for you!"

"Why don't Italian movies have subtitles?"

"Actually, I don't know what to tell you."

"He's never on time."

"Never say never."

"Actually, I don't know what to tell you."

"In certain cases."

"Characteristic marks."

"Ginevra and Lancelot were lovers."

"Would you pass me the wine, please?"

"Now that we walk into the classroom, be quiet."

## Grammar Points

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### **The Focus of This Lesson is Italian False Friends**

**Be', effettivamente a volte si possono trovare i sottotitoli, ma solo in casi particolari.**

**"Well, actually you can find subtitles sometimes, but only in special events."**

---

We shall first define the important "false friend" concept. "False friend" is a label we use to identify those words that have a similar written form in different languages (because they historically come from the same Latin word) and very diverse meanings. Anna starts her sentence with *effettivamente*, an adverb that corresponds in English to "actually." The Italian word *attualmente*, which closely resembles the aforementioned English word, in fact means "presently," or "at the present moment," and does not bear any semantic connection with its English false friend. We should always be aware of this linguistic feature and try not to allow superficial written similarities to mislead us.

### **Here are other examples:**

1. *fattoria* - "farm"  
"factory" - *fabbrica*
2. *parenti* - "relatives"  
"parents" - *genitori*
3. *attendere* - "to wait"  
"to attend" - *assistere / seguire / frequentare*

When we employ the *imperativo* ("imperative") mode in polite, but firm requests, we should always introduce it using a courtesy expression, such as *per favore* (in informal Italian) or *per cortesia* (in

formal Italian). Failure to do so would result in giving a direct order to someone we do not know, thus creating more troubles rather than solving our problems.

While in English we use "you" in the sentence "you can find subtitles," in Italian we say *si possono trovare i sottotitoli*. The *si* that you find in this sentence is the so-called *si impersonale* ("impersonal *si*") and it has two functions:

1. It substitutes *noi* ("we"): For example:  
*Si affittano camere (noi affittiamo camere)*  
"Rooms for rent"
2. It represents an indefinite subject (*uno, qualcuno, ognuno, tutti, ecc*): For example:  
*Alla facoltà di lingue si studia letteratura inglese.*  
"At the faculty of languages, people study English literature."

We finally note that out of the two frequency adverbs, *mai* and *a volte*, only the latter follows the general syntax S + frequency adverb + V that we studied in previous lessons. *Mai* is an exception and we always position it after the verb as in, *non ci sono mai i sottotitoli* ("there are never subtitles"), and it is usually matched with *non*.

## 4

## Cultural Insight

### Italian Movie Theaters

We have two different kinds of movie theaters in Italy. The traditional *cinema* (uncountable noun, "movie theaters") usually contains between fifty and one hundred seats, and they are located in historical buildings. They lack the most recent technological improvements and have a unique flavor as is masterfully represented by *Nuovo Cinema Paradiso* (New Cinema Paradise), shot by the world-famous Italian director Giuseppe Tornatore. Normally, these traditional and old style cinemas run the so-called *cineforum* in some periods of the year, which is the screening of a collection of high-level movies produced all over the world, usually connected by a common theme.

The second type of theater is the multi-screen cinema, *multisala*, which has been taking over the traditional movie theaters and is widespread throughout Italy. They usually have many different options, opening hours, and are generally located in cities' suburbs. Both kinds of *cinema* show Italian and foreign movies.

As for the preferences of Italians, autochthonous and American movies are the most common, though we can sometimes find movies produced in other countries.

Italians do not like eating and drinking at movie theaters as Americans do, they prefer to have a drink after having watched the movie and normally do not purchase food and drink. This is because popcorns, large-size soda cans, and such are not very popular and are considered unhealthy. When the Italian currency was the *Lira*, Italians could afford *pizza e cinema* ("pizza and cinema") all together, but now with the Euro, they simply choose only one thing.

## Beginner Lesson

Will You Go Sight Seeing in Rome or Go Eat Lunch in Florence?

24

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## Italian

---

Peter                    Mi scusi.  
Driver                  Sì?  
Peter                    Questo autobus va a Santa Maria Novella?  
Driver                  No, deve scendere alla prossima fermata e prendere il numero ventitre.  
Peter                    Grazie!  
Driver                  Prego!

## English

---

Peter                    Excuse me.  
Driver                  Yes?  
Peter                    Does this bus go to Santa Maria Novella?  
Driver                  No, you need to get off at the next stop and then take the number 23.  
Peter                    Thank you!  
Driver                  You're welcome!

## Vocabulary

Italian	English	Class
questo	this (masculine singular)	demonstrative adjective
autobus	bus	noun
andare	to go	verb (irregular)
scendere	to get off, get out, get down, go down	verb
salire	to get on, to get in, to go up	verb
fermata	bus stop	noun
ventitre	twenty-three	cardinal number

## Vocabulary Sample Sentences

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*Questo è un fiore.*

"This is a flower."

*Questo libro è interessante.*

"This book is interesting."

