

The Complete Idiot's Guide to Learning Italian

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English

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Notes

Page 18-20:

BUON'IDEA

Context is key. Absorb the significance of a *parola* (word) by looking at the words surrounding it. When you learn how to decode the Italian language you see patterns emerge. From there, it's just a matter of time before the words begin pouring out of you! It doesn't hurt to learn words in pairs. It's like getting two for the price of one!

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Learning Your Italian ABCs

The Italian language uses the Latin alphabet. Unlike English, however, the Italian alphabet contains only 21 letters, borrowing the letters j, k, w, x, and y for words of foreign origin.

As you read, you'll discover that the spelling of Italian words follows a logical pattern.

The Italian Alphabet

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LA BELLA LINGUA

When spelling out words, in English, we often use proper names to clarify letters: T as in Tom, for example. In Italian, names of Italian cities are used instead: *A come Ancona*, *I come Imola*, and *T come Torino* (A as in *Ancona*, I as in *Imola*, T as in *Torino*). Italians don't always agree about which cities to use, and you can feel free to change your example to a different city. Instead of C for *Cagliari*, you could substitute C for *Como*, for example.

L'Alfabeto Italiano

Italian Name

| Letter | of Letter | Pronunciation | Example | Pronunciation |
|--------|---------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| A | <i>a</i> | <i>a</i> | <i>Ancona</i> | <i>ahn-koh-nah</i> |
| B | <i>bi</i> | <i>bee</i> | <i>Bolagna</i> | <i>boh-loh-nah</i> |
| C | <i>ci</i> | <i>chee</i> | <i>Cagliari</i> | <i>kahl-yah-ree</i> |
| D | <i>di</i> | <i>dee</i> | <i>Domodossola</i> | <i>doh-moh-dohs-soh-lah</i> |
| E | <i>e</i> | <i>eh</i> | <i>Empoli</i> | <i>em-poh-lee</i> |
| F | <i>effe</i> | <i>ehf-fey</i> | <i>Firenze</i> | <i>fee-ren-zay</i> |
| G | <i>gi</i> | <i>jee</i> | <i>Genova</i> | <i>jeh-noh-vah</i> |
| H | <i>acca</i> | <i>ahk-kah</i> | <i>hotel</i> | <i>oh-tel</i> |
| I | <i>I</i> | <i>ee</i> | <i>Imola</i> | <i>ee-moh-lah</i> |
| J* | <i>i lunga</i> | <i>ee loon-gah</i> | <i>jolly</i> | <i>jol-lee</i> |
| K* | <i>cappa</i> | <i>kahp-pah</i> | <i>kaiser</i> | <i>ky-zer</i> |
| L | <i>elle</i> | <i>ehl-lay</i> | <i>Livorno</i> | <i>lee-vor-noh</i> |
| M | <i>emme</i> | <i>ehm-may</i> | <i>Milano</i> | <i>mee-lah-noh</i> |
| N | <i>enne</i> | <i>ehn-nay</i> | <i>Napoli</i> | <i>nah-poh-lee</i> |
| O | <i>o</i> | <i>oh</i> | <i>Otranto</i> | <i>oh-tran-toh</i> |
| P | <i>pi</i> | <i>pee</i> | <i>Palermo</i> | <i>pah-ler-moh</i> |
| Q | <i>cu</i> | <i>koo</i> | <i>quaderno</i> (notebook) | <i>kwah-der-noh</i> |
| R | <i>erre</i> | <i>ehr-ray</i> | <i>Roma</i> | <i>roh-mah</i> |
| S | <i>esse</i> | <i>ehs-say</i> | <i>Sassari</i> | <i>sahs-sah-ree</i> |
| T | <i>ti</i> | <i>tee</i> | <i>Torino</i> | <i>toh-ree-noh</i> |
| U | <i>oo</i> | <i>oo</i> | <i>Udine</i> | <i>oo-dee-neh</i> |
| V | <i>vu/vi</i> | <i>voo/vee</i> | <i>Venezia</i> | <i>ven-neh-zee-ah</i> |
| W* | <i>doppia vu</i> | <i>dohp-pee-yah voo</i> | <i>Washington</i> | <i>wash-eeng-ton</i> |
| X* | <i>ics</i> | <i>eeks</i> | <i>xenofobo</i> (xenophobe) | <i>kzeh-noh-foh-boh</i> |
| Y* | <i>ipsolon</i> also <i>i greca</i> | <i>eep-see-lohn</i> also <i>ee greh-kah</i> | <i>York</i> | <i>york</i> |
| Z | <i>zeta</i> | <i>zeh-tah</i> | <i>Zara</i> | <i>zah-rah</i> |

*These letters have been borrows by other languages.

Getting the *Accento* (Accent)

Italian uses the grave accent (` ; pronounced *grave*) on the words where the stress falls on the final syllable: *caffè*, *città*, *università*.

Italian also makes use of the acute accent (´ ; pronounced *acuto*), particularly with the words *benché* (although), *perché* (because/why) and *affinché* (so that).

The written accent is also used to distinguish several Italian words from others that have the same spelling but a different meaning. Note that the word for *is* in Italian is *è*, while the word for *and* is *e*, without an accent. The accented *è* should utilize a more open sound, like in the word *bell*. The simple *e* is pronounced with a more closed sound like in the word *gourmet*. If at first you don't get the subtle differences, no sweat.

