

Complete Italian Master Course

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The sounds of Italian 🎧

What follows does not pretend to be a full treatment of Italian pronunciation but rather a practical guide to help the foreign learner speak in a way that is reasonably comprehensible and acceptable. It should also be viewed as a reference section, which will be difficult to absorb in one reading but can be returned to from time to time. There is also help in the matching section of the recording that accompanies this course.

Italian spelling reflects the sounds of the Italian language on a more direct basis than English spelling does for English. There are however some cases where the spelling conventions of Italian conflict with those of English and it is important that students get these clear in their mind from the start.

Two consecutive vowels

Two vowels next to each other are each pronounced, rather than run into each other as in English. For example, the Italian unit of currency is **un euro**, in which, in contrast to English, the ‘**eu**’ is pronounced as two separate sounds. Similarly:

paura buono paese aereo lui lei

Double consonants

When a word is spelled with a double consonant, it is because the sound is different from the same consonant written as a single letter. It takes practice to get this right but it is important. Try to linger on the double consonant or pause before it. The preceding vowel becomes shorter: Listen to the difference:

*pena/penna steso/stesso fata/fatta
eco/ecco*

Here are some more words with double consonants:

freddo bello mamma anno cappuccino
terra stesso pazzo nonno

'r' in Italian

The Italian **r** is rolled with the tongue. There is no real English equivalent. The letter appears only when the **r** is pronounced: **porta**, **arte**. Note the difference between **cane** 'dog' and **carne** 'meat'. Some Italians make their **r** in their throats but it is always audible and more prominent than in standard English.

And when there is double **rr** in the spelling, there are two **rs** in the sound. Try these:

at the beginning of a word:	riso	Roma	Rialto	ragazzo
between two vowels:	ora	caro	durare	Torino
double r:	birra	ferro	terra	burro
after another consonant:	prima	crollo	dramma	
before another consonant:	arte	porta	ormai	urlo

So far, so good. The remaining sounds are, however, those where the spelling conventions of English and Italian differ significantly and learners should pay particular attention to them. Using the recordings and imitating them throughout the course will also help you avoid errors.

The spellings gn, gli

These spellings represent sounds that are a little difficult to pronounce:

gn is similar to the sound in the middle of *onion*
giugno bagno agnello
gl(i) is a little like the sound in the middle of *million*:
lugio figlio maglia gli

The sounds k and g (as in 'come' and 'go') and ch and j (as in 'church' and 'judge')

With the sounds **k** (as in 'come' in English) and **g** (as in 'go') there is no pronunciation problem, but the spelling *depends on which vowel follows*. The vowels divide into two groups:

1 If the vowel following **k** or **g** is **a, o, u**:

k is written 'c' *cane, campo, caffè, casa, cosa, costa, come, Como, curioso, cuore, cultura*

g is written 'g' *galleria, gamba, gallese, Garda, gondola, gorgonzola, Goldoni, Gonzaga, guidare, guardare, Gubbio, Guttuso*

2 If the vowel following **k** or **g** is **e, i**:

k is written 'ch' *che, orchestra, bruschetta, chi, chilo, Cherubino, Michelangelo, Chianti, Chiusi, Chioggia*

g is written 'gh' *ghetto, spaghetti, Ghirlandaio, Lamborghini*

The same grouping of vowels is also important in the spelling conventions for the sound pairs **ch** (as in 'church') and **j** (as in 'judge')

1 If the vowel following **ch** or **j** is **a, o, u**:

ch is written 'ci' *ciao, ciò, Luciano, Lancia*

j is written 'gi' *giapponese, giallo, giorno, giovedì, giù, giusto, Giulia, Giuseppe*

2 If the vowel following **ch** or **j** is **e, i**:

ch is written 'c' *cento, cena, certo, violoncello, San Francesco, Botticelli, cibo, cinema, cappuccino, Puccini*

j is written 'g' *gente, generalmente, gelato, geografia, gita, girare, Gino, Gilda*

The sound sh

Finally the spelling of the sound **sh** (as in 'shoe'):

1 followed by **a, o, u** it is written 'sci':

sciarpa, sciopero, sciupare

2 followed by **e** or **i** it is written just 'sc':

scendere, pesce, sci, Gramsci

Stress

The most common place for an Italian word to be stressed is on the syllable before the last (the *penultimate* syllable, as underlined):

**italiano aeroporto interessante il mondo moderno
la stazione della ferrovia**

Some words are stressed on the *final* vowel. In that case the vowel is written with an accent:

città possibilità percì tivù

The most problematic words for the foreign learner are those where the *antepenultimate* (the third from the end) syllable is stressed:

**sabato domenica albero cinema chilometro lettera
libero macchina medico telefono**

There is no rule for this. Certain types of words, e.g. adjectives ending in **-atico** (**simpatico, democratico) or in **-abile** (**probabile, amabile) always have the stress on the antepenultimate syllable.****

Occasionally, for instance, the stress may fall on the *fourth* syllable from the end: this occurs in the third person plural of some verbs, e.g. **telefonano**.

Dictionaries give help with stress and so does our ‘Italian–English glossary’ (pp. 303–36), where underlining shows unusual stress. Stress is also indicated in this way in the pronunciation section of the book and in verb tables, etc. But in print or in writing, it is not normally indicated. The best you can do is *listen* to Italians speaking and try to build up a sound memory. However, stress is important. The wrong stress is more likely to obscure your meaning than a generally not very Italian-sounding accent.

Related to stress is *intonation*, the ‘tune of the phrase’. This is also best acquired by imitation and should not constitute a big problem.

The Italian alphabet

The Italian language uses an alphabet of twenty-one letters. The other letters of our familiar twenty-six-letter alphabet are used in writing foreign words. When spelling something out for someone,

especially over the telephone, it is usual to use the names of towns to make the letter clear (as shown in the following list). Below is a list of letters, with their pronunciations and the town name usually used:

a	<i>a</i>	Ancona	m	<i>emme</i>	Milano
b	<i>bi</i>	Bologna/Bari	n	<i>enne</i>	Napoli
c	<i>ci</i>	Como	o	<i>o</i>	Otranto
d	<i>di</i>	Domodossola	p	<i>pi</i>	Pisa
e	<i>e</i>	Empoli	q	<i>cu</i>	cu
f	<i>effe</i>	Firenze	r	<i>erre</i>	Roma
g	<i>gi</i>	Genova	s	<i>esse</i>	Savona
h	<i>acca</i>	hotel	t	<i>ti</i>	Torino
i	<i>i</i>	Imola	u	<i>u</i>	Udine
l	<i>elle</i>	Livorno	v	<i>vi/vu</i>	Venezia
			z	<i>zeta</i>	Zara

The following are not considered Italian letters and are used mainly in foreign words:

j	<i>i lungo/a</i>	x	<i>ics</i>
k	<i>cappa</i>	y	<i>i greco/a, <u>ip</u>silon</i>
w	<i>vi/vu <u>do</u>ppio/a</i>		

Examples of how a name can be spelt out, especially over the telephone:

Roma, Otranto, Savona, Savona, Imola = Rossi

Savona, Milano, Imola, Torino, hotel = Smith

**Livorno, i greco, Milano, Bologna, Empoli, Roma, i greco
= Lymbery**

The letters are considered either masculine or feminine: some people will say **i greca** rather than **i greco**. They are not usually made plural, so **ss** is **due esse**; also **doppio esse** or **doppia esse**.

Accents

An accent is used to indicate the stress when it falls on the final vowel of a word. There is some discussion in Italy about using

acute (´) or grave (`) accents, particularly over the letter **e**, where some people like to show an open **e**/closed **e** distinction. In practice, when writing, Italians write something that could be either: **è**. You are advised to do the same.

In a very few cases an accent is used to distinguish one word from another:

e	and	è	is
da	from	dà	gives
ne	of it, of them etc.	nè	neither, nor
si	oneself	sì	yes
se	if	sè	oneself, himself, herself (reflexive pronoun, strong form)
la	the (also a pronoun)	là	there
li	(pronoun)	lì	there

Did you find all this difficult to absorb? Of course you did. Don't worry, it will gradually make sense. And don't forget to use the 'Sounds of Italian' section on the recording.

1 Buongiorno, un caffè per favore

Good morning, a coffee please

In this unit you will learn about:

- Ordering a drink or a snack
- Greetings and simple courtesies
- Introducing Italian nouns, with indefinite articles, e.g. 'a coffee', 'an orangeade'; nouns ending in **-o** and **-a**
- Prices
- Numbers 1–10, 20–100, 200 etc.; 1,000, 2,000 etc.
- Singular personal pronouns, e.g. 'I, she' etc.
- The verbs 'to be' and 'to have' in the singular, e.g. 'am'

Cultural point

First things first, let's get a drink. In Italy the bar (**bar** or **caffè**) is a popular meeting place as well as being a place to drop in for a coffee, a glass of water on a hot day, a snack or an ice cream. Many bars have terraces where, in the summer, people sit outside chatting, reading the newspaper or watching everyone else go by. Of course there are bars of all sorts, from the very elegant to the simple and down to earth. Popular drinks are:

caffè a small very strong black coffee, also called **espresso**
cappuccino a small, very strong, black coffee with frothy milk added, often sprinkled with powdered chocolate
vino, bianco o rosso wine, white or red
acqua minerale, naturale o gassata (bottled) mineral water, still or fizzy

tè, con latte o con limone tea, with milk or with lemon

tè freddo iced tea, a refreshing drink in hot weather

birra beer

succo di frutta fruit juice

succo di pera, di mela, di arancia pear, apple, orange juice

spremuta di arancia, limone, pompelmo juice of a freshly squeezed orange, lemon or grapefruit

You can also order **un panino**, a bread roll with a filling, for example ham, egg or mozzarella and tomato; **un toast**, a toasted ham and cheese sandwich; or, for the sweet-toothed, **una pasta** ‘a pastry’, or **una brioche** ‘a brioche’ or **un gelato** ‘an ice cream’.

Dialogue 1

If you have the recording, for this and all dialogues, see if you can understand without looking at the book. Good practice for real life situations! Answer the question below. You may need to listen more than once but persevere.

Al bar

A group of friends order drinks.

- **Among the drinks ordered are some not explained above. Can you pick them out and guess what they are?**

CAMERIERE: Buongiorno. Prego.

PAOLO: Una birra, per favore.

ANNA: Per me, un caffè.

TOMMASO: Un vino bianco.

MARISA: Un’aranciata.

FILIPPO: Una Coca-Cola.

CAMERIERE: Una birra, un caffè, un vino bianco, un’aranciata e una Coca-Cola. Va bene.

The drinks not explained were **un’aranciata** ‘an orangeade (fizzy)’ and **una Coca-Cola**. No prizes for guessing that! You will find answers to questions and exercises in the ‘Key to exercises’ at the back of the book.

Vocabulary notes

prego lit. ‘I pray, I beg’. Here an invitation to order. **Prego** is also used to reply when someone thanks you for something: ‘don’t mention it, not at all, you’re welcome’.

per favore ‘please’

per me ‘for me’

va bene ‘fine, OK’. **Va bene** is used not just in casual speech, like OK. It is acceptable in a formal context too.

Language point

Introducing Italian nouns and indefinite articles

Italian nouns are either *masculine* or *feminine*. This is sometimes related to sex, in the cases of people or animals for example, but not always. The word for ‘a, an’ is **un** with a masculine noun and **una** with a feminine noun.

<i>Masculine</i>		<i>Feminine</i>	
un	vino caffè gelato succo di frutta panino tè toast	una	birra aranciata spremuta pasta brioche Coca-Cola

Note: When **una** comes before a noun beginning with a vowel, such as **acqua**, it is usual to drop the **a** of **una** and just say **un**. When speaking, it comes naturally to run one vowel into another. When writing this, you put an apostrophe (') to show something has been left out: **un'aranciata**, **un'acqua minerale**.

un, **una** also mean ‘one’. When the word ‘one’ is not used with a noun, the masculine form is **uno**. See below, p. 6.

Many masculine Italian nouns end in **-o**, and many feminine nouns end in **-a**. This makes it easy to guess the gender of a noun

in very many cases. In the above list there are some foreign words adopted by Italian which do not fit this pattern: **caffè**, **Coca-Cola**, **tè**, **toast** and **brioche**. Mostly foreign words adopted into Italian are masculine. **Brioche** and **Coca-Cola**, which are feminine, are exceptions. Try to learn the *gender* of a noun at the same time as learning the noun.

Cultural point

Many Italians like to breakfast in a bar on their way to work. This is not just to save time, but they will tell you they prefer the coffee from the espresso machines in the bar. In most bars, particularly in cities, you go to the cash desk first and say what you want. You pay and are given a receipt (**scontrino**), which you then give to the barman, repeating your order. It is usual to stand at the bar with your drink. If you sit down, you get service at the table and pay extra – sometimes double. So think whether you want to sit and relax for some time, or whether in fact you just want a quick drink.

Dialogue 2

Prima colazione

It's the early morning rush hour in a busy bar. Maria and Piera pop in for breakfast. Maria first goes to the cash desk to pay.

1 What do Piera and Maria order to eat?

2 Do they each have the same drink?

CASSIERE: Desidera?
 MARIA: Per me un cappuccino e una brioche.
 PIERA: E per me un caffè e una pasta.
 CASSIERE: 4 euro.
 MARIA: Ecco.
 CASSIERE: Ecco lo scontrino.

Maria and Piera go to the bar.

MARIA: Scusi!
 BARISTA: Sì, signorina. Mi dica.
 MARIA: Un cappuccino e una brioche, per favore.



BARISTA: (to her friend) E Lei?
PIERA: Per me un caffè e una pasta.
BARISTA: Un cappuccino e un caffè. Va bene.

*Maria and Piera help themselves to the **brioche** and the **pasta** in the display case on the counter.*

Vocabulary notes

prima colazione 'breakfast'

desidera? lit. 'you desire?'. The cashier is asking what Maria wants.

ecco 'here you are'; also 'here is/here are, there is/there are' (pointing something out)

scusi 'excuse me'. In a busy bar, use **scusi** or **mi scusi** to catch the barman's attention; another way is **senta**, literally 'listen'.

mi dica (often just **dica**) lit. 'tell me'. The barman is indicating that he is ready to listen to the order. Compare with **desidera** and in the previous conversation **prego**.

Lei 'you' (formal)

una pasta 'a pastry'. **pasta** is also, of course, the generic word for all the various types of **spaghetti**, **macaroni** etc.

Language points

Prices

Italy adopted the **euro**, the European Union common currency, from the start. It is divided into 100 **centesimi**. The euro symbol is €. Note: **euro** does not change in the plural. So we have:

1 **euro**, 2 **euro** etc.

but

1 **centesimo**, 2 **centesimi** etc.

Numbers

To deal with prices you will need numbers, **i numeri**.

1	uno, una	6	sei
2	due	7	sette
3	tre	8	otto
4	quattro	9	nove
5	cinque	10	dieci

From these it is easy to move to the hundreds and thousands:

100	cento	200	duecento	300	trecento
1.000	mille	2.000	duemila	3.000	tremila

Note: **mille** has a plural form **mila** but **cento** does not change in the plural. You will notice that the thousands are marked by a full stop as in **10.000** and not by a comma (English '10,000'). A comma is used where English uses the decimal point: **virgola** = 'comma', so **2,5** is said **due virgola cinque** '2.5, two point five'.

For prices you will need the numbers between 20 and 99, which are plain sailing:

20	venti	60	sessanta
30	trenta	70	settanta
40	quaranta	80	ottanta
50	cinquanta	90	novanta

And the following should serve to show the pattern of the numbers in between:

21	ventuno	31	trentuno
22	ventidue	32	trentadue

23	ventitrè	33	trentatrè
24	ventiquattro	34	trentaquattro
25	venticinque	35	trentacinque
26	ventisei	36	trentasei
27	ventisette	37	trentasette
28	ventotto	38	trentotto
29	ventinove	39	trentanove

Note: The final vowel is **i** for **venti** and **a** for **trenta** and all the others; it is dropped when the word is combined with **uno** and **otto**, e.g. **settantuno**.

Reminder: This applies only to the numbers 21 to 98. It does not apply to **cento**, **centouno** etc.

The accent on **ventitrè** etc. is to indicate the stress.

More about indefinite articles

Can you guess whether the word **scontrino** is masculine or feminine? Like most nouns ending in **-o** it is masculine. However, ‘a till receipt’ is **uno scontrino**. As you will perhaps know from listening to Italians speaking English, the Italian language avoids clusters of consonants and Italians find them difficult in English. The combination **n + s + c** is avoided by inserting an **o**: **uno scontrino**.

This applies to other masculine words beginning with **s** + another consonant. For example the English word ‘sport’ has been adopted into Italian. Like most foreign words used in Italian it is ...? Yes, masculine. So you say **uno sport**.

The problem does not arise with feminine nouns because there is already the vowel **-a** in **una**; e.g. **una spremuta**.

Exercise 1

You are a waiter with a long list of drinks to get for a large group at a table on the terrace outside in the square. Here is the list, but the word for ‘a’ has been left out. Recite the list to the barman, using the appropriate word for ‘a’.

____ vino rosso ____ gelato ____ birra ____ caffè
 ____ acqua minerale ____ spremuta ____ succo di frutta
 ____ tè ____ vino bianco ____ aranciata

When you have checked your answers, say the words out loud to get used to the sound. It will also be helpful in memorizing them.

Exercise 2

You are an Englishman who is on holiday in Italy with your family. They decide that, since you have been learning Italian, you ought to do the ordering for them. So, be the interpreter to the barman in this bar. This means you have to put the words in italics into Italian in the spaces provided.

BARISTA: **Buongiorno. Prego.**

YOU: (to your wife) What would you like, darling?

YOUR WIFE: (1) *A white coffee.*

YOU: (to the barman) _____.

(to your daughter) And you, Jane?

JANE: (2) *An orangeade.*

YOU: (to the barman) _____.

(to your son) Mark?

MARK: (3) *A fresh orange drink.*

YOU: (to the barman) _____.

BARISTA: **E per Lei, signore?**

YOU: (for yourself order (4) *a beer*; you deserve it after all that) _____.

Exercise 3

Read the following numbers out loud and then write them out as numerals.

1 sette

2 nove

3 quattrocento

4 ottocentotré

5 duemilacinquecento

6 milletrecento

7 diecimila

8 seimilacento

9 cinquantacinque

10 settantanove

Exercise 4

Here are some travel tickets and receipts. Write down the price in words and say it to yourself.

1 Train ticket: Firenze – Pisa Centrale.

2 Bus ticket.

3 Books at the airport bookshop (Berretta SRL).

4 The hat bought at Lorenzini in Cortona?

La Posta BAR
P.2A SIGNORELLI,32
CORTONA (AR)
P.IVA 01104660517

PESO K	PREZZO €/kg	IMPORTO EURO
0,212	18,08	3,83
0,194	10,33	2,00
0,460	10,33	4,75
TOTALE €		10,58
TOTALE L.		20485

(1€ = 1936,27)
Banco: 0 Operatore:
Data: 11-06-04 Ora 11
N.Scontr. fiscale 20
/F DA 15001753

BERRETTA S.R.L.
AEROPORTO G.GALILEI PISA
TABACCHI E GIORNALI
P.IVA 01450400500

	EURO
LIBRI/GUIDE	15,00
LIBRI/GUIDE	5,00
TOTALE	20,00
14/06/2004	16-11
SC. FISC. N.	851

CEGR 11018003

LORENZINI
CORTONA

	EURO
REPARI	0,80
REPARI	0,80
TOTALE	1,60
10/06/2004	14-29
SC. FISC. N.	19
/FGR 11010055	

EURO
CAPPELLI 30,80
TOTALE 30,80
10/06/2004 14-47
SC. FISC. N. 2
/FGR 11002387
GRAZIE TEL.0575/603296

1061041519M5
LA RAPPRESENTAZIONE ITALIANA S.p.A.
PREZZO TEL.071/20888
P. IVA 000000010

LFI
BIGLIETTO
CS.SEMPLICE
EXTRAURBANO
CL_TARIF_03

EURO	2,10
COD.	3803
N° PROG.	22063
DA COMPLETARE SE ASSICURATO	
TESSERA	
AUTOMATICO (NON PRESENTARE)	
[L] [M] [N] [O] [P] [Q] [R] [S] [T] [U] [V] [W] [X] [Y] [Z]	
PER CONSIGLIO	

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PISA CENTRALE		
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TOSCANA		

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FORNITURA ANDATA 1001200120015001700190011200115001
FORNITURA RITORNO 1001200120015001700190011200115001

5 Two coffees at the Bar la Posta. How much was each?

6 Meat at the Macelleria Jacomoni.

You may have noticed that the butcher's receipt also shows the total in lire and gives the value of a euro. Doubtless the till was programmed to help customers at the time of the changeover.