*Questo panino.*

"This sandwich."



*Hai preso l'autobus per tornare a casa?*  
*I miei amici vanno in vacanza in Sardegna.*  
*Siamo andati a Venezia.*  
*Siamo andati in vacanza.*  
*Vai a casa?*  
*Vorrei andare a ballare.*  
*Andiamo al cinema?*  
*Scendi al secondo piano.*  
*Non sono mai salito su un aeroplano.*  
*Salgo al primo piano.*  
*A quale fermata devo scendere?*  
*Ho ventitre anni.*

Did you take the bus to come back home?  
"My friends go on holiday to Sardinia."  
"We went to Venice."  
"We went on vacation."  
"Are you going home?"  
"I would like to go dancing."  
"Shall we go to the cinema?"  
"Go down to the second floor."  
I've never been on an airplane.  
"I go up to the first floor."  
"At which stop do I have to get off?"  
"I'm twenty-three."

## Grammar Points

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**The Focus of This Lesson is the Italian Verb Meaning, "to go"**

*Questo autobus va a Santa Maria Novella?*

**"Does this bus go to Santa Maria Novella?"**

---

*Andare* ("to go") is one of the most widely used verbs in Italian. Its *presente indicativo* conjugation follows an irregular pattern, showing two different stems: *va* + ending and *and* + ending.

We use the former for all the singular persons and the third person plural as in, *io vado*, *tu vai*, *lui/lei va*, and *loro vanno* ("I go, you go, he/she goes, they go").

We use the latter exclusively for the first and second plural persons as in, *noi andiamo* and *voi andate* ("we go, you go"). The remaining *indicativo* mode tenses follow the regular formation, that is stem *and-* + ending.

Finally, different prepositions can follow this verb, the most common one is *a*, which corresponds to the English "to." Therefore, the sentence "we go to school" would be *noi andiamo a scuola* in Italian.

Furthermore, the other possible prepositions that may follow the verb *andare* are *in* and *da*. Please remember that we can also find these prepositions as articulated prepositions.

**For example:**

1. *Vado al mare.*  
"I'll go to the beach."
2. *Vado dal dottore.*  
"I'll go to the doctor."

In English, we use two specular couples of phrasal verbs to indicate the action of boarding vehicles, such as "to get on/to get off (a bus)" and "to get in/to get out (a car)".  
On the contrary, in Italian we use only one couple, regardless of the kind of vehicle to which we refer.

### For example:

1. *Salire* - "to get on / to get in / to go up"
2. *Scendere* - "to get off / to get out / to go down / to get down"

We use these verbs to express every vertical movement that we formed by combining the prefix (in this case "twenty," *venti*) plus the *suffigoes*, respectively "upwards" (*salire*) or "downwards" (*scendere*). This applies whether we mean physical or metaphorical movement.

## Italian Numbers Between Twenty and One Hundred

---

In Italian, we express numbers between twenty (*venti*) and one hundred (*cento*) exactly as we do in English. Therefore, we form them by combining the prefix (in this case, "twenty," *venti*) plus the suffix (in the dialogue, "three," *tre*). So you have the tens from *venti* ("twenty") to *novanta* ("ninety") and you simply add the units.

Numbers above one hundred work exactly as explained above. For example, the number "one-hundred fifty-two" is *centocinquantadue*, in Italian. That is, *cento* ("one-hundred") + *cinquanta* ("fifty") + *due* ("two"). Note that in Italian we do not employ the "and" conjugation.

## Cultural Insight

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### Italian Public Transportation

Italian public transportation shows similarities and differences to other European systems. Italian buses, even the inter-regional ones, are always one-deck and bright orange in color. In no circumstance can you purchase tickets on board. You must buy them in the Italian *tabacchi* ("tobacco shops") in advance.

We have two different types of tickets. The first type is time-based and it's valid for the period indicated on it (usually half an hour, one hour, or two hours) after it has been clocked in (Italian tickets have to be clocked in automatic machines on the bus). The second one is journey-based, and it's valid only for either a one-way or a round-trip ride. In cities, it is often advisable to purchase time-based tickets since people normally need to take one or more buses, while journey-based tickets are better for city-to-city trips.

The reliability of Italian buses varies according to the area we live in. Generally speaking, public transportation works better in northern and central Italy. In certain southern areas, including major cities, public transportation is less reliable. Therefore, when we cannot afford the possibility of being late, in those areas it is normally wiser to take a train or reach our destination by car. Considering the forgiving nature of the Italian weather, many people, Italians and foreigners alike, prefer to ride bikes rather than using buses. This is especially true in tourist cities such as Rome and Florence, where many parts of the city are restricted to normal traffic.

Finally, day and night buses have different timetables and routes even when they bear the same number. Make sure you check them out and/or ask someone about them before taking a bus or you might find yourself waiting in the middle of night on the opposite side of the city for hours!

## Beginner Lesson

Before We Leave for Naples, “We Must” Clean the House!