Let's look at some more examples:

| | | | |
|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|
| <i>è</i> | is | <i>e</i> | and |
| <i>sì</i> | yes | <i>si</i> | oneself |
| <i>dà</i> | gives | <i>da</i> | from |
| <i>sè</i> | himself | <i>se</i> | if |
| <i>là</i> | there | <i>la</i> | the |
| <i>lì</i> | there | <i>li</i> | them |
| <i>né</i> | nor | <i>ne</i> | some |

ATTENZIONE!

Some Italian letter combinations are seldom found in English. These sounds include the *gi* combination in words such as *figlio* (son; pronounced **feel-yoh**); the word *gli* (the; pronounced *ylee*, like the *ll* in *million*); and *gn* combination, seen in words such as *gnocchi* (potato dumplings; pronounced **nyok-kee**), and *bagno* (bathroom; pronounced **bahn-yoh**, like the *ny* sound in *canyon* or the *ni* sound in *onion*).

Italian sounds so beautiful because everything connects in a smooth, melodic manner. Italian uses an apostrophe when an article or preposition precedes a noun starting with a vowel. Study the examples:

l'animale instead of *lo animale* (the animal)

d'Italia instead of *di Italia* (of Italy)

dov'è instead of *dove è* (where is)

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Pronouncing Vowels Properly

| Vowel | Sound | Example | Pronunciation |
|-------|-----------|-----------------|------------------------|
| a | <i>ah</i> | <i>artista</i> | <i>ar-tee-stah</i> |
| e | <i>eh</i> | <i>elefante</i> | <i>eh-leh-fahn-teh</i> |
| i | <i>ee</i> | <i>isola</i> | <i>ee-zoh-lah</i> |
| o | <i>oh</i> | <i>opera</i> | <i>oh-peh-rah</i> |
| u | <i>oo</i> | <i>uno</i> | <i>oo-noh</i> |

...

LA BELLA LINGUA

Remember how a particular letter combination should be pronounced by recalling a word you already know. *Ad esempio* (for example), the word *ciao* is pronounced with the soft *c*, as in the word *chow*. Other words with the *c + i* combination include *cinema* (*chee-neh-mah*; cinema), *bacio* (*bah-choh*; kiss), and *amici* (*ah-mee-chee*; friends). The word *Chianti* is pronounced with a hard *c*, as in *kee-ahn-tee*. When you come across other words (such as *chi* [who] and *perché* [why] with this *combinazione* (combination), you'll know just how they're pronounced.

A Special Note About *E* and *O*

The two Italian vowels *e* and *o* both possess an open and a closed sound that varies depending on the region.

The open *e* (*eh*) is pronounced like the English words *bet*, *set*, and *ben*. Italian examples include the words *vento* (wind), *bella* (beautiful), and the simple verb conjugation *e* (is). The grave accent mark ` is used to indicate stress on open vowels.

The closed *e* (*ay*) is pronounced like the English words *hay*, *main*, *fade*, and *say*. Italian examples include the words *me* (me), *per* (for), and *e* (Without the accent, meaning “and”). The acute mark ´ is used to indicate stress on closed vowels.

The open *o* (*aw* or *ah*) is pronounced like the English words *spot*, *dog*, and *got*. Italian examples include the words *olio* (oil), *moda* (fashion), and *brodo* (broth).

The closed *o* (*oh*) is pronounced like the words *toe*, *soul*, *row*, and *ghost*. Italian examples include *sole* (sun), *mondo* (world), and *nome* (name).

Regional differences and dialects also affect the way these vowels are pronounced. If you don't get the subtle differences at first, you'll still make yourself understood!

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Give me the Combo

It's time to put it all together. The following examples illustrate many letter combinations you'll find in Italian.

C is for “Casa”

Check out all you can do with the letter *c*.

| Letter Combination | Sound | Pronunciation Guide | |
|---------------------------|--------------|----------------------------|--|
|---------------------------|--------------|----------------------------|--|

| | | | |
|-----------------|-----------|-------------------|--|
| <i>c + e, i</i> | <i>ch</i> | Say <i>cheese</i> | |
|-----------------|-----------|-------------------|--|

| | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| <i>accento</i> | <i>cena</i> | <i>città</i> | <i>baccio</i> |
| <i>ah-chen-toh</i> | cheh-nah | chee-tah | bah-choh |
| accent | dinner | city | kiss |

| | | | |
|-----------------------|----------|-----------------|--|
| <i>c + a, h, o, u</i> | <i>k</i> | Say <i>camp</i> | |
|-----------------------|----------|-----------------|--|

| | | | |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| <i>casa</i> | <i>caro</i> | <i>cubo</i> | <i>Chianti</i> |
| kah-zah | kah-roh | koo-boh | kee-ahn-tee |
| house | dear | cube | Chianti |

G is for “Gamba”

Practice getting your *g* sounds right.