Greetings and courtesies (1)

As in English, the greeting you use depends on the time of day and who you are talking to. **buongiorno** is the equivalent of both

‘good morning’ and ‘good afternoon’. It is used in any formal situation: in a shop, a hotel, in a bank, greeting someone you do not know well, greeting colleagues in the morning etc.

Dialogue 3

Un appuntamento con il signor Rossi

Angela Smith has an appointment to see signor Rossi. She goes into the outer office, where the secretary greets her.

- 1 What does the secretary invite Mrs Smith to do?**
- 2 What words does Mr Rossi use to invite Mrs Smith to sit down?**

SEGRETARIA: Buongiorno, signora. Mi dica.
 SMITH: Buongiorno, signorina. Sono Angela Smith.
 SEGRETARIA: Ah, signora Smith, buongiorno. Un attimo, prego.
 Si accomodi.

(The secretary disappears into the inner office and a moment later Mr Rossi comes out to Mrs Smith.)

ROSSI: Buongiorno, signora Smith. Venga, venga. *(He motions to Mrs Smith to go into his office.)*
 SMITH: Buongiorno, signor Rossi.
 ROSSI: S'accomodi, prego. *(He indicates a chair for Mrs Smith.)* Come va?
 SMITH: Bene, grazie. E Lei?

Vocabulary

sono	I am
un attimo	just a moment
s'accomodi, si accomodi	sit down, make yourself comfortable
prego	here please, do (sit down)
venga	come this way (lit. come)
come va?	how are you?
bene grazie, e Lei?	well thanks, and you?
signor (abbr. to sig.)	Mr
signora (abbr. to sig.ra)	Mrs
signorina (abbr. to sig.na)	Miss

It is usual *not* to capitalize these titles. As yet, there is no Italian equivalent to 'Ms'. Italian women continue officially to use their maiden name after marriage, although socially they may use their husband's name.

When you do not know a person's name, it is usual to refer to them as:

signore

signora

signorina

e.g. Scusi, signora ...

Note that the word **signore** has an **-e** on the end when it is used without the name, i.e. it becomes three syllables. In practice, too, the choice of **signora** or **signorina** depends partly on the age of the lady although **signorina** is not used a great deal. **signora** is preferred.

Dialogue 4

Un incontro per la strada

Mrs Martini meets her son's school teacher in the street. Her son, Marco, is at home with a cold.

• Why is the conversation a rather short one?

INSEGNANTE:	Buongiorno, signora. Come va?
SIG.RA MARTINI:	Buongiorno, professore. Bene grazie, e Lei?
INSEGNANTE:	Bene grazie. E Marco?
SIG.RA MARTINI:	Marco sta male. Ha un raffreddore.
INSEGNANTE:	Mi dispiace, signora. E Suo marito?
SIG.RA MARTINI:	Sta bene, grazie. Lavora molto.
INSEGNANTE:	Mi scusi, devo andare. ArrivederLa a presto. Auguri a Marco e saluti a Suo marito.
SIG.RA MARTINI:	ArrivederLa, professore. Buongiorno.

Vocabulary

insegnante	teacher
Lei	you (formal form)
Marco sta male	Marco is ill

ha un raffreddore	he has a cold
mi dispiace	I am sorry, lit. 'it displeases me'. Expressing regret about something unpleasant or unfortunate. It is slightly different from mi scusi (see below).
e Suo marito?	and your husband?
sta bene	he's well
grazie	thank you
lavora molto	he is working hard (molto = a lot)
mi scusi	I am sorry, I apologize, excuse me (mi is often omitted)
devo andare	I have to go
a presto	see you soon
auguri	best wishes
saluti	greetings, say 'hello' to

Greetings and courtesies (2)

arrivederLa is a very formal way of saying 'goodbye'. It is often used by shopkeepers, bank clerks etc. Less formal is **arrivederci**. It is also very common, when saying goodbye in formal conversations, to add **buongiorno** too, as Mrs Martini does. After mid-afternoon, people often use **buonasera** (lit. 'good evening') both to open the conversation and to close it. **buonanotte** means 'good-night' and is used to say goodbye at night, really wishing someone a good night's sleep.

Mrs Martini's relationship with her son's teacher is formal so she calls him **professore** ('teacher'). It is usual to use titles like this when talking to professional people (e.g. **avvocato**, **dottore**, **ingegnere**).

Look at Dialogue 5 to find out what you say when you are greeting friends.

Dialogue 5

Ciao, Gianni

PAOLO:	Ciao, Gianni. Come va?
GIANNI:	Oh, ciao Paolo.
PAOLO:	Tutto bene?
GIANNI:	Sì, grazie, e tu?

PAOLO: Sì, tutto bene. Mi dispiace, devo scappare. Ciao. A presto.
 GIANNI: Ciao.

Vocabulary

tutto bene? Is everything all right? (lit. 'all well?')
scappare to run away (**devo scappare** is often used colloquially instead of **devo andare**)

Greetings and courtesies (3)

You say **ciao** both when you meet a friend and to say goodbye to him/her. You don't say **Lei** to a friend, you use **tu**. You also use **tu** when talking to children, family and colleagues. These days, Italians on the whole prefer to use **tu** once they get to know you or if they are working with you. It is similar to using first names.

Language point

Personal pronouns and verbs

You have now met the word **Lei** several times. By convention it is written with a capital **L** although this convention is not always observed nowadays. It should be used in formal letter-writing. You have also met **tu**. 'I' is **io**. You may have noticed that after **per** (a preposition) you have a different form.

Pronoun subject with verb		Pronoun after preposition	
io	I	per {	me
tu	you (familiar)		te
Lei	you (formal)		Lei
		for	{ me you you

Personal pronouns as subjects of a verb ('I, you, he, we' etc.) are usually not expressed in Italian as it is generally clear from the form of the verb who or what the subject of the verb is. For example, Angela Smith said **Sono Angela Smith**. She would only have said **Io sono Angela Smith** if she had been wanting to stress the 'I'.

The verb **essere** ‘to be’ is irregular in Italian. Here are the forms for the singular:

(io) sono	I am
(tu) sei	you are (familiar)
(Lei) è	you are (formal)

Since the forms are different from each other, the subject pronoun is unnecessary, which is why it is given in brackets.

The present singular of **avere** ‘to have’ is:

(io) ho	I have
(tu) hai	you have (familiar)
(Lei) ha	you have (formal)

Note: The **h** is silent. This verb provides the only cases in Italian of an initial **h**.

Exercise 5

Rewrite this short conversation between two friends as an exchange between two people whose relationship is formal, Sig. Rossi and Avv. Bruni.

GIORGIO: Ciao, Marco, come va?
 MARCO: Bene, grazie. E tu?
 GIORGIO: Bene. Devo andare. Ciao.
 MARCO: Ciao.

Exercise 6

Look back over the dialogues and pick out the verbs used without subject pronouns. (*Note:* **scusi** and **mi dica** are verbs in the command (imperative) form and would never have a pronoun with them. You are looking for other verbs.) Consult the ‘Key to exercises’ to see if you found them successfully.

Reading

Bar famosi

Read the passage and try to answer the questions. It is not necessary to understand every word. (*Warning:* These bars are expensive!)

- 1 When did Florian's open?
- 2 What are the ingredients of the aperitif that is the speciality of Harry's Bar?
- 3 If you were hungry would it be a good place to go?
- 4 What is the name of its owner?

In Piazza San Marco a Venezia c'è un bar antico e famoso: il Florian. Esiste dal 1720. All'interno, c'è un senso di intimità nelle sale di stile '700. Fuori ci sono numerosi tavolini proprio in Piazza San Marco, con un'orchestrina che suona per i clienti. E' bello sedersi lì e guardare la piazza famosa e la gente che passa.

Un altro bar famoso a Venezia è l'Harry's Bar. E' un bar molto elegante. Offre naturalmente caffè, vino, whisky e così via, ma anche un aperitivo famoso, 'il Bellini', vino bianco frizzante con succo di pesca. Harry's è un bar ma è anche un ristorante molto buono. L'Harry's Bar era il locale preferito di Hemingway e ancora oggi è frequentato da persone famose, attori, scrittori e così via. Il proprietario, Arrigo Cipriani, è anche lui un personaggio famoso a Venezia.

Vocabulary notes

stile '700 'eighteenth-century style', the style of the years from 1700 to 1799. It is usual in Italian to refer to a century this way. The twentieth century is the '900 – **Il novecento** (an abbreviation for **millenovecento**); as yet nothing similar has developed for the twenty-first century.

la gente 'people'. **La gente** is singular, even though it refers to an idea that seems plural.

frizzante 'sparkling' (of wine)

pesca 'peach'

Exercise 7

As a revision exercise, go over the unit again and make a list of all the words used as greetings and courtesies in the various dialogues. Make sure you understand them and try to learn them.

It is wise to revise when learning. To do Exercise 7 you have to read this unit again. This will help you remember it. It would also be helpful to listen to the recording again. And, very importantly, do this again after each unit. Gradually things, which at first seemed difficult or strange, fall into place and become simple. **Auguri!**

2 Mi chiamo Harry, sono americano, e Lei?

My name's Harry, I'm American, and you?

In this unit you will learn about:

- Giving information about yourself
- Asking others for information about themselves
- Adjectives, singular
- More about nouns, those ending in **-e**
- Verbs in the present tense, singular, first group (infinitive ending in **-are**)
- Saying you like something/like doing something: **mi piace**
- Saying you have to do something: **dovere**
- Saying what you do for a living
- Talking about other people; **lui, lei**; and the form for formal 'you', **Lei**

Dialogue 1

Sono americano, e Lei?

An American businessman is reading the 'International Herald Tribune' as he breakfasts in a hotel in Bologna. An Italian, sitting at the next table, is watching him and eventually leans over.

- 1 Where is the American's home?**
- 2 And the Italian's?**
- 3 What explanation does the American give for his good Italian?**

4 What seems to be the reason for the Italian's interest in the US?**5 Is the Italian pleased to be in Bologna?**

- ITALIANO: Mi scusi, signore. Buongiorno. Lei è americano?
- AMERICANO: Buongiorno. Sì, sono americano. Mi chiamo Harry McNamara. Abito a Boston. E Lei?
- ITALIANO: Io sono italiano. Mi chiamo Pietro Mussi. Sono romano, di Roma. Lei parla molto bene l'italiano.
- AMERICANO: Grazie. Mia madre è italiana. E' siciliana. E' di Siracusa.
- ITALIANO: Ah, capisco. Mio fratello abita in America. Abita a Los Angeles. Mi piace molto l'America. E' un paese simpatico e interessante. Lei è in Italia in vacanza o per lavoro?
- AMERICANO: Sono qui per lavoro. E Lei? E' a Bologna per lavoro?
- ITALIANO: Sì, sono qui per lavoro. Vengo spesso a Bologna. Mi piace. E' una città simpatica e interessante. Ora



Bologna: Piazza Maggiore and the Palazzo del Podestà. Courtesy EPT Emilia Romagna.

	mi scusi ma devo andare. Arrivederci a stasera, forse?
AMERICANO:	Sì, sono qui per una settimana. A stasera.
ITALIANO:	Arrivederci. Buona giornata.

Vocabulary

mi chiamo	my name is (lit. 'I call myself')
abito	I live
Lei parla molto bene l'italiano	you speak Italian very well
mia madre	my mother
capisco	I understand
mio fratello	my brother
mi piace	I like
in vacanza	on holiday
per lavoro	for work
vengo spesso	I often come
simpatico	nice, friendly (There is no exact translation. When you say a person or a place is simpatico it means you like them.)
a stasera	see you this evening
forse	perhaps
una settimana	a week
buona giornata	have a nice day

Language point

Adjectives

In Italian adjectives 'agree with the noun they qualify'; that is, if the noun is masculine, the adjective must be in the masculine form; if the noun is feminine, the adjective must be in the feminine form. Look back over Dialogue 1. Underline or highlight all the adjectives you can find or write them on a piece of paper.

You probably picked out: americano, italiano, romano, italiana, siciliana, simpatico, interessante.

Look to see which nouns they qualify. You have two men talking who say: **io sono americano; io sono italiano**. But Harry says his mother is **italiana, siciliana**.

You also had adjectives used to qualify the words **paese** (m.) **simpatico**, **interessante** and **città** (f.) **simpatica**, **interessante**.

Adjectives are of two types.

- 1 The first type ends in **-o/-a**, e.g. **italiano/italiana**, **americano/americana**. A man is **americano**, a woman is **americana**; i.e. the **-o** is the masculine ending and the **-a** is the feminine ending. Many adjectives for nationality are of this sort. *Note*: They are written with a small letter.

<i>Country</i>	<i>Adjective</i>
Australia	australiano/a
Austria	austriaco/a
Brasile	brasiliano/a
Germania	tedesco/a
Gran Bretagna	britannico/a
Messico	messicano/a
Nigeria	nigeriano/a
Spagna	spagnolo/a
Svizzera	svizzero/a
Sud Africa	sudafricano/a

This applies not to only adjectives of nationality, for example: **un paese è simpatico, una città è simpatica**.

- 2 The second group of adjectives in Italian ends in **-e**, for example **interessante**. Many adjectives of nationality, for instance, end in **-e**:

<i>Country</i>	<i>Adjective</i>
Inghilterra	inglese
Irlanda	irlandese
Galles	gallese
Ghana	ghanese
Scozia	scozzese
Canada	canadese
Nuova Zelanda	neozelandese
Francia	francese
Giappone	giapponese
Olanda	olandese (Paesi Bassi = ‘the Netherlands’)

Note: Many Italians don't understand the difference between British and English. Scots, Welsh and Northern Irish should try not to feel too offended when Italians assume they are English. Americans (and others) should note that America can be **America**, but also **Stati Uniti** 'United States' – see Unit 5. The adjective **statunitense**, derived from **Stati Uniti**, is sometimes heard. The usual word is **americano**.

Now, here's some good news: adjectives that end in an **-e** do not have separate masculine and feminine forms. A man and a woman will both say:

sono { **inglese**
 { **francese**
 { **canadese**

And you can say:

è { **un paese** **interessante**
 { **una città**

Talking of the USA:

è un paese (m.) simpatico e interessante

Talking of Bologna:

è una città (f.) simpatica e interessante

Note: Adjectives usually follow the noun in Italian.

Exercise 1

Say in Italian what nationality you think the following people might be.

Example: **Luciano Pavarotti.**

Answer: **Luciano Pavarotti è italiano.**

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Sean Connery | 4 Tiger Woods |
| 2 Michael Schumacher | 5 Arnold Schwarzenegger |
| 3 Kofi Annan | 6 Meryl Streep |

Say in Italian which countries you think these cities belong to.

Example: **Los Angeles.**

Answer: **Los Angeles è una città americana.**

7 Roma	10 Toronto
8 New York	11 Sydney
9 Rio de Janeiro	12 Tokyo

Language points

More about nouns: nouns ending in -e

Nouns ending in **-e**, such as **paese**, **madre**, form the third big group of nouns in Italian. The first two are those that end in **-o** (masculine) and those that end in **-a** (feminine). Some nouns in the third group are masculine and some are feminine. Where they relate to people it is easy to guess which gender they are: **madre** 'mother' is feminine; **padre** 'father' is masculine.

But in most cases you have to learn the gender. For example, **paese** is masculine. It helps to learn the noun with an adjective of the **-o/-a** type (which shows gender), e.g. **un paese simpatico**.

More about verbs

In the text you met the following verbs in the first person singular:

io sono mi chiamo abito vengo devo

io was used when the Italian said **io sono italiano** because the Italian man was contrasting his nationality with the American's. In English we would stress the 'I' using our voice. After the first verb it is no longer necessary for him to use **io** because the ending of the verb tells us who the subject is. Can you tell which verb ending indicates **io**? It is **-o**.

When you look up a verb in the dictionary, you will find the *infinitive form*. For very many Italian verbs the infinitive will end in the letters **-are**. Traditionally verbs are grouped according to their infinitive ending and those ending in **-are** form the first group (group 1 verbs). There are three groups in all. In the text you met some verbs of the first group in the first person, that is to say in the 'I' form:

abitare
abito

parlare
parlo

Here are some more:

lavorare	studiare	telefonare	fumare	ballare	cantare
lavoro	studio	telefono	fumo	ballo	canto

Note the first person forms all end in **-o**. This is the first person marker. You can possibly guess at the meaning of them. If not, check in the Glossary.

The **tu** form of verbs always end in **-i**:

lavori	studi	telefoni	fumi	balli	canti
---------------	--------------	-----------------	-------------	--------------	--------------

For **-are** verbs *only*, the **Lei** form ends in **-a**. So you get:

parlare

(io) parlo	I speak, I am speaking
(tu) parli	you speak, you are speaking (familiar)
(Lei) parla	you speak, you are speaking (formal)

Note: The present tense in Italian can translate both the English simple present ('I speak') and the English present continuous ('I am speaking'). So if the forms seem difficult, console yourself with the knowledge that the one tense will do two jobs for you.

You also met some irregular verbs: **sono**, **vengo**, **devo**, and one of a different pattern from the **-are** type. **capisco**. Their infinitives are:

sono	essere	to be
vengo	venire	to come
devo	dovere	to have to, must
capisco	capire	to understand

In Unit 1, you met the forms of **essere**.

There was another verb in Dialogue 1: **mi chiamo**, lit. 'I call myself'. It is used when in English we would say 'my name is . . .' or 'I'm called . . .'. **chiamare** is also an **-are** verb. For the time being, however, don't worry about **mi chiamo**. **chiamo** by itself means 'I call, I am calling'. We will come back to this later.

Exercise 2

Look at the drawings on the facing page and match each with one of the following verbs.

canta	fuma	lavora	telefona	balla	studia
--------------	-------------	---------------	-----------------	--------------	---------------



Imagine you are doing each of these things. How would you say each one?

Example: (io) canto

Exercise 3

Look back at Dialogue 1 and work out how you would say the following in Italian.

- 1 My name is Charlie Hardcastle.
- 2 I am South African.
- 3 I live in Johannesburg.
- 4 I speak English and French.
- 5 My mother is French, from Bordeaux.
- 6 Bordeaux is a nice, friendly city.

mi piace 'I like'

mi piace means, literally, 'it is pleasing to me'; it is the everyday way of saying 'I like':

Mi piace { **la pizza**
Roma
la musica } or *Mi piace* { **parlare italiano**
ballare
studiare }

mi piace can be followed by: (1) a noun ('I like pizza'); or (2) the infinitive of a verb ('I like speaking Italian/to speak Italian'). You have also met **mi dispiace**, which literally means 'it is displeasing to me', but we would normally say 'I am sorry'. It is not the opposite of **mi piace**.

dovere 'to have to do something'

dovere is followed by an infinitive, for example: **devo andare**, **devo scappare**.

Exercise 4

How would you say you like the following?

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1 working (to work) | 4 Rome |
| 2 New York | 5 speaking Italian |
| 3 singing | 6 Luciano Pavarotti |

Exercise 5

How would you say you have to do the following?