25

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## Italian

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Peter                   Ciao Luca, cosa fai oggi?  
Luca                   Devo pulire tutta la casa.  
Peter                   Ah! Voglio darti una mano.  
Luca                   Grazie.  
Peter                   Da dove posso cominciare?  
Luca                   Puoi pulire il bagno.

## English

---

Peter                   Hey, Luca! What will you do today?  
Luca                   I must clean the entire flat.  
Peter                   Ah! I want to give you a hand.  
Luca                   Thanks.  
Peter                   From where can I start?  
Luca                   You can clean the bathroom.

## Vocabulary

Italian	English	Class
oggi	today	adverb
pulire	to clean	verb
tutto	everything, all	adjective
volere	to want, wish, long, demand	verb
dare	to give	verb
mano	hand	noun
dare una mano	to give a hand	expression
potere	can	verb
cominciare	to start, begin	verb
bagno	bathroom	noun

## Vocabulary Sample Sentences

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*Oggi mi sento bene.*

"Today I feel good."



*Oggi non vado a scuola.*

*Oggi devo andare dal dentista.*

*Ultimamente non pulisco mai il mio appartamento.*

*Hai pulito la tua stanza?*

*È tutta colpa tua!*

*Prendo tutto.*

*Voleva solo salutarti.*

*Voglio comprare una macchina nuova.*

*Volere la botte piena e la moglie ubriaca.*

*Vorrei un cappuccino, per favore.*

*Vorrei una mela.*

*Mi daresti una mano per favore?*

*Tienimi la mano.*

*Dammi la mano.*

*Mi daresti una mano per favore?*

*Devi fare i compiti.*

*Non ci posso credere!*

*Ho cominciato a frequentare un corso di danza del ventre.*

*Domani comincia la nuova serie di Heroes.*

*La spazzola è nel bagno.*

"Today, I'm not going to school."

"Today, I have to go to the dentist."

"Recently, I never clean my apartment."

"Did you clean your room?"

"It's all your fault!"

"I'll take everything."

"She just wanted to say hi."

"I want to buy a new car."

"To have your cake and eat it, too."

"I'd like a cappuccino, please."

"I would like an apple."

"Could you give me a hand please?"

"Hold my hand."

"Give me your hand."

"Could you give me a hand please?"

"You must do your homework."

"I can't believe it."

"I started attending a belly-dancing course."

"Tomorrow, the new *Heroes* series will start."

"The hairbrush is in the bathroom."

## Grammar Points

**The Focus of This Lesson is the Italian Verb Meaning, "have to/must," "to want," or "can"**

***Voglio darti una mano.***

**"I want to give you a hand."**

In this lesson, we can see the so-called *verbi servili* *dovere*, *volere*, and *potere* respectively "have to/must," "to want" and "can." In Italian, the usage of the *verbi servili* is conveyed by their own conjugation plus the infinitive form of another verb (also called *verbi modali* or "modal verbs"). *Verbi modali* literally serve the other verbs without changing the main meaning of the sentence. In practice, they add something more specific to the sentence.

In the dialogue, Luca expresses a need or a necessity using *devo* ("I have to"), while Peter specifies a willingness using *voglio* ("I want"). Please note that Peter and Luca are friends and they are using the informal level of speech.

When talking to someone we don't know and employing the informal level of speech, we should avoid using the present tense of the verb *volere*, since it wouldn't sound kind. We have to employ the *condizionale* tense, *vorrei*, which is equivalent to "would like to" in English.

## **The Italian *presente indicativo* Mode**

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Another important topic we will cover in this lesson is the usage of the Italian *presente indicativo* mode to convey the English future "to be + going to," or "will." In the Italian language, we use the present more often than the future and actually, we employ it in place of the future itself.

### **For example:**

1. When we are talking about upcoming actions:

*Alle 4 vado a fare la spesa.*

"At 4:00, I will go and get groceries"

2. When we are sure about future actions:

*L'anno prossimo vado in vacanza in America*

"Next year, I will go on holiday to the USA."

## Cultural Insight

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### **Helpful Italians**

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It is common in every part of Italy for people to be helpful in normal circumstances. Unless they are hurrying or talking on the phone (mobile phones are extremely widespread in Italy), Italians are generally forthcoming and friendly. When talking to someone with whom you have a good degree of familiarity (family members, friends, well-known colleagues, etc.), you can formulate the question without introducing yourself with a formal expression ("I beg your pardon, sir...", or *mi scusi...*), already considered in the previous lessons. This aspect does not change whether the speakers are Italian or foreigners.

Particularly in central and southern Italy, Italians feel the necessity to be helpful and perform as such in daily social life. It may happen that someone's willingness to be helpful in those areas gets pushy, thus forcing the person who refuses their help to repeat their answers more than once. In this case, we should not get upset, since central and southern Italians see this attitude as a sign of good will and

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proper education. Repeating your refusal a couple of times will be sufficient as this reaction will not offend the other speaker.



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