The letter combination *gh* is also pronounced like the *g* in *go*, as in *funghi* (**foonghee**; mushrooms).

| Letter Combination | Sound | Pronunciation Guide | |
|---------------------------|--------------|----------------------------|--|
|---------------------------|--------------|----------------------------|--|

| | | | |
|-----------------|----------|-------------------|--|
| <i>g + e, i</i> | <i>j</i> | Say <i>Gianni</i> | |
|-----------------|----------|-------------------|--|

| | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| <i>gelato</i> | <i>giovane</i> | <i>giacca</i> | <i>viaggio</i> |
| <i>jeh-lah-toh</i> | joh-vah-neh | jahk-kah | vee-ahj-joh |
| ice cream | young | jacket | voyage |

| | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| <i>g + n</i> | <i>ny</i> | Say onion | |
| <i>lavagna</i> | <i>signore</i> | <i>legno</i> | <i>gnocchi</i> |
| lah-vah-nyah | see-nyoh-reh | lehn-yoh | nyohk-kee |
| blackboard | sir, Mr. | wood | potato dumplings |

| | | | |
|-----------------------|----------|--|--|
| <i>g + a, h, o, u</i> | <i>g</i> | Say <i>Gabrielle</i> (and I’ll come running) | |
|-----------------------|----------|--|--|

| | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| <i>gamba</i> | <i>ghetto</i> | <i>prego</i> | <i>gufo</i> |
| gahm-bah | geht-toh | preh-goh | goo-foh |
| leg | ghetto | you’re welcome | owl |

S is for “Scandalo”

The letter s in Italian is quite slippery. Emphasize the double ss when you see words like *passera* (**pahs**-seh-rah; sparrow), *cassa* (**kahs**-sah; cashier), and *sasso* (**sahs**-soh; stone, rock).

| Letter Combination | Sound | Pronunciation Guide | |
|------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| <i>sc + a, h, o, u</i> | <i>sk</i> | Say <i>skin</i> | |
| <i>sconto</i> | <i>scusa</i> | <i>scandalo</i> | <i>pesca</i> |
| skohn -toh | skoo -zah | skahn -dah-loh | pe ss-kah |
| discount | excuse | scandal | peach |
| <i>sc + e, i</i> | <i>sh</i> | Say <i>sheet</i> | |
| <i>pesce</i> | <i>scena</i> | <i>sciropo</i> | <i>sci</i> |
| peh -sheh | sheh -nah | she-rohp -poh | shee |
| fish | scene | syrup | skiing |

When there's an s after a vowel within a word, it's more like a z sound.

| | | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| <i>Peso</i> | <i>Luisa</i> | <i>frase</i> | <i>casa</i> |
| peh -soh | loo-ee -zah | fr ah-zeh | k ah-zah |
| weight | Luisa | phrase | house/home |

Did you notice the similarity between the words you just read and their English counterparts?

Diphthongs

No, a diphthong is not a teeny-weeny bikini. The term *diphthong* (*dittongo* in Italian) refers to any pair of vowels that begins with one vowel sound and ends with a different vowel sound within the same syllable. The term, originally from Greek, literally means "two voices" (*di* = two; *thong* = tongue/voice).

Italian utilizes many diphthongs such as *Italia* (**ee-tahl**-yahl; Italy), *ciao* (*chow*; hi), *olio* (**ohl**-yoh; oil), *quanto* (**kwahn**-toh; how much), and *pausa* (**pow**-zah; pause)

Two vowels do not necessarily produce a diphthong. The word *zia* (**zee**-ah; aunt) maintains two distinct, separate sounds and consequently does not produce a diphthong. The name *Maria* (**mah-ree**-ah) is also a good example of this.

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Certain Italian adjectives can be placed *before* the noun. Some of these include:
bello (beautiful) *grande* (large; great)

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>bravo</i> (good, able) | <i>lungo</i> (long) |
| <i>brutto</i> (ugly) | <i>nuovo</i> (new) |
| <i>buno</i> (good) | <i>piccolo</i> (small, little) |
| <i>caro</i> (dear) | <i>stesso</i> (same) |
| <i>cattivo</i> (bad) | <i>vecchio</i> (old) |
| <i>giovane</i> (young) | <i>vero</i> (true) |

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Adverbs of Place

It's good to know your place. The adverbs in the following table will help.

Adverbs of Place

| English | Italiano | English | Italiano |
|----------------|--------------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| above | <i>sopra</i> | in back of | <i>dietro</i> |
| anywhere | <i>dovunque</i> | in front of | <i>davanti</i> |
| behind | <i>indietro; dietro*</i> | inside | <i>dentro</i> |
| beneath | <i>sotto</i> | near | <i>vicino</i> |
| down | <i>giu</i> | on | <i>sopra</i> |
| down there | <i>laggiu</i> | on top of | <i>su</i> |
| elsewhere | <i>altrove</i> | outside | <i>fuori</i> |
| everywhere | <i>dappertutto</i> | there | <i>ci, là, lì</i> |
| far | <i>lontano</i> | up | <i>su</i> |
| here | <i>qui, qua</i> | | |

**Italian uses dietro if followed by a noun (behind the door)*

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One of the Family (Famiglia)

In Italy, one of the first things people want to know about is your family (*famiglia*). Do you have brothers (*fratelli*) or sisters (*sorelle*)? Listen to the CD to hear how the following terms related to family member should be pronounced. Pay attention to the articles and their impact on how the word sounds when it's pronounced.