- | | |
|----------------|------------|
| 1 to telephone | 3 to come |
| 2 to work | 4 to study |

Reading 1 ***Mi chiamo Paolo Bianchi***

An Italian doctor is talking about himself.

- 1 What is the doctor's name?**
- 2 Where does he come from?**

- 3 Where does he live?
- 4 Where does he work?
- 5 Can you say something about what he looks like?
- 6 Is he married?
- 7 What does he like doing in his leisure time?

Mi chiamo Paolo Bianchi. Sono italiano. Sono di Milano. Sono alto e biondo. Sono medico e lavoro in un ospedale a Milano. Naturalmente abito a Milano. Sono sposato e ho due figli. Mia moglie si chiama Luisa. E' insegnante. Mi piace giocare a tennis, mi piace anche la musica classica.

Vocabulary

alto	tall, high	biondo	fair-haired
sposato	married	figlio	son (figli (pl.) can mean 'sons' or 'sons and daughters')
moglie	wife		

You probably found you could get quite a lot of the information you were asked for. The answers are printed in the 'Key to exercises'.

Language point

Saying what you do for a living

Paolo says **sono medico**. When you say what your job is, the word for the occupation functions as an adjective and so 'a' is usually omitted. You will also hear: **sono un medico**. Here are some other jobs:

albergatore/trice	hotelier	avvocato/tessa	lawyer
casalinga	housewife/ homemaker	commesso/a	shop assistant,
dentista	dentist	cuoco/a	cook
ingegnere	engineer	infermiere/a	nurse
segretario/a	secretary	insegnante	teacher
uomo d'affari	businessman	studente/tessa	student

Note: Some of these words have a masculine and feminine form as indicated. Nouns ending in **-ista** are masculine or feminine

according to the sex of the person described. There are many women lawyers and doctors in Italy but it is not usual to make a feminine form for the words **avvocato** and **medico**. Indeed this is a field in which some women have strong views and feel the feminine form belittles them. As for the feminine for **uomo d'affari**, a businesswoman would call herself ... well, it depends on the precise nature of her work. She might be **una donna-manager**, or simply **manager** (yes, using the English word). If she actually owns a company/companies she could perhaps be **donna d'affari**, but to some people it sounds odd.

Exercise 6

Here is another person's description of himself, but the verbs have been left out. Fill in the gaps using the verbs listed (you may use a verb more than once).

abito sono lavoro

Mi chiamo Silvio, Silvio Mancini. (1) _____ italiano. (2) _____ di Roma. Ma (3) _____ a Firenze. (4) _____ in una banca a Firenze. (5) _____ cassiere. Mi piace il mio lavoro.

Exercise 7

You have just met Giorgio at a reception and he gives you a short portrait of himself. Complete what Giorgio says using the words below (use each word once only).

scusi madre devo sportivo lavoro
chiamo mi abito ospedale giocare

Mi _____ Giorgio. Sono italiano. _____ a Napoli. Mia _____ abita a Roma con mio fratello. Sono medico in un _____ a Napoli. Mi piace il mio _____. Sono _____ e mi piace _____ a golf e a tennis. Mi _____; _____ scappare. _____ dispiace. Arrivederci.

In these passages you met some more adjectives: **sposato**, **alto**, **biondo**. You will notice these adjectives all end in **-o**. Keep an eye open to see what happens when Paolo's wife, Luisa, talks about herself. Don't forget to listen to the recordings as you read.

Reading 2

Mi chiamo Luisa Lucchini

Paolo's wife is talking about herself.

- 1 What does Luisa teach?**
- 2 Does she like sports?**
- 3 Why does she like Milan?**

Mi chiamo Luisa, Luisa Lucchini. Sono italiana. Sono bionda, e sono alta. Sono di Bologna ma abito e lavoro a Milano. Sono insegnante. Lavoro in un liceo e insegno storia e geografia. Sono sposata e ho due figli. Mio marito si chiama Paolo. E' medico e lavora in un ospedale qui a Milano. Io sono sportiva. Mi piace giocare a tennis e a golf. Amo la musica lirica e quando ho tempo mi piace andare alla Scala. Mi piace Milano. E' una città grande, vivace, interessante e stimolante.

Vocabulary

un liceo	a high school, upper secondary school
amo	I love
la musica lirica	opera

Notice that Luisa says:

sono	{	italiana
		bionda
		alta

Exercise 8

Match the nouns on the left with the adjectives on the right. Take into account sense and gender (some adjectives can go with more than one word). How many reasonable and grammatically correct combinations can you make?

una birra	vivace
un signore	australiana
un vino	romana
una signora	alto

un lavoro	americano
un paese	sportivo
una madre	interessante
un marito	simpatico
una città	bionda
una signorina	americano
un professore	sposato
un fratello	bianco

You have now learned to give other people some simple, basic information about yourself. It is also useful to be able to do the same about other people.

Dialogue 2

Suo marito, come si chiama?

Luisa Lucchini, the Milanese teacher, is talking to a Canadian tourist in the hotel where they are both spending their holiday. They have talked about themselves. Now they are talking about their husbands.

- 1 What new piece of information do you learn about Paolo's leisure activities?**
- 2 Is the Canadian woman's husband Canadian too?**
- 3 What is his job?**
- 4 Does he enjoy sports?**
- 5 Where do the couple live?**

CANADESE: E Suo marito, come si chiama?

LUISA: Si chiama Paolo.

CANADESE: Che lavoro fa?

LUISA: E' medico. Lavora in un ospedale a Milano.

CANADESE: E come passa il suo tempo libero?

LUISA: E' molto sportivo. Gioca a tennis e ama anche il golf. Gli piace anche la musica classica. Suona il pianoforte. E' molto bravo. Spesso la sera ascolta musica. E Suo marito, come si chiama?

CANADESE: Si chiama Bill. Non è canadese, è scozzese.

LUISA: Che lavoro fa?

CANADESE: Lavora in una banca a Toronto. E' commercialista. La banca è una banca inglese.

- LUISA: E' sportivo, ama lo sport?
 CANADESE: No, non è sportivo. Invece è appassionato per il fai-da-te.
 LUISA: Oh, che bello!
 CANADESE: Dipende!

Vocabulary

che lavoro fa?	what's his job?		
commercialista	accountant, financial adviser (has a degree in economics and business studies)		
ascolta	he listens to	il fai-da-te	do-it-yourself
oh, che bello!	oh, how lovely!	dipende	it depends

Language points

Talking about other people – third person singular of -are verbs; and the formal 'you'

Did you notice the verbs used by Luisa and the Canadian woman to talk about their husbands? They were:

si chiama fa lavora passa è gioca ama suona ascolta

These forms are, as you will realize, the same as those for **Lei**, the formal 'you'. In fact, **lei** is also the word for 'she'. 'He' is **lui** but neither speaker used it. It wasn't necessary, because it was quite clear who they were referring to when they spoke.*

Cultural point

You may be puzzled by the statement that **Lei** is the formal 'you' and **lei** is also 'she'. This use of **Lei** goes back to the days of deference when the people in positions of importance were addressed in the third person rather than directly, for example, 'your excellency's wish is my command'. The initials **SV** or **VS** (for **Signoria Vostra, Vostra Signoria** 'your excellency, your lordship') are still

* In this book we use **Lei** rather than **lei** to clarify that we are not talking about 'she' or 'it' but 'you' (formal).

occasionally to be found in formal invitations and bureaucratic letters. **Lei** is, however, everyday usage for 'you' to people when the relationship is not one of familiarity and you should use it in preference to **tu** when in doubt. It is better to be too formal than too familiar. It is used to men as well as to women, because of the gender of **Signoria**. The confusion with 'she', often feared by learners, is not the problem it at first seems. The deferential origin of the usage probably also accounts for the practice of writing **Lei**, especially in formal letters, with a capital letter.

Present singular of -are verbs; also essere

Now we can see the full singular pattern of an **-are** verb:

(io)	parlo
(tu)	parli
(Lei)	parla
(lui)	parla
(lei)	parla

Il signor Smith parla molto bene l'italiano.

And of **essere**:

(io)	sono
(tu)	sei
(Lei)	è
(lui)	è
(lei)	è

Exercise 9

Pretend to be the following people and talk about yourself.

- 1 A woman with the following attributes: you are Australian; tall and blonde; married; and you work in Sydney.
- 2 You are a Canadian man and you are married. Your wife is English. You live in Milan.
- 3 You are an Italian man. You are Sicilian, from Palermo. Your name is Salvatore. You live in Bologna. You work in a bank. You are married and your wife is Scottish. She is a teacher.

How would you say the same things about someone else?

- 4 She is Australian; tall and blonde; married; and she works in Sydney.
- 5 He is Canadian and he is married; his wife (**sua moglie**) is English; he lives in Milan.
- 6 He is Italian; Sicilian, from Palermo; his name is Salvatore; he lives in Bologna; and he works in a bank; he is married and his wife is Scottish; she is a teacher.

Exercise 10

Try to describe yourself using the words you have met in this unit. This exercise has no set answer, of course – it depends on you. Also try to describe someone else – a friend or member of your family.

3 In città

In town

In this unit you will learn about:

- Finding your way around the sights
- Asking for and understanding directions to specific places
- The definite article, 'the'
- **questo/a** 'this'
- **dove** 'where'; **dov'è** 'where is ...'
- Asking questions
- Negative sentences
- Ordinal numbers
- Present tense singular of second group verbs (infinitive ending in **-ere**)

Dialogue 1

A Perugia

Jack is visiting Perugia, a lively modern city but with roots going back to the Etruscans, whose civilization preceded that of the Romans in Italy. Maria is showing Jack a brochure containing a plan of the city and pictures of some of the sights.

- 1 Can you guess what the Palazzo Comunale is used for?
- 2 Where do people like to stroll in the evening?
- 3 Why might you want to go to the garden at the end of Corso Vannucci?

JACK: Che cos'è questo?

MARIA: Questo è il Palazzo Comunale, il municipio. Si chiama anche il Palazzo dei Priori.

JACK: E' magnifico. E questo?



Palazzo dei Priori and the Fontana Maggiore, Perugia.
Courtesy IAT Perugia.

MARIA: E' la cattedrale.

JACK: (*Pointing to another photo*) Questa è una fontana?

MARIA: Sì. E' la Fontana Maggiore. E' l'opera di Nicola e Giovanni Pisano.

JACK: E' molto bella. E la via, come si chiama?

MARIA: E' Corso Vannucci. E' molto importante per la città. La sera la gente viene qui a fare la passeggiata. In fondo c'è un giardino con un panorama molto bello sulla valle e verso Assisi.

JACK: E questo?

MARIA: Questo è l'Arco Etrusco.

JACK: E il museo famoso, dov'è?

MARIA: La Galleria Nazionale? L'entrata è qui, in Corso Vannucci.

Vocabulary notes

questo/a 'this'

il municipio 'the town hall'

il Palazzo dei Priori 'the Palace of the Priors'. In the Middle Ages, Perugia was a city state; the Priori were the elected officers who governed it.

opera ‘work’ (produced by a creative artist)

la via ‘the street’

la sera ‘the evening’ (here, ‘in the evenings’)

c’è (ci è) ‘there is’

un panorama ‘a view’. A number of nouns ending with **-ma** are masculine. *Hint:* Learn it with an adjective that shows gender, e.g.

un panorama magnifico.

in fondo ‘at the far end, at the bottom’

verso ‘towards’

Cultural point

fare una passeggiata means ‘to go for a walk’, but in much of Italy **fare la passeggiata** is *not* exercise: it is a social event. You walk up and down the main street, stopping to chat to friends, looking at everyone else and generally seeing what is going on. People of all ages do this, so you will see both groups of young people and also their parents. It means you will see your friends frequently and news is passed on quickly!

Language points

The definite article

il for masculine nouns

la for feminine nouns

un palazzo	a palace	un giardino	a garden
il palazzo	the palace	il giardino	the garden
una fontana	a fountain	una via	a street
la fontana	the fountain	la via	the street

Note: For *both* masculine and feminine nouns beginning with a vowel we use **l’** for ‘the’.

un arco	an arch	un’acqua minerale	a water ¹
l’arco	the arch	l’acqua	the water

¹ You say this when ordering a glass of water; it is usual to order spring/mineral water rather than ask for it from the tap.

Note also:

uno scontrino	a till receipt	uno studente	a student
lo scontrino	the till receipt	lo studente	the student

Words that have **uno** for 'a', have **lo** for 'the' (see Unit 1). This also applies to nouns beginning with **z**, pronounced 'ts' or 'ds' e.g. **lo zucchero** ('sugar').

questo/a

This can be a pronoun or an adjective. When it replaces (as a pronoun) or describes (as an adjective) a feminine noun it becomes **questa**.

Asking questions

Yes/no questions are made simply by using a rising intonation for the last word:

Questa è una fontana.	This is a fountain.
Questa è una fontana?	Is this a fountain?
Harry è americano.	Harry is American.
Harry è americano?	Is Harry American?
Paolo lavora in un ospedale.	Paolo works in a hospital.
Paolo lavora in un ospedale?	Does Paolo work in a hospital?
Giorgio abita a Firenze.	Giorgio lives in Florence.
Giorgio abita a Firenze?	Does Giorgio live in Florence?

You do not need 'do' or 'does' as in English, nor the word order change which English requires with the verb 'to be'. Word order is, however, more flexible in Italian than in English, so you will often hear in everyday speech:

E' una fontana, questa?
E' americano, Harry?
Lavora in un ospedale, Paolo?
Abita a Firenze, Giorgio?

The first form (i.e. statement with voice raised at the end: **Questa è una fontana?**) should be your model. The answer will normally be either **sì** or **no** 'yes' or 'no'.

When asking a question in a way that seems to be expecting confirmation that the information in the question is correct, e.g. ‘You do work in a hospital, don’t you?’, simply tag on to the statement: **vero?** or (sometimes) **non è vero?**:

Lavori in un ospedale, vero?

Questa fontana si chiama la Fontana Maggiore, vero?

Information questions require a question word. The subject, if expressed, follows the verb:

Come si chiama il medico?

What’s the doctor’s name?

(lit. ‘How does the doctor call himself?’)

Che cos’è questo?

What’s this?

Come va Suo marito?

How is your husband?

Question words met so far:

Come?	How?
Come va?	How are you?
Che ...?	Che + noun means ‘which?, what?’
Che lavoro fa?	What is your job? (lit. ‘What work do you do?’)
Che cosa?	What? (often just cosa?)

Note: **Una cosa** means ‘a thing’; so **che cosa** is lit. ‘which, what thing’.

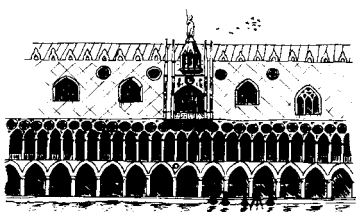
Exercise 1

Look back at the dialogues in Unit 2. Make a list of the questions you find in them.

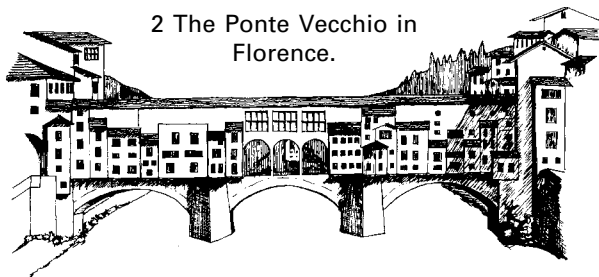
Exercise 2

On the facing page are pictures of some famous places in Italy. For each one there is a question and the answer. Complete the answer with the correct word for ‘the’. If you do not know what the word means, it does not really matter because you can find the correct gender from the **un**, **una** in the question. Try guessing and then check from the ‘Glossary’.

1 The Doges' Palace
in Venice.



2 The Ponte Vecchio in
Florence.



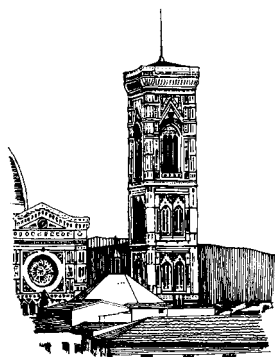
3 The Basilica
of San Pietro
in Rome.



4 The Leaning
Tower of
Pisa.



5 The Campanile by
Giotto in Florence.



- 1 Questo è un palazzo?
Sì, è _____ Palazzo Ducale a Venezia.
- 2 Questo è un ponte?
Sì, è _____ Ponte Vecchio a Firenze.
- 3 Questa è una basilica?
Sì, è _____ Basilica di San Pietro a Roma.
- 4 Questa è una torre?
Sì, è _____ Torre Pendente di Pisa.
- 5 Questo è un campanile?
Sì, è _____ Campanile di Giotto a Firenze.

Cultural point

Technically the Leaning Tower of Pisa is a **campanile**, the bell tower for the cathedral of Pisa, **il duomo di Pisa**. Cathedrals are sometimes called **cattedrale**, more often **duomo**. The famous Leaning Tower is part of a particularly lovely group of buildings, the **duomo**, the **campanile** and the **battistero** (the baptistery of the cathedral), all by Nicola and Giovanni Pisano, who were also responsible for the Fontana Maggiore in Perugia.

Vocabulary

More town vocabulary: the first group is very easy to guess, but use the 'Glossary' to check or if you cannot guess.

aeroporto	ambasciata	banca
cinema (m.)	consolato	farmacia
galleria	pizzeria	ristorante (m.)
stazione (f.)	supermercato	teatro
ufficio postale		

The following are more difficult to guess:

albergo	hotel
cambio	foreign currency exchange
chiesa	church
mercato	market
fermata dell'autobus	bus stop

Dialogue 2

C'è una banca qui vicino?

A tourist needs to change some money. He stops a passer-by.

1 What does the tourist ask for first?

**2 The passer-by suggests he goes to a foreign exchange bureau.
Why?**

TURISTA: Scusi, c'è una banca qui vicino?

PASSANTE: Una banca, sì. E' in Piazza Garibaldi.

TURISTA: Dov'è Piazza Garibaldi? E' lontano?

PASSANTE: No, è qui vicino. Vede l'albergo Bristol? (*pointing down the road*)

TURISTA: Sì.

PASSANTE: Piazza Garibaldi è subito dopo, sulla sinistra.

TURISTA: Grazie. E' aperta la banca a quest'ora?

PASSANTE: Penso di no. Lei deve cambiare valuta o travellers cheques?

TURISTA: Sì, travellers cheques.

PASSANTE: C'è un ufficio di cambio lì, sulla destra, subito dopo la farmacia.

TURISTA: Oh, grazie. Buongiorno.

PASSANTE: Prego. Buongiorno.

Vocabulary

vicino	near
lontano	far
qui	here
qui vicino	near here
vede l'albergo?	do you see the hotel?
lì	there
aperto	open
penso di no	I think not, I don't think so
valuta	currency
subito	immediately, suddenly
dopo	after
sulla sinistra	on the left
sulla destra	on the right

Exercise 3

Make the question you need in the following circumstances, using a sentence on the pattern of: **C'è una banca qui vicino?**

- 1 You are hungry and want something to eat.
- 2 You have a headache and want to buy something for it.
- 3 It's getting late and you realize you are going to have to spend the night in this town.
- 4 You're tired of walking and want to get a bus to your destination.
- 5 You need to do some food shopping.

Language point

Using dove and dov'è 'where, where is'

You may need to look for a specific place, not *a* bank but *the* bank you want to use. You will need to ask **dov'è** 'where is'.

Note:

dove	stress the first syllable	where
dov'è (dove è)	stress on the è	where is

Dialogue 3

Scusi, dov'è il consolato americano?

Our tourist has lost his passport and needs the consulate. He stops another passer-by.

• **Where is the American Consulate?**

TURISTA: Mi scusi, Lei sa dov'è il consolato americano?

PASSANTE: Mi dispiace, non lo so. Ma c'è l'Azienda per il Turismo in Via Mazzini. Provi a chiedere lì.

TURISTA: E dov'è Via Mazzini?

