



Torniamo a tavola! Volume 1

Torniamo a tavola!

Volume 1

*An intermediate Italian grammar
manual*

MELINA MASTERSON

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST LIBRARIES



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Benvenuto* a *Torniamo a tavola*, vol. 1! This book represents a continuation and expansion of what you studied in *Tutt* a tavola!* volumes 1 & 2. Since you are now at the intermediate level of your study of Italian, this book is meant to service as a grammatical reference and guide, rather than as a traditional textbook, as the primary goal of this course is to improve your speaking, listening, writing, reading and intercultural abilities and knowledge. There are four (4) units (*Unità*), comprised of different grammatical structures (*Strutture*) and vocabulary (*Vocabolario*) related to the theme of the unit. The vocabulary list in particular is intended as a starting off point – you are encouraged to keep and maintain your own vocabulary lists throughout the semester, using whatever platform you prefer (Quizlet, Anki, good old fashioned paper flashcards). Some of the grammatical structures will be a review of topics you have studied in the past, with attention to forms and usage not covered at the elementary level, while others will be new. At the end of the explanation of each structure, there is a practice exercise (*Una prova*) that is auto-graded, with multiple attempts possible, so you can check your work and gauge your progress.

This text is just one resource for your study of Italian this semester. Other materials, including grammar tutorials, are available on the Blackboard site for the course, and our class meetings will provide additional information, explanations, and, most importantly, conversation!

Bentornat a tavola – ora mangiamo!*

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Unità 1

Cosa ti sta a cuore?

Obiettivi per il capitolo

At the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- describe their routines at home and at school
- talk about their likes and dislikes, needs and preferences
- discuss their hobbies and interests
- engage others in conversations about their daily lives
- compare superstitions and cultural traditions in Italy to their own cultures

Vocabolario: la cultura popolare. Le superstizioni e le tradizioni

Here are some words that will help you participate in the conversations in this chapter. Of course, there are also many more! Creating your own course dictionary is a good way to keep track of new words.

l'oroscopo	horoscope
toccare ferro	knock on wood (literally, to touch iron)
la sfiga	bad luck
il malocchio	evil eye
la coccinella	ladybug
il corno, il cornicello, il cornetto	lucky charm, talisman (horn-shaped)
fare le corna	gesture to ward off evil
il quadrifoglio	four leaf clover
il numero sfortunato	unlucky number
venerdì 17	Friday the 17th (unlucky day in Italy—not the 13th!)
il fantasma	ghost
stregato/a	haunted
la superstizione	superstition
la scaramanzia	superstition, “for luck”
superstizioso/a; scaramantico/a	superstitious
lo scongiuro	exorcism, spell (to ward off bad luck)

Struttura 1.1 Ripasso dei verbi regolari al presente indicativo

Welcome to intermediate Italian! You learned SO MANY verb forms at the elementary level. In this course we will review

some of those forms, as well as look at them more in depth and discover more of their irregularities and usages. Plus you'll learn some brand new forms, too (did you think you learned them all in 120?!)

Let's start with a review of **regular verbs** in the **present tense**.

First of all, a reminder that the present tense is actually incredibly useful in Italian. It is used far more than it is in English. For example, *Io ballo* in Italian can mean:

-I dance (as in a routine activity)

-I am dancing (at this moment)

-I will dance / I'm going to dance (in the future)

So knowing how to use the present tense means that you can communicate a LOT of things in Italian! So let's review the forms...

Remember that there are three primary categories of verbs in Italian: those ending in *-are*, *-ere*, and *-ire*.

To conjugate verbs in the present tense, the first step is to remove the ending (the *-are*, the *-ere*, and the *-ire*). You are then left with what is called the **"root"** of the verb. In the case of the verb *ballare*, we would remove the *-are* and the remaining *ball-* is the root of the verb, to which we attach the endings. In the case of a regular *-are* verb, those endings are as follows:

io ballo	noi balliamo
tu balli	voi ballate
lui/lei/Lei balla	loro ballano

We do the same thing for *-ere* and *-ire* verbs, which differ only in the *lui/lei*, *voi* and *loro* forms from *-are* conjugations. *-Ere* and *-ire* verbs are nearly identical in their conjugated forms, with the exception of the *voi* form.

	scrivere	dormire
io	scrivo	dormo
tu	scrivi	dormi
lui/lei/Lei	scrive	dorme
noi	scriviamo	dormiamo
voi	scrivete	dormite
loro	scrivono	dormono

Remember, too, that *-ire* verbs actually have two regular conjugations in the present—those that conjugate like *dormire*, and those that add an *-isc* in between the root and the ending (with the exception of the *noi* and *voi* forms, like other shoe verbs).

	dormire	capire
io	dormo	capisco
tu	dormi	capisci
lui/lei/Lei	dorme	capisce
noi	dormiamo	capiamo
voi	dormite	capite
loro	dormono	capiscono

Common verbs that conjugate like *capire* are *preferire*, *pulire*, *spedire*, *finire* and *obbedire/ubbedire*.