Family Members

| Femine | Femminile | Pronunciation | Masculine | Maschile | Pronunciation |
|---------------|-------------------|---------------------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| mother | <i>la madre</i> | lah mah -dreh | father | <i>il padre</i> | eel pah -dreh |
| wife | <i>la moglie</i> | lah moh -lyeh | husband | <i>il marito</i> | eel mah- ree -toh |
| grandmother | <i>la nonna</i> | lah nohn -nah | grandfather | <i>il nanno</i> | eel nohn -noh |
| daughter | <i>la figlia</i> | lah feel -yah | son | <i>il figlio</i> | eel feel -yoh |
| infant | <i>la bambina</i> | lah bahm- bee -nah | infant | <i>il bambino</i> | eel bahm- bee -noh |
| sister | <i>la sorella</i> | lah suh- rehl -leh | brother | <i>il fratello</i> | eel frah- tehl -loh |
| cousin | <i>la cugina</i> | lah koo- gee -nah | cousin | <i>il cugino</i> | eel koo- gee -noh |

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| aunt | <i>la zia</i> | lah tsee-ah | uncle | <i>lo zio</i> | loh tsee-oh |
| granddaughter | <i>la nipote</i> | lah nee- poh-teh | grandson | <i>il nipote</i> | eel nee- poh-teh |
| niece | <i>la nipote</i> | lah nee- poh-teh | nephew | <i>il nipote</i> | eel nee- poh-teh |
| mother-in-law | <i>la suocera</i> | lah swoh-cheh-rah | father-in-law | <i>il suocero</i> | eel swoh-cheh-roh |
| daughter-in-law | <i>la nuora</i> | lah nwoh-rah | son-in-law | <i>il genero</i> | eel jen-eh-roh |
| sister-in-law | <i>la cognata</i> | lah koh- nyah-tah | brother-in-law | <i>il cagnato</i> | eel koh- nyah-toh |
| stepmother | <i>la matrigna</i> | lah mah- tree-nyah | stepfather | <i>il patrigno</i> | eel pah- tree-noyh |
| stepsister | <i>la sorellastra</i> | lah soh-reh- lah-strah | stepbrother | <i>il fratellastro</i> | eel frah-teh- lah-stroh |
| godmother | <i>la madrina</i> | lah mah- dree-nah | godfather | <i>il padrino</i> | eel pah- dree-noh |
| girlfriend | <i>la ragazza</i> | lah rah- gahz-tсах | boyfriend | <i>il ragazzo</i> | eel rah- gahz-tsoh |
| fiancée | <i>la fidanzata</i> | lah fee-dahn- tsah-tah | fiancé | <i>il fidanzato</i> | eel fee-dahn- tsah-toh |
| widow | <i>la vedova</i> | lah veh-doh-vah | widower | <i>il vdeovo</i> | eel veh-doh-voh |

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The – are Family

The largest *famiglia* in the branch, the – are verbs, are also the most regular. These are the most user-friendly verbs because they follow consistent rules.

P Is for *Parlare*

Study the verb *parlare* (to speak) to see how it conjugates, Substitute the infinitive – are with the endings you just saw. The English words *parable*, *paragraph*, and *parlance* all share roots with this verb.

Parlare (to Speak)

| Italiano | Pronunciation | English |
|--------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>io parlo</i> | par-loh | I Speak |
| <i>tu parli</i> | par-lee | you speak |
| <i>lui/lei/Lei parla</i> | par-lah | he/she speaks; You speak |
| <i>noi parliamo</i> | par-lee-yamo | we speak |
| <i>voi parlate</i> | par-lah-teh | you speak |
| <i>loro parlano</i> | par-lah-noh | they speak |

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Regular – are Verbs

| Italiano | Pronunciation | English |
|-----------------|----------------------|----------------|
| ... | | |
| passare | pahs- sah-reh | to pass |

...

ritornare ree-tor-**nah**-reh to return

...

trovare troh-**vah**-reh to find

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S Is for Scrivere

Notice how easy it is to write in Italian with the verb *scrivere* (to write). The English words *scribe*, *script*, and *scripture* all share common roots with this verb.

***Scrivere* (to Write)**

| Italiano | Pronunciation | English |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>io scrivo</i> | skree -voh | I write |
| <i>tu scrivi</i> | skree -vee | you write |
| <i>lui/lei/lei scrive</i> | skree -veh | he/she writes; You write |
| <i>noi scriviamo</i> | skree -vee- yah -moh | we write |
| <i>voi scrivete</i> | skree - veh -teh | you write |
| <i>loro scrivono</i> | skree -voh-noh | they write |

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The – *ire* Family

There are two groups of – *ire* verbs. The first group follows conjugation rules similar to those for the – *ere* verbs. As a matter of fact, they're the same except for the second person plural (*voi*), as shown in the following table.

D is for Dormire

It's true, verb conjugations can put you to sleep. As an example of the first group, study the verb *dormire* (to sleep). The English words *dormitory*, *dormant*, and *dormer* are related to this verb.

***Dormire* (to Sleep)**

| Italiano | Pronunciation | English |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>io dormo</i> | dor -moh | I sleep |
| <i>tu dormi</i> | dor -mee | you sleep |
| <i>lui/lei/Lui dorme</i> | dor -meh | he/she sleeps; You sleep |
| <i>noi dormiamo</i> | dor -mee- yah -moh | we sleep |
| <i>voi dormite</i> | dor - mee -teh | you sleep |

loro dormono

dor-moh-noh

they sleep

...

More -ire Verbs (Group II)

The second group of -ire verbs is still considered regular but must be conjugated differently from other -ire verbs. After you learn the endings, you'll have no problem conjugating them.

C Is for *Capire*

A commonly used verb from this family is the verb *capire* (to understand). Look at the following table to see how this verb conjugates. If you can remember this verb, the others follow quite easily. English words sharing etymological ties include *capitalism*, *capable*, and *capacity*.