PASSANTE: E' la seconda via a destra. L'Azienda per il Turismo è sulla sinistra.

TURISTA: Grazie. Buongiorno.

PASSANTE: Prego. Buongiorno.

Vocabulary

Lei sa	do you know?
non lo so	I don't know (lit. 'I don't know it')
provi a chiedere	try asking

Language points

Negative sentences

To make a sentence negative, put **non** before the verb:

Jane è americana.	Jane is American.
Jane non è americana.	Jane isn't American.
Piero abita a Milano.	Piero lives in Milan.
Piero non abita a Milano.	Piero doesn't live in Milan.
Mi piace New York.	I like New York.
Non mi piace New York.	I don't like New York.
Capisco.	I understand.
Non capisco.	I don't understand.

In the last dialogue you met **non lo so**. You can say **non so** but Italians usually say:

lo so I know (it)	non lo so I don't know (it)
--------------------------	------------------------------------

So is from **sapere**, an irregular verb.

Note: Do not confuse **no** (which means 'no') and **non** (which is used with a verb to make a negative sentence).

Exercise 4

Vero o falso? Read the following statements and say whether they are true or false.

- 1 New York non è in Irlanda.
- 2 Luciano Pavarotti non è biondo.
- 3 Roma non è una città interessante e bella.
- 4 Il Teatro alla Scala non è a Milano.
- 5 Assisi non è lontano da Perugia.

Which of the following are true for you?

- 6 Non sono americano/a.
- 7 Non abito in Italia.
- 8 Non sono sposato/a.
- 9 Non parlo francese.
- 10 Non lavoro in una banca.
- 11 Non mi piace il fai-da-te.
- 12 Per me, questo esercizio è molto difficile.

Exercise 5

Someone is pestering you with questions. The answer to them all is 'no'. You feel a bit irritated by the onslaught so answer them, stressing the 'no' answer by giving the full sentence in the negative. You may find it helpful to look back to Unit 2 and check the 'you' and 'I' verb endings.

Example: **Lei fuma?**

Answer: **No, non fumo.**

- 1 Lei lavora qui?
- 2 Abita in questa città?
- 3 E' qui in vacanza?
- 4 E' americano/a?
- 5 Parla francese?

Ordinal numbers

You know the numbers 1 to 10 (Unit 1). Here are the corresponding ordinal numbers. The abbreviated way of writing each is given in brackets.

first	primo	(1°)
second	secondo	(2°)
third	terzo	(3°)
fourth	quarto	(4°)
fifth	quinto	(5°)
sixth	sesto	(6°)
seventh	settimo	(7°)
eighth	ottavo	(8°)
ninth	nono	(9°)
tenth	decimo	(10°)

After **decimo**, take off the final vowel from a given number and add: **-esimo**, for example:

twentieth	ventesimo	(20°)
thirtieth	trentesimo	(30°)
forty-ninth	quarantanovesimo	(49°)

Ordinal numbers are adjectives and agree with the noun they refer to:

il primo giorno	the first day
la prima sera	the first evening

Directions for finding places

The general word for 'street' is **strada**. However, when streets are named, they are usually called **via**, e.g. **via Cavour**. **Strada Rosero** would be a name used in a rural area and would indicate where the road *leads to*. Streets are often named after important historical figures, events or even dates. **corso** means a particularly important street, **viale** (m.) a wide, tree-lined street. **una piazza** is a square, **un piazzale** a large square.

Question: Dov'è la Banca Popolare?

è	qui lì	sulla	destra sinistra	it's	here there	on the	right left
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You may be told to take:

la	prima seconda	a	destra sinistra	the	first second	right left
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Often you will be told what you *have to do* (see Unit 1):

Lei deve prendere la seconda sulla sinistra.

You have to take the second on the left.

Lei deve girare a destra.

You have to turn right.

You may hear:

Prenda la quarta a sinistra.

Take the fourth left.

Giri a destra qui e poi è sempre dritto.

Turn right here and then it's straight on.

These last two forms are 'commands' (imperatives), such as **dica**, **scusi**, **provi**. More about them soon.

Another way of posing a question is: **Per la stazione, per favore?**

If you want *a* supermarket, *a* bank etc., that is *any* one rather than a specific one, you say:

C'è un supermercato/una banca qui vicino?

Vocabulary

Here is a summary of vocabulary for giving directions:

dov'è ...	where is ...
per ...	(roughly) what is the way to ...
a destra/sulla destra	to the right, on the right
a sinistra/sulla sinistra	to the left, on the left
poi	then, next
sempre dritto (or dritto)	straight on
in fondo	at the end, at the bottom
dopo (il cinema, il museo ecc.)	after (the cinema, the museum etc.)
prima di (prima della chiesa)	before (before the church)
accanto a (accanto al palazzo)	next to (next to the palace)
dietro	behind
davanti a	in front of
di fronte a	opposite
oltre	beyond
è lontano?	is it far?
vicino	near
è a 100 metri	it's 100 metres (100 yards approx.) away
è a 5 minuti	it's 5 minutes away
a piedi	on foot
in macchina	by car
fino a	as far as
il semaforo	the traffic lights

Hint: When you are given directions, it is a good idea to repeat the main points to the person who gave them, e.g. **seconda a sinistra, poi sulla destra**. In this way you can check you have understood and it also helps you to memorize what was said.

More verbs, present tense singular: verbs with an infinitive ending in -ere

You have already met the verbs ending in **-are**. A second group have an infinitive ending in **-ere**:

vedere (to see)	(io) vedo (tu) vedi (lui) vede (lei)
prendere (to take)	(io) prendo (tu) prendi (lui) prende (lei)
chiedere (to ask)	(io) chiedo (tu) chiedi (lui) chiede (lei)

They differ very little from the **-are** verbs, however the third person singular has **-e** where the first group has **-a**. Other verbs you have met that belong to this group are commonly used only in the third person singular:

piacere	dipendere
piace	dipende

piacere ‘to be pleasing’ is not a regular verb, but few parts of it are used frequently. **Dovere** ‘to have to’ is also an irregular verb but it follows the **-ere** pattern for the present tense singular endings, although the stem (the first part) changes:

devo
devi
deve

One further point about **-ere** verbs. Some have the stress on the first **e** of the infinitive, some on the previous syllable: **vedere** but **prendere**. This has no bearing on any other part of the verb. Where stress is on the antepenultimate syllable, this is given in the Glossary. When in doubt, check in a dictionary where the stress should fall.

Exercise 7

Work out how to explain to an Italian how to get to your home/place of work from the bus stop/railway station/motorway exit (**uscita**).

Example: **L'uscita è 'corso Marconi'. Sempre dritto per 200 metri; al secondo semaforo, a sinistra, e poi la prima sulla destra. La casa è sulla sinistra, il numero 23.**

Exercise 8

Here are some sentences and, shown separately, some verbs. Can you pick the correct verb in the correct form to complete the sentence? Use each verb once only.

**abito abita chiama chiedo chiedere dipende
lavora piace prenda prendi vedi vedo**

- 1 Io non ____ la banca. Dov'è?
- 2 Non so se vengo. ____ dal mio lavoro.
- 3 Devo ____ la strada. Non ____ in questa città e non so dov'è il duomo.
- 4 ____ la terza sulla sinistra e il museo è lì.
- 5 Un attimo. ____ a questo signore se la banca è qui vicino.
- 6 Il mio amico ____ a Milano, proprio in centro.
- 7 Mi ____ molto la fontana. E' bella.
- 8 Questo Palazzo si ____ il Palazzo Pubblico. E' molto antico.
- 9 Carlo ____ al museo di arte moderna. E' un lavoro molto interessante.
- 10 Ecco il bar Roma. Tu ____ Enzo? Deve essere qui. Ah sì. Ciao, Enzo. Cosa ____?

Reading

A Roma

- 1 What is the origin of the name of Palazzo Venezia?
- 2 Why do you think the Museum of Italian Unification is in the Vittoriano?
- 3 Why was the Campidoglio important in Ancient Rome?
- 4 Why do you think the Via dei Fori Imperiali is so called?
- 5 Between which two Piazze does Via del Corso run?

Siamo a Roma. La piazza in primo piano è Piazza Venezia. Sulla destra c'è Palazzo Venezia, in passato residenza degli ambasciatori di Venezia, oggi un museo. Davanti a noi, c'è il Vittoriano, il monumento al re Vittorio Emanuele II, il primo re d'Italia dopo l'unificazione nel 1861. Qui si trova anche l'Altare della Patria e la tomba del Milite Ignoto. All'interno del Vittoriano c'è il Museo del Risorgimento. Oltre questo monumento si trova il Campidoglio, il centro religioso della Roma antica e ancora oggi il cuore della città.

Alla sinistra del Vittoriano c'è Via dei Fori Imperiali e in fondo il Colosseo. A destra e a sinistra di questa via ci sono i ruderi del Foro Romano. Di fronte al Vittoriano, in primo piano, c'è l'inizio della famosa Via del Corso, la strada principale della città. Lunga più di un chilometro, finisce in Piazza del Popolo.



Piazza Venezia and the Monument to Vittorio Emanuele.
Courtesy APT di Roma.

Vocabulary

il re	the king
il Milite Ignoto	the Unknown Soldier
il Risorgimento	the name given to the nineteenth-century movement for Italian unity
i ruderi	ruins

Cultural point

Vittorio Emanuele II was the first king of the united Italy but the second Victor Emanuel of the kingdom of Sardinia. The kingdom, which originally included Savoy, encompassed Piedmont as well as the island of Sardinia, and its capital was Turin. It was the prime mover for the unity of the peninsula, through its Prime Minister, Count Cavour, the romantic patriot, Garibaldi, and Victor Emanuel II.

4 In viaggio

Travelling

In this unit you will learn about:

- Travelling – by train, bus, air
- **ogni** 'every'
- Numbers 11 to 19
- Years: how to say, e.g. 1492, 2005
- Telling the time
- Verbs with infinitives in **-ire** (singular), third group
- Relative pronouns (the man who . . . , the book which . . .)
- Using **proprio** 'exactly'; **un po'/poco** 'a little'
- Impersonal/unspecified **si**

Dialogue 1

Devo andare a Torino

*While in Milan, Angela Smith needs to go to Turin for a day. She enquires at the Milan Central Station (**Milano–Stazione Centrale**) about the journey.*

- 1 What sort of train does the Interregionale seem to be?
- 2 And the Eurostar?
- 3 How much, in total, does Angela's ticket cost?
- 4 What would it have cost in first class?

IMPIEGATO: Buongiorno, dica.

SMITH: Buongiorno. Devo andare a Torino. Posso fare l'andata e il ritorno in una giornata?

IMPIEGATO: Certo, signora. C'è un treno quasi ogni ora e ci mette più o meno due ore. A che ora vuole partire?

- SMITH: Verso le otto.
IMPIEGATO: Allora, c'è un treno che parte alle 8.20. Arriva a Torino alle 10.30.
SMITH: E' un rapido?
IMPIEGATO: No, è un Interregionale. C'è l'Eurostar che parte alle 8.15 che arriva a Torino alle 9.33 ma che naturalmente costa di più. Però l'Eurostar ci mette solo 1 ora e 20 minuti.
SMITH: Benissimo. Prendo quello. E' necessario prenotare per domani?
IMPIEGATO: Sì, è obbligatorio.
SMITH: E per tornare? Vorrei essere a Milano prima delle venti.
IMPIEGATO: C'è un Eurostar ogni ora, alle 14.07, alle 16.15, alle 17.07, e alle 18.15.
SMITH: Perfetto. Prendo quello delle 17.07.
IMPIEGATO: Quello delle 17.07 ferma a Vercelli e Novara e ci mette 10 minuti in più.
SMITH: Va bene. Mi dia un'andata e ritorno per domani.
IMPIEGATO: Prima o seconda classe?
SMITH: Quanto costa?
IMPIEGATO: In prima classe 20 euro all'andata e in seconda 15 euro. Il ritorno costa lo stesso.
SMITH: Preferisco la seconda classe.
IMPIEGATO: Allora, 30 euro in tutto.
SMITH: Va bene.

Vocabulary

andare	to go
posso ...?	can I ...?
in una giornata	in a day
quasi	almost
più o meno	more or less
a che ora vuole partire?	at what time do you want to leave?
verso	at about
quello	that one
tornare	to come back
domani	tomorrow
vorrei ...	I'd like, I should like ...
ferma a Vercelli ...	it stops at Vercelli ...

Language point

ogni 'every'

ogni ora	every hour
giorno	day
dieci minuti	ten minutes

Ogni quanto c'è un treno per Torino?

How often do the trains for Turin run?

(lit. 'every how much?')

Vocabulary

Il treno

l'orario (dei treni)	the (train) timetable
biglietto (di andata e ritorno)	a (return) ticket
andata	outward journey
ritorno	return
biglietteria	ticket office
fare il biglietto	to buy a ticket
dove devo cambiare?	where do I have to change?
arrivo	arrival
partenza	departure
prenotare, prenotazione	to book a seat, booking (sometimes obligatory on fast trains)
binario	track (the platform trains leave from is given as binario ...)
da che binario parte il treno per Verona?	which platform does the train for Verona leave from?
un viaggiatore	a traveller
viaggiare	to travel
il treno è in orario	the train is on time
anticipo	early
ritardo	late
partenza	leaving
arrivo	arriving

Cultural point

Italian Railways are nowadays called Trenitalia, although you will see the old name Ferrovie dello Stato and initials FFSS. It is quite

easy now to check train times and book on line (www.trenitalia.com) and a ticket bought that way is called: **ticketless**, using the English term. Eurostar, Intercity, Interregionale are types of train, in ascending order of the number of stops they make and therefore increased journey times.

Numbers 11 to 19

We can't put it off any longer! You need to learn the remaining numbers, 11 to 19. If necessary, remind yourself of the numbers in Unit 1. The numbers 11 to 19 are perhaps the most difficult for the learner. They divide into two groups according to the way they are formed:

- 11 **undici**
- 12 **dodici**
- 13 **tre**dici
- 14 **quattor**dici
- 15 **quindici**
- 16 **sedici**
- 17 **diciassette**
- 18 **diciotto**
- 19 **diciannove**

You will recognize part of each word as being similar to **dieci** (10) but in the first group that part comes at the end and in the second group at the beginning of the word. Notice too that the stress of the first group falls on the third syllable from the end.

The numbers 11 to 19 can all be turned into ordinals by the addition of **-esimo**, e.g.:

- quattordicesimo**
- diciottesimo**

Exercise 1

Here are some addresses. How would you say the house numbers?

Example: **Via Tiziano 11.**

Answer: **Undici.**

- 1 Corso Vittorio Emanuele 18
- 2 Via Mazzini 17

- 3 Via San Francesco 12
 4 Piazza della Repubblica 19
 5 Corso Cavallotti 16

Exercise 2

Work out how to say these famous dates in history in Italian. *Note:* In Italian you always say: **millenovecento** ..., i.e. 'one thousand nine hundred ...' and not 'nineteen hundred ...'

- | | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 1 1215 | 2 1492 | 3 1789 | 4 1815 |
| 5 1848 | 6 1918 | 7 1946 | 8 2005 |

Telling the time

Che ora è? Che ore sono?

To ask someone 'what's the time?' you can say either **che ora è?** or **che ore sono?**. **ora** means 'hour', and its plural is **ore**.

E' l'una	It's one o'clock
Sono le due	It's two o'clock
Sono le tre	It's three o'clock
... e così via	... and so on

But at 12 noon and 12 midnight respectively:

E' mezzogiorno
E' mezzanotte

For minutes past, you simply use **e**:

Sono le cinque e cinque	It's five past five
dieci	ten
venti	twenty
venticinque	twenty-five

and for minutes to, **meno**:

Sono le sei meno venticinque	It's twenty-five to six
venti	twenty
dieci	ten
cinque	five

For quarters and halves:

**Sono le cinque e un quarto
le cinque e mezzo
le sei meno un quarto**

It's a quarter past five
half past five
a quarter to six

**E' mezzogiorno e un quarto
e mezzo
meno un quarto**

It's a quarter past twelve
half past twelve
a quarter to twelve

When giving the times of trains, flights etc. Italians use the 24-hour clock, which avoids the possibility of misunderstanding:

Il treno parte alle sedici e cinquanta.

The train leaves at 16.50.

Note also that when you are saying 'at 16.50' the **a** ('at') combines with **le** or **l'**:

**Parto all'una
alle due**

I'm leaving at one
at two

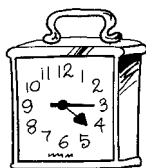
More about this later.

Exercise 3

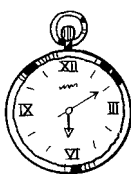
What times are the clocks showing? Use the conversational way of telling the time.

Example: **Sono le dieci e venticinque.**

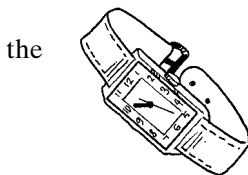
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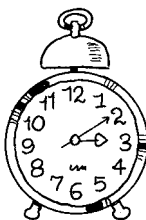
2



3



4



5



Exercise 4

Say at what time you:

- 1 get up
- 2 leave for work
- 3 have lunch
- 4 finish work
- 5 arrive home

Verbs ending in -ire

Angela used **preferisco**. You have already met **capisco**. The third group of verbs in Italian has an infinitive ending in **-ire**. In the present tense, but not in most other tenses, this group of verbs divides into two sub-groups.

(1)	<i>capire</i>	<i>preferire</i>	<i>finire</i>
(io)	capisco	preferisco	finisco
(tu)	capisci	preferisci	finisci
(Lei/lui/lei)	capisce	preferisce	finisce
(2)	<i>partire</i>	<i>dormire</i>	<i>sentire</i>
(io)	parto	dormo	sento
(tu)	parti	dormi	senti
(Lei/lui/lei)	parte	dorme	sente

The second sub-group has the same endings as **-ere** verbs, while the first have an extra syllable: **-isco**. Try to learn, as you go along, which group each type of **-ire** verb belongs to.

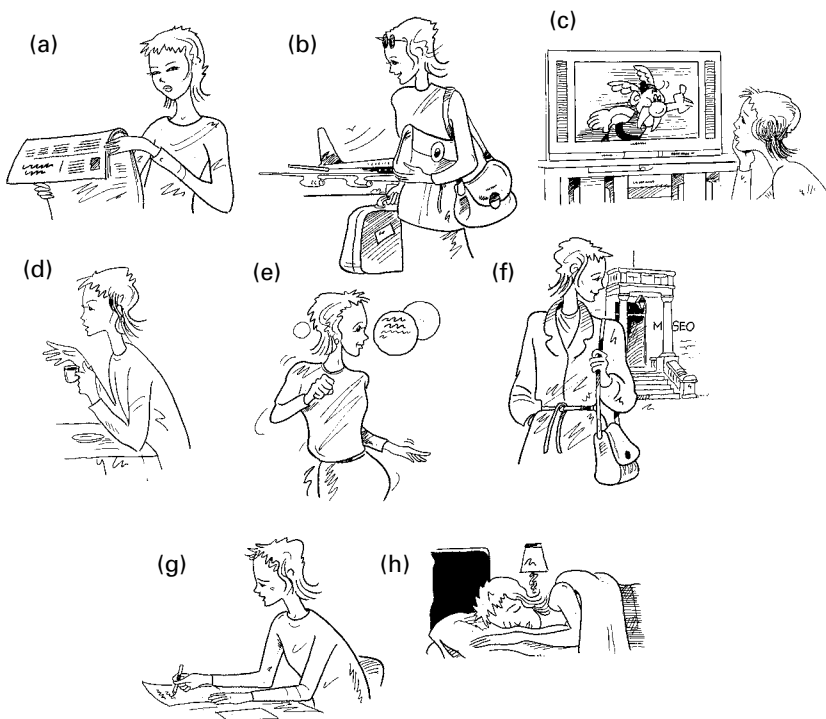
You have now seen the forms for the singular of all regular verbs in Italian. Verb tables often look daunting but study the summary table below carefully and you will see that the differences between the groups are small.