Capire (to Understand)

| Italiano | Pronunciation | English |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <i>io capisco</i> | <i>kah-pee-skoh</i> | I understand |
| <i>tu capisci</i> | <i>kah-pee-shee</i> | you understand |
| <i>lui/lei/Lei capisce</i> | <i>kah-pee-shay</i> | he/she understands; You understand |
| <i>noi capiamo</i> | <i>kah-pee-yah-moh</i> | we understand |
| <i>voi capite</i> | <i>kah-pee-teh</i> | you understand |
| <i>loro capiscono</i> | <i>kah-pee-skoh-moh</i> | they understand |

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The Birds and the Be Verbs

Two different *verbi* are used to express “to be” in Italian: *stare* and *essere*. When you ask someone, “*Come stai?*” (How are you?), you’re using the verb *stare*. When you say, “*La vita è bella*” (Life is beautiful), you’re using the verb *essere*. Because the two verbs mean the same thing, the difference between the two comes down to usage.

...

The Verb *Essere* (to Be)

The verb *essere* is essential and very useful. When you talk about immutable facts, this is your verb. *Essere* is also used as a helpful verb, necessary to create compound tenses like the past. The English words *essence*, *essential*, and *existence* all share etymological roots with this verb. Its highly irregular and therefore difficult to find in a dictionary. You’ll do yourself a big favor by being able to recognize the many different forms.

What's amazing is how important one tiny letter – è (is) – can have. Pronounce it with oomph, like a strong *ay*.

The Verb *Essere* (to Be)

| Italiano | Pronunciation | English |
|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>io sono</i> | <i>soh-noh</i> | I am |
| <i>tu sei</i> | <i>say</i> | you are |
| <i>lui/lei/Lei è</i> | <i>ay</i> | he/she (it)* is; You are |
| <i>noi siamo</i> | <i>see-ah-moh</i> | we are |
| <i>voi siete</i> | <i>see-yeh-teh</i> | you are |
| <i>loro sono</i> | <i>soh-noh</i> | they are |

*Italian has no neuter “it.” It uses the verb form alone to refer to things or animals.

Page 112-113:

The Verb *Stare* (to Be; to Stay)

It's time to switch over to another super handy verb: *stare*. You'll use this verb to ask someone how they are, to discuss temporary situations (like where you're staying), and to form the progressive tense. The English words *stay*, *state*, and *status* are all cousins to *stare*.

The Verb *Stare* (to Be; to Stay)

| Italiano | Pronunciation | English |
|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>io sto</i> | <i>stoh</i> | I am |
| <i>tu stai</i> | <i>sty</i> | you are |
| <i>lui/lei/Lei sta</i> | <i>sta</i> | he/she (it) is; You are |
| <i>noi stiamo</i> | <i>stee-ah-moh</i> | we are |
| <i>voi state</i> | <i>stah-teh</i> | you are |
| <i>loro stanno</i> | <i>stahn-noh</i> | they are |

...

Come stai?
How are you?

Sto bene, grazie.
I am well, thanks.

Page 120:

Bambino, I got Your Numero

You don't need to use Roman numerals to do your math. Italians use the euro (EUR), so be ready to manage a lot of coins because there are no bills under 5 euros. Numbers that express amounts are known as cardinal numbers (*numeri cardinali*) in Italian, as shown in the following table.

Numeri Cardinali

| English | <i>Italiano</i> | Pronunciation |
|---------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| 0 | <i>zero</i> | <i>zeh-roh</i> |
| 1 | <i>uno</i> | <i>oo-noh</i> |
| 2 | <i>due</i> | <i>doo-weh</i> |
| 3 | <i>tre</i> | <i>treh</i> |
| 4 | <i>quattro</i> | <i>kwaht-troh</i> |
| 5 | <i>cinque</i> | <i>cheen-kweh</i> |
| 6 | <i>sei</i> | <i>say</i> |
| 7 | <i>sette</i> | <i>seht-teh</i> |
| 8 | <i>otto</i> | <i>oht-toh</i> |
| 9 | <i>nove</i> | <i>noh-veh</i> |
| 10 | <i>dieci</i> | <i>dee-yay-chee</i> |
| 11 | <i>undici</i> | <i>oon-dee-chee</i> |
| 12 | <i>dodici</i> | <i>doh-dee-chee</i> |
| 13 | <i>tredici</i> | <i>treh-dee-chee</i> |
| 14 | <i>quattordici</i> | <i>kwaht-tor-dee-chee</i> |
| 15 | <i>quindici</i> | <i>kween-dee-chee</i> |
| 16 | <i>sedici</i> | <i>seh-dee-chee</i> |
| 17 | <i>diciasette</i> | <i>dee-chas-seht-teh</i> |
| 18 | <i>diciotto</i> | <i>dee-chot-toh</i> |
| 19 | <i>dicianove</i> | <i>dee-chan-noh-veh</i> |
| 20 | <i>venti</i> | ven-tee |
| 21 | <i>ventuno</i> | ven-too-noh |
| 22 | <i>ventidue</i> | ven-tee-doo-weh |
| 23 | <i>ventitre</i> | ven-tee-treh |
| 24 | <i>ventiquattro</i> | ven-tee-kwaht-troh |
| 25 | <i>venticinque</i> | ven-tee-cheen-kweh |
| 26 | <i>ventisei</i> | ven-tee-say |
| 27 | <i>ventisette</i> | ven-tee-seht-teh |
| 28 | <i>ventotto</i> | ven-toht-toh |
| 29 | <i>ventinove</i> | ven-tee-noh-veh |
| 30 | <i>trenta</i> | tren-tah |

Page 129:

Days of the Week

| English | <i>L'Italiano</i> | Pronunciation |
|----------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Monday | <i>lunedì</i> | <i>loo-neh-dee</i> |
| Tuesday | <i>martedì</i> | <i>mar-teh-dee</i> |
| Wednesday | <i>mercoledì</i> | <i>mer-koh-leh-dee</i> |

| | | |
|-------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Thursday | <i>giovedì</i> | <i>joh-veh-dee</i> |
| Friday | <i>venerdì</i> | <i>veh-ner-dee</i> |
| Saturday | <i>sabato</i> | <i>sah-bah-toh</i> |
| Sunday | <i>domenica</i> | <i>doh-meh-nee-kah</i> |
| the weekend | <i>il fine settimana</i> | <i>eel fee-neh seh-tee-mah-nah</i> |

Page 130:

I Mesi: Months

The original *calendrio* (calendar) the Romans used was based on a 10-month year. The original “old-style Roman calendar, instituted by Julius Caesar in 46 B.C.E., was used until 1583, when Pope Gregory XIII made official the “new-style” calendar – also referred to as the *Gregorian* calendar. The months *luglio* (July) and *agosto* (August) were added in honor of the great Roman Emperors Julius Caesar and Augustus. As with the days of the week, Italian does not capitalize names of months.

LA BELLA LINGUA

The word *calendrio* originally comes from the Latin word *calends*, signifying the day of the new moon. During the Middle Ages, money lenders referred to their account books as the calendar due to the fact that the monthly interest was due on the *calends*.

I Mesi (the Months)

| English | Italiano | Pronunciation |
|----------------|------------------|----------------------|
| January | <i>gennaio</i> | <i>jen-ny-yoh</i> |
| February | <i>febbraio</i> | <i>feb-bry-yoh</i> |
| March | <i>marzo</i> | <i>mar-tsoh</i> |
| April | <i>aprile</i> | <i>ah-pree-leh</i> |
| May | <i>maggio</i> | <i>mahj-joh</i> |
| June | <i>giugno</i> | <i>joo-nyoh</i> |
| July | <i>luglio</i> | <i>loo-lyoh</i> |
| August | <i>agosto</i> | <i>ah-goh-stoh</i> |
| September | <i>settembre</i> | <i>set-tem-breh</i> |
| October | <i>ottobre</i> | <i>oht-toh-breh</i> |
| November | <i>novembre</i> | <i>noh-ven-breh</i> |
| December | <i>dicembre</i> | <i>dee-chem-breh</i> |

Page 131:

LA BELLA LINGUA

Here’s a who’s who of mythological archetypes. The Romans and Greeks shared many of the same gods. The Greek equivalents are in parentheses.

The Gods

Apollo (Apollo)
 Jupiter (Zeus)
 Mars (Ares)
 Mercury (Hermes)
 Neptune (Poseidon)
 Vulcan (Hephaistos)

The Goddesses

Ceres (Demeter)
 Diana (Artemis)
 Juno (Hera)
 Minerva (Athena)
 Venus (Aphrodite)
 Vesta (Hestia)

Page 135-136:**Things to Do; The Verb *Fare***

If you're a doer, then *fare* (to do) is the verb for you because it expresses when you want to make or do something. It's also often used like the English verb *to take* and appears in many idiomatic expressions. For example, in Italian, you don't *take* a trip – rather, you *make* a trip (*fare un viaggio*). *Fare* is also used to talk about *il tempo* (the weather) or when you *take* the perfect picture.

With this versatile verb, you can go shopping, pretend, or indicate where something hurts. You'll use it when you take a shower, a walk, or a spin. You'll also use it a lot during your travels. Because *fare* is irregular, you must memorize the different parts shown in the following table.

The Verb *Fare* (to Do; to Make)

| Italiano | Pronunciation | English |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|--|
| <i>io faccio</i> | <i>fah-choh</i> | I do/make |
| <i>tu fai</i> | <i>fy</i> | you do/make |
| <i>lui/lei/Lei fa</i> | <i>fah</i> | he/she (it) does/makes; You do/make |
| <i>noi facciamo</i> | <i>fah-chah-moh</i> | we do/make |
| <i>voi fate</i> | <i>fah-teh</i> | you do/make |
| <i>loro fanno</i> | <i>fahn-noh</i> | they do/make |

Page 139:***Pizza Quattro Stagioni (the Four Seasons)***

Have you ever eaten *pizza quattro stagioni*? Did you realize it was referring to “Four season pizza”? Here are the ingredients:

| | |
|--------|--|
| summer | <i>l'estate</i> |
| spring | <i>la primavera</i> (literally, first green) |
| fall | <i>l'autunno</i> (autumn) |
| winter | <i>l'inverno</i> |

Page 143-145:
Chapter 10
The Modal and Other
Irregular Verbs

...

Superhero Verbs: The Modals

Do you *want* to learn Italian? You can, but you must study. The modal verbs *volere* (to want), *potere* (to be able to), and *dovere* (to have to) express a mood, such as when you say, “I want! I can! I must!” They’re powerful verbs that describe intention, desire and potential.

I Want What I Want!

Volere is an important verb you have already been using in its conditional form. When you say “*Vorrei*,” you’re saying “I would like.” Because you *would like* to express your wants as delicately as possible, you use the conditional. Sometimes, however, you just want what you want and there’s no doubt about it. The following table shows you how to express want, pure and simple, in the present tense. The English terms *volunteer* and *volition* are etymological cousins to this verb.