<i>-are</i>	<i>-ere</i>	<i>-ire (1)</i>	<i>-ire (2)</i>
-o	-o	-isco	-o
-i	-i	-isci	-i
-a	-e	-isce	-e

Don't forget, the Italian present can express the meaning of both the English simple present ('I speak') and also the English present continuous ('I am speaking').

Exercise 5

Here are pictures of Carla doing various things. Match each drawing with one of the sentences in the list below.



- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 Carla balla in discoteca | 5 Carla legge il giornale |
| 2 visita un museo | 6 scrive una lettera |
| 3 prende un caffè | 7 parte per le vacanze |
| 4 guarda la TV | 8 dorme |

How would you say *you* were doing each of these actions? You need to change the endings of the verbs to the **io** form.

Example: Ballo in discoteca.

Exercise 6

Giorgio has been telling you about himself. Tell someone else what he said, i.e. rewrite his words so that you are talking about him, changing the endings of the verbs from the 'I' form to the 'he' form.

Example: **Giorgio è pilota.**

Sono (1) pilota. *Abito* (2) a Verona e *lavoro* (3) per una compagnia privata. Spesso *devo* (4) portare gente a Roma o a Bruxelles. Generalmente *parto* (5) da Verona presto e *arrivo* (6) a Roma per le 9. La sera *torno* (7) a Verona e *finisco* (8) di lavorare alle 18 o alle 19. Se non è possibile tornare *dormo* (9) all'albergo, ma *preferisco* (10) tornare a Verona. Ma non *decido* (11) *io*, decide il cliente.

Saying how long something takes

Ci mette is used to say how long it takes:

Il treno ci mette due ore.

The train takes two hours.

Per fare questo, ci metto mezz'ora.

To do this, I take half an hour.

Mettere in other contexts means 'to put' and works like **prendere** in the present tense.

Dialogue 2

Vorrei andare in Piazza Castello

In Torino Angela wants to go to Piazza Castello. It is raining as she gets off the train so she thinks she'll take the bus. She finds a bus information office in the station.

- 1 If Angela takes the number 63, does it take her right to Piazza Castello?
- 2 Where does she have to get off?
- 3 Which bus will take her right into Piazza Castello?

- ANGELA: Buongiorno. Vorrei andare in Piazza Castello. Che autobus devo prendere?
- IMPIEGATO: Può prendere il 4, il 12 o il 63. Scende in Via XX Settembre dietro il duomo. Trova una piccola via che la porta in Piazza Castello.
- ANGELA: Dov'è la fermata?
- IMPIEGATO: E' in Via Sacchi, accanto alla stazione.
- ANGELA: Non c'è un autobus che mi porti proprio in Piazza Castello?
- IMPIEGATO: C'è il 15, che deve prendere in Via XX Settembre. La lascia proprio in Piazza Castello.
- ANGELA: Sembra un po' difficile. E piove. Dove posso trovare un taxi?

Vocabulary

può	you can	scende	you get off
la lascia	it leaves you	sembra un po'	it seems a bit
piove	it's raining	difficile	difficult
trovare	find		

Language points

Using che as an interrogative adjective or pronoun

The word **che** has a number of uses, one of which is to make a question (*interrogative adjective or pronoun*):

Che autobus devo prendere?	Which bus must I take?
Che ora è?	What time is it?
Che cosa devo fare?	What must I do?

Using che as a relative pronoun

Another use is to show the relationship between a noun followed by a phrase and the main part of the sentence (*relative pronoun*):

Trova una piccola via che la porta in Piazza Castello.
 You'll find a little street which takes you into Piazza Castello.

As a relative pronoun (e.g. in the last example), **che** can refer to people or things, and be the subject or object of the clause it introduces. In this it differs from, and is easier than, both English and French.

- People as subject:

L'amica che viene stasera abita proprio in Piazza Castello.

The friend who is coming this evening lives right in Piazza Castello.

- People as object:

Giorgio è una persona che conosco bene.

Giorgio is a person (who) I know well.

- Things as subject:

Tu vedi il taxi che arriva?

Do you see (can you see) the taxi that is arriving?

L'Albergo Londra che è in Via Londra è molto famoso.

The Hotel Londra which is in Via Londra is very famous.

- Things as object:

Il libro che cerco è di un amico.

The book (that) I am looking for belongs to a friend.

Using proprio 'exactly'

This is an adverb meaning 'exactly, really, indeed, right, just'.

Arrivi proprio al momento giusto.

You are arriving (have come) exactly at the right moment.

Abita proprio in centro.

He lives right in the centre.

Sei proprio gentile.

You really are kind.

Using un po' 'a little'

un po' is a very commonly used abbreviation for **un poco** 'a little'.

Vuole un po' di vino?

Would you like a little wine?

Parla italiano?

Do you/does he/she speak Italian?

Un po'

A little

poco without **un** can also be an *adverb*:

Legge poco.

He reads little (i.e. he doesn't read very much).

Dorme poco.

He doesn't sleep very much.

E' poco simpatico.

He's not very nice.

It can also be an *adjective*:

poca gente

few people, not very many people

Reading 1

Come si fa a prendere l'autobus?

- 1 Where do you usually buy bus tickets?**
- 2 Is the cost related to the distance travelled?**
- 3 Why might the foreigner find travelling by bus more pleasant than driving?**

Quando si prende l'autobus in Italia, occorre generalmente acquistare il biglietto prima di salire. Di solito questo si fa dal tabaccaio, dal giornalaio, al bar o in qualsiasi posto dove si vede un cartello che annuncia la vendita dei biglietti. Salendo sull'autobus, occorre obliterare il biglietto con la macchinetta. Nelle città generalmente si paga lo stesso prezzo per qualsiasi percorso, senza badare alla distanza. Però è meglio informarsi sul posto del sistema in vigore. Viaggiare in autobus è un modo simpatico e qualche volta anche divertente per conoscere una città, a contatto con la gente e senza il problema di trovare un parcheggio una volta arrivati a destinazione. E costa relativamente poco. Di solito è più economico acquistare un blocchetto di dieci biglietti che un biglietto solo. Chi sale senza biglietto paga una multa.

Vocabulary

occorre	it is necessary to, you need to	acquistare	to purchase, buy
di solito	usually	prima di salire	before getting on
dal giornalaio	at the newsagent's	dal tabaccaio	at the tobacconist's
un cartello	a sign, a notice	in qualsiasi	in any place
la vendita	the sale	posto	
macchinetta	little machine	salendo	as you get on
senza badare a	regardless of	si paga lo	you pay the same
è meglio	it's better to	stesso prezzo	price
informarsi	find out (inform oneself)	sul posto	on the spot, in the place
qualche volta	sometimes	un modo	a way
una multa	a fine	un parcheggio	a parking place, a car park

Language points

salire/scendere *'to get on/off'*

'To get on' (e.g. a bus) is **salire** and 'to get off' is **scendere**. These verbs are also used to refer to getting into and out of other vehicles. The literal meanings are 'to go up' and 'to go down', respectively. **scendere** is a regular verb, **-ere** type. **salire** is irregular.

Scusi, per il duomo, dove devo scendere?

Excuse me, for the cathedral, where should I get off?

Using **chi**

chi, like **che**, has more than one use. It can mean 'who?' when asking questions:

Chi vuole venire con me?

Who wants to come with me?

Chi è?

Who is it?

It can also be used, as in this passage, to mean 'the person who, those who, anyone who':

chi sale senza biglietto

anyone who gets on without a ticket

This is much used in proverbs. In English we would say ‘he who’:

Chi va piano, va sano e va lontano.

(lit. ‘He who goes slowly, goes safely and a long way.’)

In other words: ‘More haste, less speed.’

It can also mean ‘some . . . others’:

Per andare a Roma c’è chi preferisce l’aereo, chi la propria macchina, chi il treno.

For going to Rome, some prefer to travel by air, others to use their own car and others the train.

Impersonal (unspecified) si

There were a number of examples of this in the last passage. **si** has more than one meaning and a very common and useful one is ‘one’ as in ‘one does such and such’, i.e. in generalizations. In English we often say ‘you’ or ‘they’ instead, or use the passive: e.g. ‘How do you/they do it?’, ‘How is it done?’ This is often called impersonal **si** in grammar books, but it does refer to a person, albeit an undefined, unspecified person.

Come si fa a prendere l’autobus?

How does one go about taking the bus?

Note: You can also say:

Come si fa *per* . . . andare alla stazione?

Can you pick out the other cases of **si** in the text?

Here are some common and useful phrases with **si**:

Come si dice in italiano *useful*?

What is the Italian for *useful*?

(lit. ‘How does one say . . .’)

Come si { **scrive
pronuncia } questa parola?**

How is this word { written?
pronounced?

Qui si parla inglese.

English is spoken here.

Si può parcheggiare qui?

Can one/you park here?

Si mangia bene e si paga poco.

The food is good and it's not expensive. (e.g. of a restaurant)
(lit. 'One eats well and one pays little.')

Using qualsiasi 'any'

qualsiasi means 'any' in the sense of 'it doesn't matter which', 'whichever'.

qualsiasi percorso	any journey
qualsiasi paese	any country
qualsiasi cosa	anything (in positive sentences)

Reading 2 **L'aeroporto**

- 1 Why is travelling by air so easy for English-speaking travellers?**
- 2 In what case are announcements made in English as well as Italian?**

Viaggiare in aereo, per una persona di madre-lingua inglese, è facile. Perché? Perché l'aeroporto è un posto dove si usa molto la lingua inglese. Questo è vero anche per l'aereo. E il personale capisce sempre l'inglese. In genere tutto viene annunciato in inglese e in italiano, soprattutto per i voli diretti verso un paese in cui la lingua principale è l'inglese. Il vocabolario poi non è difficile. Il viaggiatore prende un *volo*; c'è anche un verbo, *volare*. Il volo *parte* da un aeroporto e *arriva* in un altro. Per la *partenza* il viaggiatore deve prima fare il 'check-in', poi deve passare per l'esame elettronico del bagaglio e il *controllo dei passaporti*. Poi va a una precisa *porta* o *uscita*, da dove sale sull'aereo. Esattamente come in tutti gli aeroporti del mondo.

Vocabulary

perché?	why?	un volo	a flight
perché	because	mondo	world
soprattutto	especially, above all		

5 Vorrei comprare/ Quanto costa?

**I'd like to buy/How much does
it cost?**

In this unit you will learn about:

- Shopping for various items, asking how much something costs
- Comparing one thing with another
- 'False friends'
- Asking if you may do something, saying you want to or have to do something
- Saying what you would like, and what you could or ought to do
- **si può?** Asking whether something is possible
- The plurals of nouns, adjectives and definite articles
- **questo e quello** 'this and that'
- The plural subject and strong pronouns ('we, they')
- The plurals of regular verbs and some irregular ones

Dialogue 1

Vorrei una guida

Joe has just arrived in Florence and he wants to start exploring, but first he needs a guidebook and a good map. He goes into a likely-looking bookshop.

1 What type of guidebook does Joe choose?

2 Is he offered a choice of maps?

COMMESSA: Buongiorno, signore. Desidera?

JOE: Vorrei una guida della città.

- COMMESSA: In italiano o in inglese?
JOE: Preferisco l'inglese, se è possibile.
COMMESSA: Ecco. C'è questa, illustrata. E' molto bella. E c'è anche questa, tascabile. E' più pratica, forse.
JOE: Posso vedere? Infatti, ha ragione. La guida piccola è più pratica. Quanto costa?
COMMESSA: 12 euro, signore.
JOE: Va bene. Prendo questa.
COMMESSA: Altro, signore?
JOE: Sì. Vorrei anche una pianta della città.
COMMESSA: Per il momento abbiamo solo questa. Guardi pure. Secondo me, è la migliore.
JOE: E' molto chiara. La prendo. Quant'è?
COMMESSA: 17 euro in tutto. La pianta costa 5 euro.
JOE: Ecco 20 euro.
COMMESSA: 18, 19, 20, ecco ... Grazie, signore. ArrivederLa. Buongiorno.
JOE: Buongiorno.



Santa Maria Novella, Florence; courtesy of Suzanne Cousin.
This church, near the San Lorenzo market, also gives the main rail station its name.

Vocabulary notes

vorrei 'I'd like'. Polite way of asking for something in a shop – see below.

tascabile lit. 'pocketable'. **una tasca** means 'a pocket'.

posso vedere? 'may I see?' (see below)

ha ragione 'you're right'

abbiamo 'we have'

guardi pure 'please have a look/please do have a look'

altro? 'anything else?'

la prendo 'I'll take it', lit. 'I take it' (present tense)

quant'è? (quanto è) 'how much does it come to in total?', 'how much is it?' – usually referring to all the items bought

Language points

The comparative

You have met **più o meno** 'more or less'. To compare two people or things, you use **più**:

questa guida è più pratica	this guidebook is more practical
piccola	smaller
interessante	more interesting

In Italian few words actually change in the comparative form; most are simply preceded by **più**. Exceptions are:

migliore	better	maggiore	bigger
peggiore	worse	minore	smaller

But you can also say: **più buono**, **più cattivo**, **più grande** and **più piccolo**. Purists prefer the first forms, but the second are frequently heard.

To say things from the other point of view, you use **meno** 'less':

Questo libro è meno importante.

This book is not so important (less important).

Vorrei una guida meno grande.

I'd like a smaller guidebook.

To compare one thing with another, in phrases such as ‘smaller than, more interesting than’, use **di**:

Questo libro è più interessante di quello.

Firenze è più piccola di Roma.

Firenze è meno grande di Roma.

Il più grande, la più grande means ‘the biggest’:

Di tutte le città italiane, Roma è la più grande.

Questo ristorante è caro, ma secondo me è il migliore della città.

Questa cartolina è la più bella di tutte.

Note:

la più bella	}	di	the most beautiful	}	in
il migliore			the best		

However, **più** can also mean ‘plus’ and **meno** can mean ‘minus’:

Due più due fa quattro $2 + 2 = 4$

Quattro meno due fa due $4 - 2 = 2$

Exercise 1

Vero o falso? Say if the following statements are true or false.

- 1 L'Italia è più grande del Canada.
- 2 Un albergo è più caro di un campeggio.
- 3 L'Everest è più alto dell'Etna.
- 4 L'elefante è più feroce del leone.
- 5 Napoli è più tranquilla di Venezia.

'False friends'

infatti is frequently used by Italians when agreeing with something someone has said. It means ‘indeed’ rather than ‘in fact’, which is **in effetti, in realtà**. You have seen that Italian is highly ‘guessable’. Many Italian words resemble English words. Language professionals refer to such words as *cognates*. Cognates make the learner’s task easier. However, there are some cases where the similarity is misleading. These words are sometimes called ‘false friends’. One false friend you have already met is **simpatico**, which does not mean quite the same as ‘sympathetic’ in English. If a person

is **simpatico**, you find him congenial, likeable but he does not necessarily feel sympathy for you.

In the cases of both of these words, it is not disastrous if you get the word wrong. Indeed it is often more a laughing matter and everyone will probably enjoy it. For instance Italians use **suggestivo** to mean 'beautiful' and it has no hint of the meaning given to 'suggestive' in English, hence Italian tourist brochures may refer to 'suggestive views'. But it makes all the difference to your Italian if you pay attention to the points where the two languages differ and try to get things right.

Common false friends

accidenti!	good heavens!	un incidente	an accident
attualmente	at present	veramente	actually
bravo	good, clever (at something)	coraggioso	brave
conferenza	lecture	congresso	conference
educato	polite	lettura	reading
fattoria	farm	colto, istruito	educated
ginnasio	high school	fabbrica	factory
largo	wide	palestra	gymnasium
libreria	bookshop	grande	large
morbido	soft	biblioteca	library
occorrere	be necessary	malsano, morboso	morbid
sensibile	sensitive	succedere	happen, occur
		senso	sensible

Exercise 2

What does the following short paragraph mean? Watch out for the false friends!

Alberto è un ragazzo molto educato. Attualmente frequenta il ginnasio. E' uno studente molto bravo. Gli piace la lettura e va spesso nelle librerie a guardare e comprare libri.

Asking if you may do something, saying you want to or have to do something

The word **posso ...?** means 'can I, may I ...?'. You first met it in Unit 4. **posso**, like **devo**, is part of an irregular verb and one

that is just as useful. Indeed there is a trio: **dovere** 'to have to', **potere** 'to be able to' and **volere** 'to want', which, combined with an infinitive, enable you to say a lot of useful things. You have already met the present of **dovere** (singular). Here are the other two and **dovere** too to help you:

<i>potere</i>	<i>volere</i>	<i>dovere</i>
posso	voglio	devo
puoi	vuoi	devi
può	vuole	deve

You can now make combinations. Here are a few:

posso	}	{	parlare
			finire
voglio			partire
			andare
devo	}	{	lavorare
			giocare
e così via			(and so on)

You can now ask other people if they are able, willing or have to do something.

Formal

Può portare questo per me?

Can you carry this for me?

Vuole andare a Firenze domani?

Do you want to go to Florence tomorrow?

Deve veramente partire? Mi dispiace.

Do you really have to leave? I'm sorry.

Informal

Puoi finire questo per me?

Can you finish this for me?

Vuoi giocare a tennis?

Do you want to play tennis?

Devi andare a Roma?

Do you have to go to Rome?

Saying what you'd like, and what you could or ought to do

When you are requesting something, in a shop for instance, it is more courteous to say **vorrei** 'I'd like' than **voglio** 'I want'. **vorrei** is the first person singular 'I' form of a different part of the verb called the *conditional*. We shall look at the conditional in detail in Unit 15. Also useful are two other first person singular conditionals:

potrei	I could
dovrei	I ought to

Dovrei andare a Roma domani, potrei partire con il treno delle 7.00, ma vorrei aspettare la telefonata di Giorgio prima di decidere.

I ought to go to Rome tomorrow, I could leave on the 7 a.m. train but I should like to wait for Giorgio's phone call before deciding.

si può? Asking whether something is possible

You saw in Unit 3 that you can use this to ask if something is possible. And of course you can use it to say it is impossible:

Si può prenotare un posto al cinema per questo film?

No, signore, mi dispiace, non si può.

Can one book a seat in the cinema for this film?

I'm sorry, Sir, it is not possible.

Exercise 3

Pair the sentences in the first group below with logical follow-ups from those in the second group.

- 1 Vado a Parigi, ma non parlo francese.
- 2 Non mi piace la pizza.
- 3 Potrei prenotare due posti per il film stasera?
- 4 Andiamo in questa libreria.
- 5 Sono stanco.

- a Mi dispiace, signore, ma non si può.
- b Dovrei studiare la lingua.

- c Vorrei andare a dormire.
- d Potrei prendere gli spaghetti alla bolognese?
- e Vorrei comprare una guida della città.

Exercise 4

How would you say the following in Italian?

- 1 I want to go to Rome.
- 2 I'm sorry, I can't go to Rome.
- 3 May I see the book?
- 4 Can you play tennis tomorrow?
Sorry, I can't. I have to go to Milan.
- 5 I don't want to leave tomorrow.
- 6 Is it possible to leave for Rome tonight?
I'm sorry, it's not possible.
- 7 I'd like a beer.
- 8 Is it possible to pay by credit card?
(**pagare con la carta di credito**)
- 9 Can you (people generally) see Etna from here?

Using secondo me

This means 'according to me' but is a very useful way of expressing the idea 'in my opinion, I think that ...'. It can be adapted:

secondo	me
	te
	lui
	lei
	Paolo

Dialogue 2

Cinque cartoline per favore

Joe intends to send postcards to friends back home. He goes into a Tabaccheria, which has some attractive displays of cards.

- 1 How many postcards does Joe buy?
- 2 Which country does he plan to send them to?