Volere (to Want)

| <i>Italiano</i> | English |
|-------------------|---------------------------|
| io voglio | I want |
| tu vuoi | you want |
| leu/lei/Lei vuole | he/she/it wants; You want |
| noi vogliamo | we want |
| voi volete | you want |
| loro vogliono* | they want |

**Emphasis should be placed on the first syllable of the third person plural (loro)*

I Think I Can, I Think I Can!

You use the verb *potere* (to be able to; can) to express your potential to do something. It’s the same as what the little treno said as it puffed up the hill – and it’s what you use to express that you *can* speak Italian. The *possibilita* are endless, as long as you think you can. The verb *potere* is always used with an infinitive. Linguistic cousins include the words *potential*, *potent*, and *possibility*.

Potere (to Be Able to/Can)

| Italiano | English |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| <i>io posso</i> | I can |
| <i>tu puoi</i> | you can |
| <i>lui/lei/Lei può</i> | he/she/it/You can |
| <i>noi possiamo</i> | we can |
| <i>voi potete</i> | you can |
| <i>loro possono*</i> | they can |

**Emphasis should be placed on the first syllable of the third person plural (loro)*

I Have to...

Use the modal verb *dovere*, outlined in the following table, to express *to have to* and *must* or to express *to owe*. Like the verb *potere*, *dovere* is almost always used in front of an infinitive, such as when you say, "I must study." Relatives to this word include *debt* and *debit*.

Dovere (to Have to/Must/to Owe)

| Italiano | English |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| <i>io devo</i> | I must |
| <i>tu devi</i> | you must; |
| <i>lui/lei/Lei deve</i> | he/she/it/You must |
| <i>noi dobbiamo</i> | we must |
| <i>voi dovete</i> | you must |
| <i>loro devono*</i> | they must |

**Emphasis should be placed on the first syllable of the third person plural (loro)*

Page 146-147:

B Is for Bere (to Drink)

You'll definitely need to use the irregular verb *bere* (to drink) if you plan on enjoying any number of the first beverages (another etymological cousin), from *il vino* to *un bicchiere d'acqua* (a glass of water).

Bere (to Drink)

| Italiano | English |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>io bevo</i> | I drink |
| <i>tu bevi</i> | you drink |
| <i>lui/lei/Lei beve</i> | he/she/it drinks; You drink |
| <i>noi beviamo</i> | we drink |
| <i>voi bevete</i> | you drink |
| <i>loro bevono</i> | they drink |

D Is for Dire (to Say)

Dire (to say or tell) is another useful irregular verb. Note in the following table that the stem changes to *dic-* in all persons except the second plural. Think *diction*, *dictate*, *dictionary*.

***Dire* (to Say/Tell)**

| Italiano | English |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>io dico</i> | I say |
| <i>tu dici</i> | you say |
| <i>lui/lei/Lei dice</i> | he/she/it says; You say |
| <i>noi diciamo</i> | we say |
| <i>voi dite</i> | you say |
| <i>loro dicono</i> | they say |

Knowing with *Sapere*

The irregular verb *sapere* (to know something) is what you use to talk about all the information you have stuck inside that head of yours. Linguistic cousins include *la sapienze* (knowledge) and *consapevole* (aware, conscious).

***Sapere* (to Know)**

| Italiano | English |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>io so</i> | I know |
| <i>tu sai</i> | you know |
| <i>lui/lei/Lei sa</i> | he/she/it knows; You know |
| <i>noi sappiamo</i> | we know |
| <i>voi sapete</i> | you know |
| <i>loro sanno</i> | they know |

Page 148:

Going Out with *Uscire*

You're ready to paint the town red. The verb *uscire* (to go out or exit) gets you out of your hotel room and into the heart of the action.

***Uscire* (to Go Out/Exit)**

| Italiano | English |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>io esco</i> | I go out |
| <i>tu esci</i> | you go out |
| <i>lui/lei/Lei esce</i> | he/she/it goes out; You go out |
| <i>noi usciamo</i> | we go out |
| <i>voi uscite</i> | you go out |
| <i>loro escono</i> | they go out |

Remember your pronunciation rules: the word *esco* is pronounced *es-koh*; *esci* is pronounced *eh-she*.

Staying a While with *Rimanere*

The verb *rimanere* (to remain) has similar endings to the verb *venire*.

Rimanere (to Remain)

| Italiano | English |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>io rimango</i> | I remain |
| <i>tu rimani</i> | you remain |
| <i>lui/lei/Lei rimane</i> | he/she/it remains; You remain |
| <i>noi rimaniamo</i> | we remain |
| <i>voi rimanete</i> | you remain |
| <i>loro rimangono</i> | they remain |

Page 149:

Coming Together with *Venire*

Eventually, you have to come down to Earth. The irregular verb *venire* (to come) might help you find your way.

Venire (to Come)

| Italiano | English |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>io vengo</i> | I come |
| <i>tu vieni</i> | you come |
| <i>lui/lei/Lei viene</i> | he/she/it comes; You come |
| <i>noi veniamo</i> | we come |
| <i>voi venite</i> | you come |
| <i>loro vengono</i> | they come |

Going Crazy: The Verb *Andare*

The verb *andare* (to go) is an essential irregular verb, so you need to memorize the parts outlined in the following table. (You can cram on the 7-hour plane ride to Italy.) You'll get to use the verbs you've studied so far to talk about getting around.

Andare (to Go)

| Italiano | English |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| <i>io vado</i> | I go |
| <i>tu vai</i> | you go |
| <i>lui/lei/Lei va</i> | he/she/it goes; You go |
| <i>noi andiamo</i> | we go |

voi *andate*
loro *vanno*

you go
they go

Page 184:

What, When, and How Much?