- TABACCAIO: Dica.
 JOE: Posso vedere le cartoline?
 TABACCAIO: Certo, faccia pure.
 JOE: Quanto costano?
 TABACCAIO: Queste qui, normali, costano 40 centesimi l'una. Le grandi costano 55 l'una.
 JOE: Allora, prendo cinque di quelle normali e cinque grandi. Sono molto belle, le grandi, ma un po' care.
 TABACCAIO: Sì, sono bellissime, ma se deve scrivere a molte persone . . . Allora, sono 4 euro e 75 in tutto. Vuole anche i francobolli?
 JOE: Sì, mi dia dieci francobolli per gli Stati Uniti.
 TABACCAIO: Via aerea?
 JOE: Sì, grazie.
 TABACCAIO: Metto i francobolli qui nella busta con le cartoline. Le do anche dieci etichette 'via aerea'. Desidera altro?
 JOE: No, grazie. Quant'è?

Cultural point

In Italy tobacco and cigarettes come under a state monopoly and are therefore sold through licensed outlets. This explains why tobacconists also sell stamps (and, at one time, salt, which was also under a state monopoly). The post office also sells stamps, of course, along with other functions. A letter or postcard going outside Europe will need to be sent via aerea 'by air'. For mail within Italy and Europe a relatively new service: *prioritaria*, for which you pay extra, seems to get letters to their destinations quickly, in a way that used to be unknown in Italy.

Language points

Plurals of nouns

<i>Singular ending</i>	<i>Plural ending</i>
-o (m.)	-i
-a (f.)	-e
-e (m. and f.)	-i

Examples

un francobollo	dieci francobolli
un palazzo	due palazzi
una cartolina	cinque cartoline
una fontana	tre fontane
uno studente	cento studenti
una torre	due torri

Exception

Monosyllabic nouns and nouns ending in a consonant or a stressed vowel do not change in the plural:

due bar
tre computer
dieci caffè

Plurals of adjectives

Adjectives form their plurals in the same way:

<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
americano	americani
bello	belli
americana	americane
bella	belle
inglese	inglesi
interessante	interessanti

So we have:

un signore americano
due signori americani

un libro interessante
due libri interessanti

Exercise 5

The bar is very busy and the barman is working fast. But either he is flustered or he is not hearing properly. He repeats the orders to the customers, but in each case he gets it wrong. Be the customers and correct him as indicated.

Example: **Un vino rosso, vero?** No, two ____.

You say: **No, due vini rossi.**

- 1 Un caffè, vero? 'No, three ____.'
- 2 Un'aranciata, vero? 'No, four ____.'
- 3 Una birra, vero? 'No, five ____.'
- 4 Un'acqua minerale, vero? 'No, six ____.'
- 5 Una spremuta di arancia, vero? 'No, seven ____.'
- 6 Un cappuccino, vero? 'No, eight ____.'

(to customer number seven, as the barman turns away)

Oh, questo barista è decisamente strano.

Plurals of definite articles

	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
Feminine	la	le
	l'	le
Masculine	il	i
	l'	gli
	lo	gli

Examples

la strada	le strade
l'acqua	le acque
il francobollo	i francobolli
l'americano	gli americani
lo studente	gli studenti

Note: (1) **lo stato** –means 'the state' and hence we have **gli Stati Uniti d'America**. (2) **le**, the feminine plural article, is not shortened when the next word starts with a vowel.

Exercise 6

Here are some nouns, sometimes with adjectives describing them. What would be the correct word for 'the' to use with each one?

Example: _____ **pianta tascabile**

Answer: **la pianta tascabile**

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 _____ albergo caro | 6 _____ studente americano |
| 2 _____ città tranquilla | 7 _____ uffici pubblici |
| 3 _____ ragazzi educati | 8 _____ monumento importante |
| 4 _____ cartoline grandi | 9 _____ scontrini |
| 5 _____ francobolli italiani | 10 _____ città italiane |

Using questo/quello

These may be used as an adjective, with a noun, or as a pronoun, standing for a noun.

Prendo questo. (pr.)

I'll have this one (referring to a masculine noun).

Mi piace quella fontana. (adj.)

I like that fountain.

– **Vuoi comprare questa cartolina?** (adj.)

– **No, preferisco quella.** (pr.)

– Do you want to buy this postcard?

– No, I prefer that one.

Questo (pr.) **è più grande; quello** (pr.) **è più interessante.**

This one is bigger; that one is more interesting.

quello, when used in front of a noun, has forms like those of the definite article:

il palazzo	quel palazzo	i palazzi	quei palazzi
l'albergo	quell'albergo	gli alberghi	quegli alberghi
lo stato	quello stato	gli stati	quegli stati
la fontana	quella fontana	le fontane	quelle fontane
l'acqua	quell'acqua	le acque	quelle acque

The changes are to do with sound and the smooth flow of speech from the tongue; the forms are those that flow for Italian. Say them to yourself.

Exercise 7

Look back at Exercise 6. Instead of 'the' in each case, what would you put for 'that/those'?

Plural subject pronouns

noi we
voi you (more than one person)
loro they

Don't forget that more often than not Italians omit the subject pronoun. However, these pronouns, unlike the singular ones (see Unit 1), can also be used after a preposition ('with, in, from'); and with **secondo**:

Noi siamo con loro.	We are with them.
Parte con voi?	Is he leaving with you?
Vuole venire con noi.	He wants to come with us.
secondo loro	in their opinion

In other words, they are also the *strong pronouns*.

Plurals of regular verbs

<i>-are</i>	<i>-ere</i>	<i>-ire</i>	
-iamo	-iamo	-iamo	
-ate	-ete	-ite	
-ano	-ono	-ono/iscono	

<i>parlare</i>	<i>vedere</i>	<i>partire</i>	<i>finire</i>
parliamo	vediamo	partiamo	finiamo
parlate	vedete	partite	finite
parlano	vedono	partono	finiscono

Look closely: the differences are small. For all verbs, the **noi** form is **-iamo**. For **voi**, the distinguishing or characteristic vowel of the infinitive appears: **-ate**, **-ete**, **-ite**. For the **loro** form, the **-are** verbs have **-ano**, the others **-ono**. Also for the **loro** form, the stress moves

from the penultimate syllable to the antepenultimate. The stressed vowel is indicated above by the underlining. Note also, that verbs like **finire** have the extra **-isc-** only in the third person in the plural.

Exercise 8

How would you complete the following sentences in Italian? We give you the verb to use. Don't forget to leave out the pronoun ('we, you' etc.).

- 1 (We prefer) Roma a New York. (**preferire** – it works like **finire**)
- 2 (We arrive) a casa alle sei e mezzo. (**arrivare**)
- 3 (They are buying) una guida di Roma. (**comprare**)
4. Gianni e Carlo, (do you understand) l'inglese? (**capire**)
- 5 Anna e Giorgio (are leaving) alle otto. (**partire**)
- 6 Gli studenti (are having) un caffè. (**prendere**)

Using quanto costa?

Now you probably understand why the question is sometimes **quanto costa?** and sometimes **quanto costano?**. **costare** is an **-are** verb, so:

Quanto costa?

How much does it cost?

Quanto costano?

How much do they cost?

quant'è? or **quanto fa?** are usually used to enquire about the total cost: 'how much does it come to?'.

Plurals of irregular verbs

<i>essere</i>	<i>avere</i>	<i>potere</i>	<i>dovere</i>	<i>volere</i>
siamo	abbiamo	possiamo	dobbiamo	vogliamo
siete	avete	potete	dovete	volete
sono	hanno	possono	devono	vogliono

As you study these you will realize that, for the most part, the irregularities are sound changes in the 'root' of the verb, not in the endings.

Exercise 9

Here are two short paragraphs. Most of the verbs have been left in the infinitive. Can you write down the correct form in each case?

- (a) Mio marito ed io (1 andare) in discoteca questa sera. Generalmente la sera (2 guardare) la TV, (3 leggere) o (4 invitare) amici. Ma questa sera (5 volere) cambiare.
- (b) Gli Italiani (1 lavorare) molto. Generalmente (2 cominciare) a lavorare alle 7.30, alle 8.00 o alle 8.30. A mezzogiorno molti (3 tornare) a casa per mangiare, altri (4 mangiare) in città. (5 Finire) di lavorare alle 6.00 o alle 7.00 di sera. Se (6 volere) andare al cinema o a teatro (7 dovere) mangiare rapidamente. Il teatro comincia alle 9.00.

molti	many people
altri	others, other people
se	if

Reading

Il mercato in Italia

- 1 Why is it easy to visit a market in Italy?**
- 2 Why are the restaurants and bars full on market day?**

Per lo straniero in Italia, un divertimento e un piacere è la visita al mercato locale. Ogni paese ha un mercato almeno una volta alla settimana e questo è vero anche nelle grandi città dove ci sono mercati di quartiere. Il turista ammira la frutta e la verdura: tutto è sempre fresco e disposto con arte per attirare il cliente. Spesso ci sono contadini che vengono dalla campagna con i loro prodotti: uova, frutta e verdura, noci, funghi, dipende dalla stagione. Generalmente c'è anche un venditore di formaggi, una bancarella di pesce e spesso un macellaio che vende la carne. In più ci sono vestiti, articoli da cucina, scarpe e sandali, borse, biancheria da casa, un po' di tutto, insomma. Il mercato è anche un luogo di incontro per la gente del paese e della campagna circostante. I bar, i ristoranti e le strade sono pieni di persone che chiacchierano con animazione.

Vocabulary

lo straniero	the foreigner	piacere	pleasure
un divertimento	entertainment	almeno	at least
la verdura	vegetables	attirare	to attract
contadini	peasants, farmers, country people	uova	eggs
stagione	season	nocci	walnuts
pesce	fish	formaggi	cheeses
vestiti	clothes	macellaio	butcher
scarpe	shoes	cucina	kitchen, cooking
borse	bags, handbags	biancheria	household
chiacchierare	to chat, chatter	da casa	linen

Exercise 10

Going over and revising what you have learned is a good way of fixing it more securely in your mind. If you haven't been doing this, try reviewing Unit 1 and perhaps further units. You should find that things that seemed difficult or strange at first have become clearer.

6 Appuntamenti

Engagements

In this unit you will learn about:

- Making appointments
- Hours, days, weeks, months, seasons, years and the date
- Using the telephone and mobile phones
- Prepositions: **a** and other prepositions + definite article; prepositions generally
- Reflexive and reciprocal verbs ('to enjoy oneself', 'to speak to each other')
- More irregular verbs
- Telling people to do something – the imperative

Dialogue 1

Vorrei parlare con il signor Rossi

Angela Smith calls signor Rossi to arrange a meeting next week to discuss their new project.

- 1 When would Mrs Smith like to have a meeting with Mr Rossi?**
- 2 After agreeing to the meeting, what suggestion does Mr Rossi make to Mrs Smith?**

SMITH: Pronto, ditta Rossi?

SEGRETARIA: Sì, buongiorno. Desidera?

SMITH: Vorrei parlare con il signor Rossi.

SEGRETARIA: Chi parla?

SMITH: Sono Angela Smith.

SEGRETARIA: Ah, buongiorno signora Smith. Un attimo, per favore. Le passo subito il signor Rossi.

- ROSSI: Pronto. Buongiorno, signora, come va?
 SMITH: Bene grazie, e Lei? Senta, vengo in Italia la settimana prossima. Possiamo vederci per parlare del nuovo progetto?
 ROSSI: Buona idea. Quando Le va bene?
 SMITH: Martedì devo andare a Torino. Suggerisco mercoledì alle nove. Va bene?
 ROSSI: Sì, anche per me va bene. Mercoledì, 17 giugno.
 SMITH: Giusto.
 ROSSI: E mercoledì sera, se Lei è libera, venga a cena con me e mia moglie.
 SMITH: Grazie, è molto gentile. Accetto con piacere. Arrivederci alla settimana prossima.

ditta company, firm
cena supper, evening meal



Language points

Hours, days, weeks, months, years

You should be able to work out what these mean:

un secondo	60 secondi	= un minuto
un minuto	60 minuti	= un'ora
un'ora	24 ore	= un giorno
un giorno	7 giorni	= una settimana

una settimana	4 settimane	=	un mese
un mese	12 mesi	=	un anno
un anno			

Do you remember how to say ‘wait a moment’ (Unit 1)?

un attimo

or often

attenda/aspetti un attimo

Vocabulary

Here are some more words related to days, months and years.

oggi	today
ieri	yesterday
l'altro ieri	the day before yesterday
domani	tomorrow
dopodomani	the day after tomorrow
la settimana prossima	next week
la settimana scorsa	last week
mattino, mattina	morning (both masculine and feminine forms exist – use either)
pomeriggio	afternoon
ogni giorno	daily (adv.)
quotidiano	daily (adj.); also ‘daily newspaper’ (as noun)
ogni settimana	weekly
ogni mese	monthly
il giorno dopo	the day after
il giorno prima	the day before
l'indomani	the next day (the day after the one being talked about, usually in the past)
quindici giorni, due settimane	a fortnight

Do you remember the words for ‘evening’ and ‘night’?

Exercise 1

Using the words given above, how do you think you might say the following? Don’t forget, **mese** and **anno** are masculine.

- 1 next month
- 2 last month

- 3 next year
- 4 last year
- 5 annually

Can you guess how you might say:

- 6 tomorrow morning
- 7 yesterday afternoon

Note: 'This morning', 'this evening' and 'tonight' are usually **stamatina**, **stasera** and **stanotte** respectively, i.e. **questa** is abbreviated to **sta**. 'This afternoon' is **questo pomeriggio** or **oggi pomeriggio**.

i giorni della settimana

The days of the week:

lunedì	venerdì
martedì	sabato
mercoledì	domenica
giovedì	

Note: All have irregular stress and are written without capital letters. All are masculine, except **la domenica**.

arrivo lunedì	I arrive/am arriving on Monday
arrivo il lunedì	I arrive on Mondays (regularly)
a sabato	see you on Saturday
a domani	see you tomorrow
a stasera	see you this evening
alla settimana prossima	see you next week

i mesi dell'anno

The months of the year:

gennaio	maggio	settembre
febbraio	giugno	ottobre
marzo	luglio	novembre
aprile	agosto	dicembre

Again, no capital letters are used and all are masculine.

When giving the date you say:

il primo dicembre	il due dicembre
l'otto dicembre	il trentun dicembre

i.e. you use the ordinal for 'the first' only. Note also that **trentun** works like **un**, as do other numbers ending in **uno**.

There is more than one way of asking what the date is:

Qual è la data (di) oggi?

What's the date today?

Oggi è il venti aprile.

Today is the twentieth of April.

di is optional. Or, when you know the month but are not sure of the day:

Quanti ne abbiamo oggi?

What's the date today?

Oggi ne abbiamo 20.

It's the 20th.

Che giorno è oggi?

What day is it today?

'On' with a date is omitted:

Arrivo il diciassette giugno.

I'm arriving on the seventeenth of June.

That is the usual word order; the number is *not* put after the month. And when abbreviating, the order is the European one:

03.11.04 = **il tre novembre 2004**

To say simply 'in July' you can use either **a** or **in**:

Mark, il mio amico inglese, viene in Italia a luglio.

Mark, my English friend, is coming to Italy in July.

Exercise 2

Say these dates aloud in Italian and then write them down.

1 1 May

4 11 June

2 25 December

5* 25 April

3 14 July

6* 20 September

7 Work out the date of your own birthday, **compleanno**.

* These two dates are often used for street names. They mark respectively the liberation of Italy at the end of the Second World War; and the date in 1870 when the Papal States fell to the troops of the then recently unified Italian state, thus completing it.

le quattro stagioni

Here are the four seasons:

l'inverno la primavera l'estate (f.) l'autunno

You say: **in inverno, in primavera, in estate, in autunno**. With **inverno** and **estate**, **di** can also be used.

al telefono *Using the telephone*

Vocabulary

telefonare a una persona	to telephone someone
chiamare una persona	to call someone
carta/scheda telefonica	telephone card
una cabina telefonica	telephone box
pronto	hello (pronto also means 'ready')
chi parla?	who is calling/speaking?
con chi parlo?	who am I talking to? who's speaking?
sono Giorgio	(this is) Giorgio speaking
c'è Carla?	is Carla there/available?
sì, c'è/no, non c'è	yes, she's here/no, she's not here
teleselezione	direct dialling
prefisso	area (or country) code (see note below)
centralino	switchboard
interno	extension
attenda (resti) in linea	hold the line
le passo ...	I'm putting you through to ...
mi sente?	can you hear me?
è caduta la linea	I (we)'ve been/were cut off
scusi, ho sbagliato numero	I'm sorry, I've dialled the wrong number
numero verde	freephone number (starts with 167)
segreteria telefonica	telephone answering machine
un abbonato	subscriber
un elenco telefonico	telephone directory

Note: Italian area codes must be included even when you dial from *within* that area. When dialling from outside Italy, do *not* omit the 0 of the area code. So in Milan, calling a Milan number, you dial the area code 02 and then the number. Calling from outside Italy, you dial 00 39 (code for Italy) 02 and then the number.

Italians vary in how they say telephone numbers. It is usual to say:

nove tre sei sette uno cinque sei 9367156

but some people group the numbers:

novantatrè, sessantasette, quindici, sei

We advise the first system.

The dialling tone in Italy is a short tone followed by a longer tone. When the number is ringing you hear a long tone, repeated. If the number is engaged you get a repeated short tone.

Exercise 3

Look at the information below from an Italian telephone directory and say which number you would call if:

- 1 You saw a building on fire.
- 2 You saw someone collapse in the street.
- 3 You saw a bridge collapse.
- 4 Your house had been broken into.
- 5 You were a child with a problem you couldn't handle and no one to turn to about it.

NUMERI DI EMERGENZA

Soccorso pubblico di emergenza	113
Carabinieri – pronto intervento	112
Vigili del fuoco – pronto intervento	115
Soccorso stradale	803.116
Emergenza sanitaria	118
Pronto soccorso autoambulanze	118
Telefono azzurro – Linea gratuita per i bambini	1.96.96

Using mobile phones, il telefonino/il cellulare

un sms

(un esse emme esse)

a text message

(from the English: Short Message Service); also called **un messaggino (telefonico)**

The **telefonino** quickly became widely popular in Italy. It has been argued that it is another means by which the usually tight-knit Italian family keeps a check on its members!

Text messaging, however, does not seem to have developed the same lively special language as it has in English. Perhaps Italian lends itself less to creative abbreviation. The most usual thing is to eliminate the vowels in words, thus **non sono libero** becomes **nn sn libero**. For example:

che	often becomes	ke			
chi	often becomes	ki	so	ki 6	= chi sei?
per	becomes	x	so	xke	= perché
comunque	becomes	cmq			

This is particularly popular among teenagers (who also abbreviate **messaggino** to **mess** or **mex**), but rather frowned on by the generation immediately preceding them – e.g. those in their twenties. Older generations are often completely unaware of the practice. It is the teenagers too who use messages such as:

TVB = ti voglio bene

I love you

TVTB = ti voglio tanto bene

I love you so much

TAT = ti amo tanto

I love you

These are perhaps similar to SWALK in English and of course precede the mobile phone. However, Italian is a language of long words and suppressing some of the vowels when you text can save time!

Dialogue 2

Andiamo al cinema

Alberto telephones Marisa to ask her to go to the cinema with him.

1 Which days can Alberto not manage?

2 Where do they decide to meet?

ALBERTO: Pronto. Casa Rossini? C'è Marisa?

MARISA: Sì, sono io. Chi parla?

- ALBERTO: Ciao, Marisa. Sono Alberto. Senti, danno quel nuovo film al Lux la settimana prossima. Sai, il film che ha avuto il Leone d'oro al Festival di Venezia. Che dici? Andiamo a vederlo?
- MARISA: Sì, volentieri. Quando?
- ALBERTO: Lunedì non posso perché ho una riunione. Va bene martedì?
- MARISA: Mi dispiace, faccio sempre aerobica il martedì.
- ALBERTO: E io il mercoledì gioco sempre a tennis con Raffaele. Giovedì ti va bene?
- MARISA: Giovedì, vediamo un attimo. Il 10, vero?
- ALBERTO: Sì, il 10 ottobre.
- MARISA: (*consulting her diary*) Sì, sono libera. Per me va benissimo giovedì. Dove ci troviamo?
- ALBERTO: Andiamo a mangiare la pizza prima? Ti vengo a prendere alle 7.00.
- MARISA: Perfetto. A giovedì allora. Ciao.
- ALBERTO: Ciao, a giovedì.