Remember that in Italy, schedules are given in military time. If you're leaving at 2 P.M., for example, you are told 14:00 hours. This may be tricky at first, so confirm that you understand correctly by asking if it is A.M. (*di mattina*) or P.M. (*di sera*).

The following table contains a list of words and expressions that help you get what you want, find out where you want to go, and meet the people you'd like to meet.

Information Questions

| English | Italiano |
|----------------|---|
| how? | <i>come?</i> |
| how much? | <i>quanto?</i> |
| what? | <i>che cosa?</i> (can be broken up as <i>che?</i> or <i>cosa?</i>) |
| what time? | <i>a che ora?</i> |
| when? | <i>quando?</i> |
| where? | <i>dove?</i> |
| where is ...? | <i>dov'è ...?</i> |
| who? | <i>chi?</i> |
| why? | <i>perche?</i> |

Page 185-186:

Prepositions: Sticky Stuff

You've used these words thousands of times and probably never knew they were all prepositions. Just like the name implies, a preposition is situated *before* a word (*preposition*) to tell you its relationship to other words. These little commonly used words pack a lot of punch, connecting everything together.

You've already seen a lot of prepositions because they're the glue of a *frase* and tie the words together. The following table provides a comprehensive list of Italian prepositions and their meanings. Those in bold are the most commonly used.

Preposizioni (Prepositions)

| English | Italiano | English | Italiano |
|---|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| about, around (when making an estimation) | <i>circa</i> | from, by | <i>da</i> |

| | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| above | <i>sopra</i> | in front of, before, <i>ahead</i> | <i>avanti,</i> <i>davanti</i> |
| after | <i>dopo</i> | in, into, by, on | <i>in</i> |
| against, opposite to | <i>contro</i> | inside of | <i>dentro a</i> |
| around | <i>attorno a</i> | near | <i>vicino a</i> |
| before | <i>davanti a</i> | of, from, about | <i>di</i> |
| behind | <i>dietro a</i> | on, upon | <i>su</i> |
| beside | <i>accanto a</i> | outside | <i>fuori di</i> |
| besides, beyond | <i>oltre</i> | to, at, in | <i>a</i> |
| between, among, in, within | <i>fra, tra</i> | under | <i>sotto</i> |
| except, save | <i>eccetto</i> | until, as far as | <i>fino a</i> |
| far from | <i>lontano da</i> | <i>with</i> | <i>con</i> |
| for, in order to | <i>per</i> | without | <i>senza</i> |

Page 206:

I'm sorry.
Mi dispiace.

Page 326:

cold *freddo* (adj.), *raffredorre* (m.)

Page 335:

please *per favore, per piacere*

Page 344:

caldo heat, hot (adj.)

Page 342:

arrivederci! See you later!

Page 359:

lodare to praise

Page 372:

Va Bene: Idioms with Andare (to Go)

| English | Italiano |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Get out of here! You're kidding! | <i>Ma va!</i> |
| How's it going? | <i>Come va?</i> |
| It's going well/badly | <i>Va bene/male.</i> |
| to go around; to take a spin | <i>andare in giro</i> |
| to go crazy | <i>andare matto</i> |

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| to go to pieces | <i>andare in pezzi</i> |
| to go to the other world | <i>andare all-altro mondo</i> |
| to let something go | <i>lasciare andare</i> |

Page 376:

Italian Colloquialisms

Whether lonely dogs, hungry wolves, or depressed potatoes, Italian possesses thousands of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms.

In Bocca al Lupo! (Break a Leg!)

| English | Italiano |
|--|--|
| ... | |
| Those that sleep won't catch fish. The early bird gets the worm. | <i>Chi dorme non piglia pesci.</i> |
| ... | |
| It takes much more than that! | <i>Ci vuole altro!</i> |
| ... | |
| a lot | <i>da morire</i> |
| on the other hand | <i>d'altro canto</i> |
| to give a hand | <i>dare una mano</i> |
| Of mothers, there is only one. | <i>Di mamma ce n'è una sola.</i> |
| ... | |
| to be a fish out of water | <i>essere un pesce fuor d'acqua</i> |
| out of fashion | <i>fuori moda</i> |
| I smell a rat | <i>Gatta ci cova</i> |
| to spin one's head | <i>fuori moda</i> |
| Leave me alone | <i>Lasciami stare.</i> |
| Lies have short legs. | <i>Le bugie hanno le gambe corte</i> |
| southpaw (a leftie) | <i>mancino (little hand")</i> |
| to eat like a beast | <i>mangiare come una bestia</i> |
| better than nothing | <i>miglior di nulla</i> |
| Not even in your dreams! | <i>Nemmeno per sogno!</i> |
| That's all. | <i>Non c'è altro</i> |
| I can't stand it anymore. | <i>Non ne posso più.</i> |
| Nude and crude (the plain truth) | <i>nudo e crudo</i> |
| As you like! All right then! | <i>Padronissimo!</i> |
| To tease or joke | <i>prendere in giro (to take around)</i> |
| to fade into nothing (to go up in smoke) | <i>sfumare nel nulla</i> |

Sweet dreams!

They're like two drops of water. (two peas in a pod; *one and the same*)

dead tired

to touch iron (to knock on wood)

to want the bottle full and the wife drunk

Sogni d'oro!

Sono come due gocce d'acqua

stanco da morire

toccare ferro

volere la botte piena e la moglie ubriaca