Language points

Prepositions

Prepositions with the definite article

You have now met a number of examples and it is time to give you the whole picture. The spelling reflects the way **a** combines with the definite article in speech:

a + il	→	al	al supermercato
a + l' (m.)	→	all'	all'aeroporto
a + lo	→	allo	allo stadio
a + la	→	alla	alla stazione
a + l' (f.)	→	all'	all'entrata
a + i	→	ai	ai negozi
a + gli	→	agli	agli scavi
a + le	→	alle	alle casse

gli scavi excavations (archaeological) **la cassa** till, cash desk

Look back to **quel** in Unit 5. It works the same way.

The same thing happens with four other common, short prepositions: **da**, **su**, **in** and **di**. The following examples are taken from earlier units:

un panorama *sulla* valle
salire *sull'*autobus
***dal* tabaccaio**

***sulla* destra, *sulla* sinistra**
informarsi *sul* posto
***dal* giornalaio**

In and **di** change when they combine with the article:

in + il → nel
di + il → del

metto i francobolli *nella* busta
i mesi *dell'*anno
i giorni *della* settimana
prima *della* partenza
una guida *della* città

These forms are called *articulated prepositions*. The full table can be found in the Grammar section at the end of the book.

Warning: These very common prepositions (**a**, **di**, **da**, **in**, **su**) should be handled with care. They are arguably the trickiest thing to learn to use correctly in Italian. Nonetheless, you should not be too inhibited by this warning, as a mistake in a preposition does not usually obscure your meaning.

For example, Italian uses **a** to mean 'to' or 'in' when talking about towns and cities and **in** when talking about countries, regions etc. Direction or place (*going to* or *being in*) is indicated in the verb.

Abito	a Roma in Italia	I live in Rome in Italy
Devo andare	a Roma in Italia	I have to go to Rome to Italy

Note: You use the article as well as **in** with countries that are plural:

Devo andare negli Stati Uniti
nei Paesi Bassi (Netherlands)
nelle Antille (West Indies)

It makes sense to learn usages as you go along. For instance **a** can mean 'to', 'in', 'at', or even 'on' in some cases:

Andiamo al cinema	Let's go to the cinema
Siamo al cinema	We are at the cinema
Abita a Roma	He lives in Rome
Marco è al telefono	Marco's on the phone

Another tricky preposition is **da**: **da** can mean 'at the house/ establishment of'. For example, **dal tabaccaio** means 'at the tobacconist's' (cf. French 'chez').

Fra and **tra** are interchangeable and mean 'among, between, through', and with an expression of time, 'in ...'s time'.

fra Milano e Genova	between Milan and Genoa
fra un'ora	in an hour's time

Other common prepositions

Other common prepositions are listed below. There are fewer idiomatic uses with these.

con	with	senza (di)	without
per	for, through, by	attraverso	across, through
contro (di)	against	dietro (di)	behind
davanti a	in front of	accanto a	beside, next to
di fronte a	opposite	in fondo a	at the bottom of
sopra (di)	above	oltre	beyond
in mezzo a	in the middle of	dopo (di)	after
prima di	before	entro*	by (+ point in time)

* **Finiamo entro giovedì** 'We'll finish by Thursday'

Where **(di)** is indicated above, **di** is used before a pronoun, for example:

senza di lui	without him
contro di me	against me

Exercise 4

The following information comes from the brochure of a gymnasium. Complete it by putting articulated prepositions in the blanks. We indicate which preposition you should use (e.g. **su**) but leave you to work out how it combines with the definite article. *Note*: **salute** is feminine. You should be able to work out the gender of the other nouns.

SERVIZI OFFERTI

Biblioteca (su) ____ salute e (su) ____ sport

Ampio parcheggio

La possibilità (in) ____ bella stagione di allenarsi

(a) ____ aperto tra il verde

Orario:

(da) ____ lunedì (a) ____ venerdì (da) ____

ore 9.00 (a) ____ ore 21.15

il sabato (da) ____ ore 10.00 (a) ____ ore 12.30

salute

health

ampio parcheggio

large car park

allenarsi

to train, to work out

And this is from an advertising brochure for a self-service restaurant:

Per il pranzo (in) ____ corso (di) ____ intervallo di
 lavoro, per la cena che segue (a) ____ shopping, per
 ritrovarsi con gli amici prima (di) ____ spettacolo in
 una sala (di) ____ centro, per una sosta ristoratrice
 fra una scoperta e l'altra (in) ____ la città in cui si fa
 turismo . . . la soluzione è Brek.

pranzo

lunch

cena

supper

spettacolo

show

sala

hall (theatre, cinema etc.)

sosta

pause, stop

scoperta

discovery

Note: **shopping** is considered as beginning with **s** + consonant.

Reflexive/reciprocal verbs

Mi chiamo Harry.
Come si chiama?

We explained in Unit 2 that **chiamare** means ‘to call’ and **mi chiamo** means ‘I call myself’, i.e. ‘my name is’. The infinitive is **chiamarsi**. A verb that works this way is called a *reflexive verb*, i.e. one that ‘turns back on itself’. The present tense of **chiamarsi** is:

mi chiamo	ci chiamiamo
ti chiami	vi chiamate
si chiama	si chiamano

mi, ti etc. are called *reflexive pronouns*. In the infinitive form the reflexive pronoun follows the verb and is written joined to it. Sometimes there is a direct equivalence between an Italian verb and an English verb:

<i>divertirsi</i>	<i>to enjoy oneself</i>
mi diverto	I enjoy/am enjoying myself
ti diverti	you enjoy/are enjoying yourself
si diverte	he/she enjoys/is enjoying himself/herself
ci divertiamo	we are enjoying ourselves
vi divertite	you are enjoying yourselves
si divertono	they are enjoying themselves

But often this is not the case. Common reflexive verbs are:

alzarsi	to get up
coricarsi	to lie down
addormentarsi	to fall asleep
svegliarsi	to wake up
riposarsi	to rest
lavarsi	to wash (oneself)
pettinarsi	to comb/do one's hair
vestirsi	to dress, get dressed
accorgersi	to notice
sposarsi	to get married
rendersi conto	to realize

accomodarsi ‘to make oneself comfortable’, is used particularly in the formal invitation **s'accomodi** ‘take a seat, sit down’.

In the plural some verbs are used with the reflexive pronoun to indicate the action is *reciprocal*:

Dove ci troviamo?

lit. 'Where shall we find each other?',

i.e. 'Where shall we meet?'

Non si parlano.

They don't talk/are not speaking to each other.

Si vedono ogni sabato.

They see each other each Saturday.

Grammatically sophisticated readers may be assured: the reflexive pronouns **mi**, **ti** etc. can mean both 'myself' and 'to myself', 'yourself' and 'to yourself', i.e. they can be *direct* and *indirect* objects of the verb.

Note: Common ways of saying 'goodbye' between friends are **ci vediamo** or **ci sentiamo**, meaning 'see you soon' and 'we'll telephone each other' respectively.

Exercise 5

The printer has got the following sentences muddled up. They describe what I do every morning. Put them into a more logical order.

- 1 Mi pettino.
- 2 Non mi alzo subito.
- 3 Mi vesto.
- 4 Vado in bagno.
- 5 Mi sveglio alle sette.
- 6 Mi lavo.

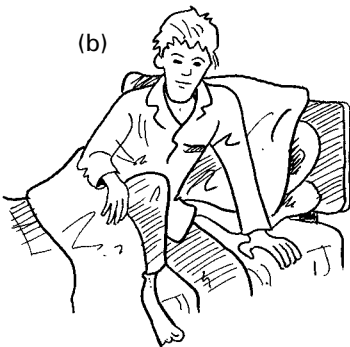
Exercise 6

Lucio has done a series of drawings of his morning routine. What does he do? Here are the verbs you need: **pettinarsi**, **fare la doccia**, **vestirsi**, **svegliarsi**, **fare colazione**, **alzarsi**, **prepararsi**.

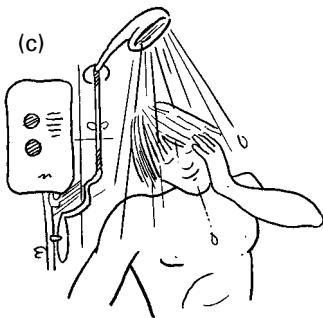
(a)



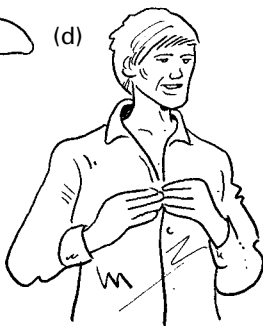
(b)



(c)



(d)



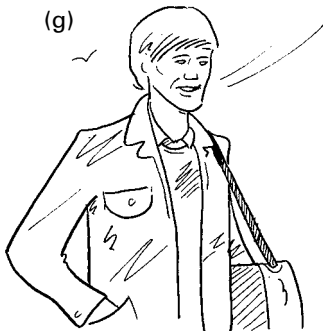
(e)



(f)



(g)



More irregular verbs

<i>andare</i>	<i>venire</i>	<i>fare</i>	<i>sapere</i>	<i>dire</i>
vado	vengo	faccio	so	dico
vai	vieni	fai	sai	dici
va	viene	fa	sa	dice
andiamo	veniamo	facciamo	sappiamo	diciamo
andate	venite	fate	sapete	dite
vanno	vengono	fanno	sanno	dicono

You need to find your own way of learning these verbs. You will need them a lot – but you will also hear them a lot, which will help you.

- **Dove vai?**
- **Vado a fare la spesa. Perché non vieni con me?**
- **Buona idea, così faccio la spesa anch'io.**
- Where are you going?
- I'm going shopping. Why don't you come with me?
- Good idea, that way I'll do my shopping too.
- **Anna dice che non sa dove abita Luisa. Come facciamo a trovare la sua casa?**
- Anna says she doesn't know where Luisa lives? How shall we find her house?

Exercise 7

Here are two lists. The first contains questions and the second answers but again they have become muddled. Can you sort them out?

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1 Vuoi venire con me? | a Sì, vogliamo un po' di frutta e di verdura. |
| 2 Da dove vengono? | b Sì. Viene a trovarlo stasera. |
| 3 Che cosa dicono del progetto? | c Al cinema. |
| 4 Che cosa fai? | d Non posso oggi. |
| 5 Andate al mercato? | e Scrivo una lettera. |
| 6 Dove vanno Giorgio e Maria? | f Vengo io. |
| 7 Lucia sa che Giorgio arriva oggi? | g Non sanno che esiste. |
| 8 Chi viene con noi? | h Da Roma. |

Telling people to do something – the imperative

You have met a number of examples of this. For instance:

Giri a destra.

Turn right.

Prenda la terza sulla sinistra.

Take the third on the left.

Scusi.

Excuse me.

Senta.

Listen.

All these are examples of the *imperative*, the form of the verb used to give orders or instructions. They were all used in the formal form, addressed to people when using **lei**. How can we make sense of this?

Formal form

<i>-are verbs</i>		<i>All other verbs</i>	
scusare	scusi	prendere	prenda
girare	giri	sentire	senta
parlare	parli	dire	dica
accomodarsi	s'accomodi	venire	venga

The rule is that for verbs other than **-are** ones, the ending is **-a**, even if you are not quite sure what to attach it to. In fact, it is usually the first person singular of the verb, without **-o** (**veng(o)**, **dic(o)**).

But what about friends? Alberto said to Marisa: **senti**. But you have not met other forms yet, as you have mostly met formal conversations. The rule is:

Informal form

<i>-are verbs: -a</i>	<i>All other verbs: -i</i>
scusa	senti
gira	
parla	

You may have observed that it is exactly the opposite of the formal form and wonder how to get it right. We suggest that you choose two imperatives you hear frequently in Italy and make them your models. For example, **scusare** and **sentire**. Your friends will say to you: **Oh scusa, Joe/Mary/Mike/Ann** (substitute your own name). In the street people you don't know will say: **Scusi, signore/signora/signorina**, as appropriate. Similarly friends will attract your attention by saying: **Senti, Joe** etc., and people you do not know well will say: **Senta, signore** etc. These two make excellent models. Other verbs you commonly hear are:

-are verbs

<i>tu</i>		<i>Lei</i>	
guarda	Joe	guardi	signore
aspetta		aspetti	

Other verbs

<i>tu</i>	<i>Lei</i>	<i>tu</i>	<i>Lei</i>
prendi	prendi	fa'	faccia
abbi pazienza	abbia pazienza¹	va'	vada
vieni	venga	da'	dia
di'	dica		

1 lit. 'have patience', i.e. 'be patient'.

In fact, for regular **-ere** and **-ire** verbs, the **tu** form of the present is also the imperative form. This is also true for some irregular verbs (e.g. **vieni**). In the case of **dire**, **fare**, **andare** and **dare**, the full form is usually abbreviated, as (') shows.

Andiamo! 'Let's go!'

To include yourself in a suggestion, you use the **noi form** of the verb, but without **noi**. This is also an imperative.

Telefoniamo a Gianni!	Let's call/phone Gianni!
Mangiamo alle otto!	Let's eat at 8 o'clock!
Facciamo gli spaghetti!	Let's make spaghetti!

To tell several people to do something, you use the **voi** form of the verb, again without **voi**.

Andate presto!	Go quickly!
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Telling someone not to do something

You simply use **non** and the verb:

Non dica questo.

Non giri a sinistra, vada dritto.

However, when you are using **tu**, you use **non** + infinitive:

Non dire questo.

Non girare, va' dritto.

Exercise 8

You and your friend Mario are on your way, by car, to Giorgio's house. You know the way and Mario, who is driving, doesn't, so you have to give him directions. The verbs have been left out. Choose the correct ones from the list that follows to make sense of your instructions. You may use two of them twice. As Mario is a friend, you use **tu** when talking to him.

**rallenta prendi girare va' gira sta'
facciamo cerca andare**

- 1 _____ la seconda sulla destra.
- 2 Qui, _____ a destra.
- 3 E poi _____ sempre dritto un po'.
- 4 Non _____ troppo veloce.
- 5 Ora al semaforo _____ a sinistra.
- 6 _____ sempre sulla sinistra perché devi girare di nuovo.
- 7 No, non _____ qui.
- 8 Ecco _____ un po'.
- 9 _____ questa via.
- 10 _____ un parcheggio in questa piazza.
- 11 _____ l'ultimo pezzo a piedi perché non si può parcheggiare.

Exercise 9

There's an air traffic controllers' strike – again. You are an airline employee and a passenger wants information about his flight.

YOU: (1) (Yes,) signore. (Say 'tell me', using *dire*, indicating you are ready to listen.)

PASSENGER: Quando parte il mio volo?

- YOU: (2) (Give me) il biglietto per favore. Mi dispiace, signore, il volo per Amsterdam ha due ore di ritardo.
- PASSENGER: Ma non è possibile! Devo essere a Amsterdam a mezzogiorno.
- YOU: (3) (Be patient), signore. (4) (Forgive me). Non posso fare niente. (5) (Make yourself comfortable) al bar o nel ristorante. (6) (Wait) con calma . . .

Exercise 10

Compose a text message (SMS) to someone in your office saying your flight to Amsterdam is two hours late and asking them to phone your hotel to warn them.

Reading

La domenica in Italia

- 1 Why is it difficult for families to be together on Saturdays?**
- 2 Can you list five activities that an Italian family might be engaged in during a winter Sunday?**
- 3 Where do many people enjoy going on summer Sundays?**

La domenica è un giorno molto importante per gli Italiani. Il sabato molti adulti non lavorano ma i bambini sono a scuola la mattina. La domenica è dunque il giorno in cui tutti i membri della famiglia sono a casa. Spesso il venerdì o il sabato, si sente l'augurio 'Buona domenica!'. La domenica è il giorno in cui si invitano i familiari a pranzo a mezzogiorno. Il pomeriggio si va a fare una passeggiata in campagna o nei parchi o semplicemente si passeggia lungo la via principale della città, che è spesso zona pedonale. Certe persone, invece, d'inverno preferiscono passare il pomeriggio al cinema. Durante la stagione calcistica, i tifosi vanno allo stadio a vedere la partita. Se però devono accompagnare la famiglia a spasso, seguono la partita alla radio. E' divertente vedere questi signori camminare con la radiolina all'orecchio per seguire, anche da lontano, la loro squadra. In inverno dalle città del nord c'è l'esodo verso la montagna per sciare; invece d'estate sono il mare e la campagna che attirano i gitanti. La sera, sulle strade che vanno in città, qualsiasi città, si formano code di automobilisti che tornano

per prepararsi a una nuova settimana di lavoro. Il lunedì arriva sempre troppo presto.

Vocabulary

dunque	so, therefore	augurio	wish, greeting
spesso	often	(auguri!	best wishes!)
i familiari	relatives	il calcio	soccer
pedonale	traffic-free, reserved for pedestrians	calcistico	to do with soccer
pedoni	pedestrians	un tifoso	a fan
spasso	walk or outing for pleasure	camminare	to walk
esodo	exodus	orecchio	ear
una gita	a trip, an excursion	un gitante	tripper
casa	house, home	una coda	a queue

7 Giriamo

Let's get out and about

In this unit you will learn about:

- Booking into hotels
- Saying it doesn't matter, **non importa**
- The plural of nouns and adjectives ending in **-co** and **-go**, **-ca** and **-ga**
- The verb **uscire** 'to go out'
- Saying you are going to do something: **andare a fare . . .**
- Shopping for food and for clothes – and for computers
- Saying you need something, asking if someone needs something else, and saying you have enough
- Weights and measures
- Plurals of nouns ending in **-cia** and **-gia**
- Talking about colours

Dialogue 1

All'albergo (1)

Frances is touring Italy with her husband and another couple. They haven't booked accommodation because it's low season. Frances has been delegated to go into the Albergo della Fontana in a little Tuscan town to see whether they have rooms for tonight.

- 1 How many rooms does Frances want?
- 2 What are the important points about the rooms for her and her party?
- 3 Before deciding to take the rooms what does she ask to do?

DIRETTORE: Buona sera, signora, desidera?

FRANCES: Avete una camera?

DIRETTORE: Sì, signora. Una camera singola o doppia?

- FRANCES: In realtà, vorrei due camere, due camere doppie.
Una per me e mio marito, una per i nostri amici.
- DIRETTORE: Preferite un letto matrimoniale o due letti?
- FRANCES: Veramente non importa.
- DIRETTORE: Con bagno o senza?
- FRANCES: Oh, con bagno, per favore. E preferiamo camere tranquille.
- DIRETTORE: Certo, signora. Per una notte?
- FRANCES: No, per due notti.
- DIRETTORE: Abbiamo due camere tranquille. Danno sul cortile dietro l'albergo. Ma qui in ogni modo c'è poco traffico.
- FRANCES: Potrei vedere le camere?
- DIRETTORE: Sens'altro. Prendo le chiavi. Venga pure.

Vocabulary

i nostri amici	our friends	
veramente	really (vero means 'true'; lit. 'truly')	
danno sul cortile	they overlook the courtyard (implied 'at the back of the hotel')	
in ogni modo	in any case	c'è poco traffico there's not much
senz'altro	of course	traffic

More vocabulary for hotels

una camera singola/doppia	a single/double room
una camera a un letto	a single room (room with one bed)
a due letti	a double (room with two beds)
matrimoniale	a room with a double bed (Italian double beds are generous)
con bagno	with bath
doccia	shower
aria condizionata	air-conditioning

Cultural point

Quite often Italian hotels do not have a dining room, so some hotels have a room charge without breakfast. They can usually provide a continental breakfast, however some guests may prefer to go to a nearby bar. The bar is the place to go for really good coffee (see Unit 1). If your hotel does not have a restaurant, that

leaves you free to try a variety places to eat during your stay. And you may well find you eat better than you would have done in a hotel.

Language points

non importa *'it doesn't matter'*

non importa means 'it doesn't matter, it's not important'. **importa** is a verb (**importare**), and the subject (which is not stated) is 'it'. A verb used in this way is called an *impersonal* verb, that is, the subject is not a person. Look out for others.

The plural of nouns and adjectives ending in -co and -go, -ca and -ga

Most nouns and adjectives ending in **-go** keep the hard **g** sound in the plural and therefore insert an **h** to indicate this:

un albergo

due alberghi

Nouns ending in **-co** are less predictable. Generally speaking those in which the *penultimate* syllable bears the main stress keep the hard **c** and therefore insert an **h**:

un arco etrusco

due archi etruschi

un vino bianco

due vini bianchi

Exception:

un amico

due amici

When the stress is on the *antepenultimate* syllable, however, there is usually a sound change:

un medico simpatico

due medici simpatici

Note: Feminine nouns and adjectives in the feminine ending in **-ca** and **-ga** all keep the hard sound and insert the **h**, including:

un'amica

due amiche

These points fall into place the more Italian you hear. Lists of exceptions are confusing for the beginner, so we are not giving them here. However, **amico** is such a common word, you should learn it. And remember: if in doubt, consult a dictionary. At this

stage don't worry too much, as mistakes do not usually impair communication. As your Italian becomes more sophisticated you can gradually aim to get these details correct.

Exercise 1

In the hotel conversation singulars and plurals were used:

una camera due camere un letto due letti

Here are some more words, sometimes with adjectives, to put into the plural (remind yourself of the forms first, Unit 5). In numbers 1 to 8, change to two of everything.

Example: **un letto**

Answer: **due letti**

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| 1 un giorno | 5 una banca |
| 2 una settimana | 6 un giornale |
| 3 un mese interessante | 7 un cappuccino |
| 4 un nuovo progetto | 8 una birra |

In the next group you have definite articles ('the'). Make the whole word group plural.

Example: **il francobollo francese**

Answer: **i francobolli francesi**

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 9 il nuovo film | 13 la nuova galleria |
| 10 lo spettacolo | 14 la strada che va in città |
| 11 il giornale interessante | 15 l'adulto responsabile |
| 12 il supermercato francese | 16 il vino rosso |

Dialogue 2

All'albergo (2)

Having satisfied herself the rooms are pleasant, Frances continues the conversation.

1 What is and what is not included in the price?

2 Where is the garage?

FRANCES: Qual è il prezzo di una camera per una notte?

DIRETTORE: 105 euro, signora.

- FRANCES: E' inclusa la colazione?
- DIRETTORE: No, signora. Sono inclusi le tasse e il servizio, ma la colazione non è compresa nel prezzo.
- FRANCES: Va bene. Vado a chiamare mio marito e i nostri amici. Oh, c'è un garage?
- DIRETTORE: Sì, signora. Quando esce, giri a sinistra. Poi deve passare sotto l'arco, a sinistra. Il garage è dietro l'albergo, in fondo al cortile. Posso avere un documento, per cortesia?
- FRANCES: Ecco il mio passaporto.



Vocabulary

compreso, incluso

included (very similar in meaning, from **comprendere, includere**)

quando esce

when you go out

in fondo a

at the bottom of, at the end of

per cortesia

please (this is another way of saying 'please', as is **per piacere**)

un documento

an identification document (usually a passport or an identity card)

Language points

Using uscire '*to go out*'

esco	usciamo
esci	uscite
esce	<u>escono</u>

Using andare

Vado a chiamare mio marito

When you say you are going to do something, you need to use **a** after **andare**, before the second verb.

Vado a mangiare.

I am going to eat.

Andate a vedere il nuovo film?

Are you going to see the new film?

Va a lavorare.

He/she is going to work.

Exercise 2

Joe McDonald needs to book into a hotel for the night. Here is his conversation with the receptionist. Unfortunately the printer has got the order all wrong and forgotten to indicate whether Joe or the receptionist is talking. Can you sort it out so that it makes sense?

- 1 Per quante notti?
- 2 Singola o doppia?
- 3 60 euro.
- 4 Abbiamo una singola con doccia. Va bene?
- 5 E' compresa la colazione?
- 6 Ecco la chiave. E' il numero 32.
- 7 Va bene.
- 8 Buona sera. Avete una camera?

- 9 No, non è compresa.
- 10 Una notte.
- 11 Grazie.
- 12 Posso avere un documento?
- 13 Singola.
- 14 Qual è il prezzo?
- 15 Certo, ecco la mia carta d'identità.

Dialogue 3

Vorrei un po' di frutta

Mrs Rossi is shopping for fruit and vegetables.

- 1 The fruit seller says the small oranges have certain qualities.
What are they?**
- 2 Which other fruit does she want?**
- 3 How much will her apples cost her?**

- FRUTTIVENDOLO: Buongiorno, signora. Desidera?
- SIG.RA ROSSI: Buongiorno. Vorrei un po' di frutta. Quanto costano le arance?
- FRUTTIVENDOLO: 1 euro e 49 centesimi al chilo le grandi, 1,19 le piccole. Sono molto dolci, quelle piccole, ottime per la spremuta.
- SIG.RA ROSSI: Allora, un chilo. E ho bisogno anche di banane.
- FRUTTIVENDOLO: Quante?
- SIG.RA ROSSI: Cinque o sei. Ecco, così va bene. E due pompelmi.
- FRUTTIVENDOLO: Benissimo, signora. Altro?
- SIG.RA ROSSI: Ci sono delle mele buone?
- FRUTTIVENDOLO: Queste a 1,96 al chilo, del Trentino, sono molto buone.
- SIG.RA ROSSI: Mezzo chilo, per favore.
- FRUTTIVENDOLO: Ecco. E poi?
- SIG.RA ROSSI: Basta così per oggi. Quant'è?
- FRUTTIVENDOLO: 3 euro e 75 centesimi, signora.
- SIG.RA ROSSI: Ecco (*giving him a 10 euro note*).
- FRUTTIVENDOLO: Quattro, cinque e cinque, dieci. Grazie, signora, arrivederLa, buongiorno.

Vocabulary

ho bisogno di	I need (see below)
del Trentino	from the Trentino (in northern Italy)
basta così	that'll be all (lit. 'it's enough like that')



Shop in the Mercato di Mezzo, Bologna.
Courtesy EPT Emilia Romagna.

Language points

Using avere bisogno di

Ho bisogno di ...

avere bisogno di (lit. 'to have need of') corresponds to the English 'to need':

Ho bisogno di francobolli.

I need some (postage) stamps.

Ho bisogno di sapere la risposta.

I need to know the answer.

Hai bisogno di me?

Do you need me?

Using altro?

When asking a customer if she (he) needs anything else a shop-keeper may say **altro?** which means 'anything else?' in this context. **altro** is the word for 'other':

un altro caffè

another coffee

l'altro giorno

the other day

Take note of the way you say 'two, three' etc. and 'more/other':

altri due caffè

two more coffees

altre tre persone

three other people

Other ways of encouraging the customer to buy more are:

E poi?

And then? Next?

Dopo?

After (that)?

E' tutto?

Is that all?

And ways of saying 'no' are:

No, grazie

No, thank you

Basta, grazie

That's all, thanks

No, basta così

No (lit. 'it's sufficient like that')

No, va bene così

No (lit. 'it's all right like that')

così means 'in this way, in that way, thus'.

Using basta

bastare is a verb but normally used only in the third person singular and plural. It can have a specific subject:

Bastano queste banane?

Are these enough bananas?

Bastano dieci euro?

Are 10 euros enough?

Or it can be used impersonally followed by an infinitive or a noun:

Basta chiedere.

It's sufficient to ask.

(i.e. 'All you need do is ask'.)

– **E' lontano. Si può arrivare in una giornata?**

– It's a long way. Can one get there in one day?

– **Basta partire presto.**

– So long as one starts early.

(lit. 'All you need do is start early'.)

Basta telefonare.

All you need to do is telephone.

Or, from a leaflet about cancer prevention:

Basta una telefonata per prenotare una visita preventiva gratuita per te e per i tuoi cari . . .

All it needs is a telephone call to book a free check-up for you and your loved ones . . .

Weights and measures

The metric system is used in Italy, as elsewhere in Europe. For weight, the basic measures are the gram (**grammo**) and the kilogram (**chilogrammo**), 1,000 grams. Lightweight items such as ham, sweets/candies, are sold by the **etto**. **Un etto** = 100 grams, which is just under 4 oz. So you have:

un etto = 100 grammi

mezzo chilo = 5 etti = 500 grammi

un chilo = 1.000 grammi

The liquid measure is the litre:

un litro
mezzo litro
un quarto (di litro)

la frutta *'fruit'*

The word **frutta** is similar to the English collective noun 'fruit', i.e. you do not usually use it in the plural. In season, the following are commonly found (the singular is given for clarity):

l'albicocca	apricot	l'arancia	orange
la ciliegia	cherry	la fragola	strawberry
il limone	lemon	la mela	apple
il melone	melon	la pera	pear
la pesca	peach	il pompelmo	grapefruit
la prugna	plum	la susina	plum (also)
l'uva	grapes (uva is a singular noun meaning 'grapes'):		

L'uva è molto buona.

The grapes are very good.

Un chilo di uva bianca, per piacere.

A kilo of white grapes, please.

Plurals of nouns ending in -cia, -gia

A stressed **-i** remains in the plural:

la farmacia
le farmacie
un'allergia
molte allergie

If the **-i-** is there only to show that the **-c-** or **-g-** is soft, then:

(a) **-cia, -gia**, preceded by a vowel becomes **-cie, -gie**:

una ciliegia **un chilo di ciliegie**

(b) **-cia, -gia**, preceded by a consonant becomes **-ce, -ge**:

un'arancia **un chilo di arance**

Difficult? Yes, but we needed to tell you before the next exercise. When you are speaking Italian, in the case of (a) and (b) it makes no difference to the sound, so don't worry. But, in the next exercise, try to get it right, while it is fresh in your mind. You can always look it up when you have to write.

Exercise 3

You are at a fruit stall in a market. Ask how much the fruits listed above cost. There is one 'trick question' – watch out for it.

Dialogue 4

Ho bisogno di formaggio

Mrs Rossi is in a grocer's shop.

1 How much 'pecorino' does Mrs Rossi buy?

2 What else does she buy besides cheese?

COMMESO: Buongiorno, signora, desidera?
SIG.RA ROSSI: Ho bisogno di formaggio oggi. C'è del pecorino?
COMMESO: Dolce o piccante?
SIG.RA ROSSI: Piccante. Tre etti.
COMMESO: Ecco. Altro?
SIG.RA ROSSI: Sì. Del prosciutto crudo.
COMMESO: Prosciutto di Parma o nostrano?
SIG.RA ROSSI: Quanto costano?
COMMESO: Il nostrano 32 euro e 90 centesimi al chilo, quello di Parma 35,60. E' molto buono quello nostrano.
SIG.RA ROSSI: Allora lo prendo. Basta un etto.
COMMESO: *Slices some and then weighs it*
120 grammi. Va bene così?
SIG.RA ROSSI: Sì, va bene. Quant'è?
COMMESO: 4 euro e 30 centesimi il pecorino. E poi, 3,30 il prosciutto. 7,60 in tutto. Grazie, arriverà. Buongiorno.

Cultural point

Italy boasts a wide variety of cheeses. The Po Plain produces **grana padano** and **parmigiano reggiano**, which are very similar to each other. They are both made from cow's milk and are fairly hard, depending on how long they have been matured; more importantly, maturing affects the flavour. Another popular cheese is **pecorino**, which is made with ewes' milk. According to how long it has been matured it is **dolce** 'mild' or **piccante** 'strong flavoured'. All these cheeses are used for grating as well as being delicious eaten as cheese. Grated cheese is much used in Italian cooking, on pasta, risotto, soups etc. Another very special Italian speciality is **prosciutto crudo**, cured ham. It is usually known in English as 'Parma ham' although ham is cured in a similar way in other parts of Italy; **prosciutto** can also be **cotto** 'cooked'.

Exercise 4

Say out loud and then write down in words the prices in Dialogue 4.

Language points

The partitive, 'some ...'

To express the idea 'some' ('not all') of something, you use the articulated preposition **del**, i.e. **di** + the definite article:

del formaggio	some cheese
delle mele	some apples
del prosciutto	some ham

Prices

When giving the price 'per kilo, per litre' etc. Italian uses: **al chilo**, **al litro**:

30 euro al chilo

Exercise 5

Sig.ra Rossi has made a shopping list. How would she tell the shop assistant she wants *some* of the following?

Example: **banane**

Answer: **Vorrei delle banane**

- | | |
|---------------|------------------|
| 1 limoni | 6 acqua minerale |
| 2 francobolli | 7 arance |
| 3 caffè | 8 pesche |
| 4 formaggio | 9 pane |
| 5 uva | |

Quantity

When you specify a quantity, however, you just use **di**:

un chilo di mele

un litro di vino

un po' di formaggio

un etto di prosciutto

Dialogue 5

Ci sono altri colori?

*Joe, in Florence, wants to buy presents to take home. He, like many other tourists, goes to the very large street market near the church of San Lorenzo. He is looking at sweaters ('a sweater' is **una maglia**), with his young sister in mind. There is one he likes displayed on a stall.*

- 1 Who does the salesgirl assume he is buying for?**
- 2 What colour sweater catches his eye?**
- 3 Why does he take an 'L'?**

JOE: *(trying to attract the salesperson's attention)* Senta!
Posso vedere quella maglia?

VENDITRICE: Sì, signore. E' molto bella, questa maglia. Fatta a mano.

- JOE: Quanto costa?
 VENDITTRICE: Solo 30 euro. E' per Sua moglie?
 JOE: No, per mia sorella. Ha 16 anni. Ci sono altri colori?
 VENDITTRICE: (*pointing to a pile of sweaters*) Sì signore. Guardi. C'è verde, rosa, blu, beige ...
 JOE: Mi piace quella verde.
 VENDITTRICE: Sua sorella, com'è? Di che misura ha bisogno?
 JOE: Le piace portare le maglie grandi.
 VENDITTRICE: Allora deve prendere una "L".
 JOE: Va bene. Prendo quella verde.

Vocabulary notes

fatto/a a mano 'handmade' (made by hand)
misura 'size' (used for clothes, shoes etc.)

Language point

Colours, i colori

The singular of **i colori** is **il colore**.

azzurro	blue (darker than celeste)
bianco	white
giallo	yellow
grigio	grey
nero	black
rosso	red
celeste	blue (sky blue, paler than azzurro)
arancione	orange
marrone	brown
verde	green
blu	dark or navy blue
rosa	pink
viola	violet

The colours have been grouped above according to the way the adjectives work. The ones in the first group have four forms: **rosso**, **rossa**, **rossi**, **rosse**:

buoni vini rossi good red wines

Those in the second group have two forms: **verde, verdi**:

una mela verde	one (a) green apple
due mele verdi	two green apples

Those in the last group have one form only:

una maglia blu	a dark blue sweater
due maglie blu	two dark blue sweaters

Note: chiaro 'light' (when used of a colour), also 'clear'; *scuro* 'dark'.

verde chiaro	light green	verde scuro	dark green
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Exercise 6

It takes a while to absorb verb forms. Here is some more practice. The verb is given in the infinitive. Write the correct form for the various subjects suggested. Where it might be more usual to leave the subject pronoun out, it is put in brackets.

Example: lavorare

Carlo. Carlo lavora. Anna e Paola.

Anna e Paola lavorano.

1 *comprare*

Anna, che cosa (a) _____ (tu)?

Io (b) _____ un libro.

Gianna, tu e Piero, che cosa (c) _____?

(Noi) (d) _____ una maglia per Piero.

2 *leggere*

Io (a) _____ poco. Non ho tempo.

Paolo invece (b) _____ molto.

Si dice che gli Italiani (c) _____ poco. Non so se è vero.

3 *preferire*

Io (a) _____ la maglia rossa.

Giorgio invece (b) _____ quella celeste.

4 *parlare*

Questi studenti (a) _____ russo, francese e italiano.

Io invece (b) _____ solo italiano.

Mario (c) _____ inglese e francese?

E tu? (d) _____ un'altra lingua?

5 **vivere**

Giorgio e Anna (a) _____ in città.

Noi (b) _____ in campagna.

Reading

Il mio primo computer

Il pc ideale per un bambino? Processore di ultima generazione e memoria potente. Inutile, invece, il modello più recente.

- 1 **This is part of an article in a women's magazine. It is about buying a computer. For what sort of use?**
- 2 **In the last sentence, what is buying a computer for the purpose described compared to?**

Con l'inizio della scuola è bene che il bambino impari a usare il pc vero e proprio, magari con mouse e tastiera semplificati. "Per un bimbo tra i 7 e gli 11 anni è sufficiente un pc di media potenza, fisso (i portatili costano di più e sono più delicati), con stampante a getto di inchiostro, cd rom, scheda audio e casse, modem per poter navigare in internet," spiega l'esperto. "Verificate che la macchina sia dotata di processore di ultima generazione e abbia una memoria Ram almeno di 128 Megabyte, meglio se è più alta, altrimenti si rischia di non poter utilizzare cd rom e giochi elettronici."

Trappole

"Non cadete nell'errore di rincorrere il modello più recente. La differenza reale tra il più potente dei pc è nell'ordine della frazione di secondo. Attenzione piuttosto alla garanzia e alla serietà del rivenditore ... Spiegate chiaramente al venditore l'uso che intendete farne ... E ricordate che per andare a fare la spesa non c'è bisogno della Ferrari, basta una Cinquecento."

(Anna, Family Life section, 18 febbraio 2003)

Vocabulary notes

inutile 'useless'. Opposite of **utile** 'useful'.

bambino, bimbo 'child'. There is a feminine form, ending in **-a**.

When used in a general way, as here, the masculine includes the feminine.

vero e proprio 'proper' (lit. 'real and proper'). An earlier part of the article, not included here, talked about toy computers for pre-school children.

dotato/a di 'equipped, provided with'

si rischia 'one risks' (**rischiare** 'to risk')

non cadete nell'errore 'don't fall into the error of ...' (**cadere** 'to fall')

nell'ordine della frazione di secondo 'in the order of a fraction of a second'

l'uso che intendete farne 'the use you intend to make of it'

ricordate 'remember' (**ricordare** 'to remember')

Computer vocabulary notes

You will recognize as English much of Italian computer vocabulary. Here are some words you may not have been able to guess:

tastiera 'keyboard'

media potenza 'medium power'

fisso 'fixed'. In this case 'desktop'.

portatile 'portable'. An adjective used as the noun for laptop (computer).

stampante (f.) 'printer' (**stampare** 'to print')

getto di inchiostro 'ink-jet' (**laser** 'laser')

scheda audio 'audio card' (cf. **scheda telefonica**)

casse 'loudspeakers'

navigare in internet 'to surf the internet'

ultima generazione 'last generation'. We would probably say 'latest generation'.

memoria 'memory'

giochi elettronici 'computer games' (**un gioco**)

Shopping vocabulary notes

verificare 'to check'

attenzione 'be careful'

garanzia 'guarantee'

serietà 'trustworthiness' (in this context). A **rivenditore serio** is one who can be trusted.

rivenditore 'retailer' (in this context). Really a reseller, i.e. seller of second-hand goods.

venditore 'salesman'

fare la spesa 'to do the shopping'. Usually implies the regular household shopping.

Unusual verb forms

There are three examples in this passage of the present subjunctive. They need not worry you and possibly you did not notice them. They are **impari** (first line), **sia** and **abbia**. You will probably agree that the meaning is guessable. We will deal with them later in the book.