This is all familiar, right?

Una prova



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Struttura 1.2 Ripasso dei verbi irregolari al presente indicativo

Of course, there are also many common verbs that do NOT quite follow the patterns above. There are some patterns within these irregularities, but some of them just require some memorization. Here are the most common irregular verbs in the present tense. See if you can find any patterns that might help you remember them.

	essere	avere
io	sono	ho
tu	sei	hai
lui/lei/Lei	è	ha
noi	siamo	abbiamo
voi	siete	avete
loro	sono	hanno

Common irregular -are verbs

	fare	stare	dare	andare
io	faccio	sto	do	vado
tu	fai	stai	dai	vai
lui/lei/Lei	fa	sta	dà	va
noi	facciamo	stiamo	diamo	andiamo
voi	fate	state	date	andate
loro	fanno	stanno	danno	vanno

Common irregular -ere verbs

	bere	dovere	potere	volere	piacere
io	bevo	devo	posso	voglio	piaccio
tu	bevi	devi	puoi	vuoi	piaci
lui/lei/Lei	beve	deve	può	vuole	piace
noi	beviamo	dobbiamo	possiamo	vogliamo	piacciamo
voi	bevete	dovete	potete	volete	piacete
loro	bevono	devono	possono	vogliono	piacciono

Common irregular -ire verbs

	uscire	venire	dire
io	esco	vengo	dico
tu	esci	vieni	dici
lui/lei/Lei	esce	viene	dice
noi	usciamo	veniamo	diciamo
voi	uscite	venite	dite
loro	escono	vengono	dicono

Note that in almost all cases, the voi form remains regular.

Una prova



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Struttura 1.3 I verbi riflessivi e reciproci

There are also other verb forms in the present tense that are regular in their conjugations but a bit unusual in their meaning and usage. **Reflexive verbs**, or the verbs that end in *-arsi*, *-ersi*, and *-irsi* indicate actions that one does to oneself. Sometimes these are similar to how they are used in English, like *mettersi* (to put on [oneself]), but often times there is no good direct translation, like *divertirsi* (to have fun) – though in that case if it is defined as “to enjoy oneself” the idea becomes clearer. The biggest thing to remember is that these verbs conjugate just like regular *-are*, *-ere*, and *-ire* verbs do, with the addition of what is called the **reflexive pronoun** before. These verbs always have a two part conjugation, like this:

	alzarsi (to get up)	mettersi (to put on)	divertirsi (to have fun)
io	mi alzo	mi metto	mi diverto
tu	ti alzi	ti metti	ti diverti
lui/lei/ Lei	si alza	si mette	si diverte
noi	ci alziamo	ci mettiamo	ci divertiamo
voi	vi alzate	vi mettete	vi divertite
loro	si alzano	si mettono	si divertono

Other common reflexive verbs, many of which we use to describe our routines, are *svegliarsi*, *lavarsi*, *vestirsi*, *asciugarsi*, *prepararsi*, *addormentarsi*, *annoiarsi*, *arrabbiarsi*, *riposarsi*, *sentirsi*, *sposarsi*, *innamorarsi*.

There are also other verbs that conjugate identically to reflexive verbs but with slightly different meanings. Those verbs are called **reciprocal verbs**, and much like the name suggests,

they indicate actions that people do to each other. By definition, they only exist in the plural form (a “two to tango” kind of situation). Like this:

	parlarsi (to speak to each other)	vedersi (to see each other)	sentirsi (to hear each other/to talk to each other on the phone)
noi	ci parliamo	ci vediamo	ci sentiamo
voi	vi parlate	vi vedete	vi sentite
loro	si parlano	si vedono	si sentono

Sometimes the same verb can exist in both reflexive and reciprocal forms. For example, *Mi chiamo Alessandra* (I call myself Alessandra) and *Io e Alessandra ci chiamiamo* (Alessandra and I call each other). Or *si sentono male oggi* (They don't feel well today) and *si sentono al telefono* (they talk to each other on the phone).

Una prova



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Struttura 1.4 Altri verbi irregolari

In contesto

Jovanotti **compone** una canzone d'amore per la sua fidanzata. ?

Jovanotti **propone** il matrimonio alla sua fidanzata. ??

Jovanotti **tiene** in mano una piccola scatola. ?

La scatola **contiene** un anello di fidanzamento. ?

Al momento giusto, Jovanotti **produce** la scatola dalla sua tasca e **conduce** la sua fidanzata ad una panchina.

Lui **toglie** l'anello dalla scatola e **coglie** l'occasione per cantare la canzone che ha scritto.

Il "concerto" **attrae** l'attenzione delle altre persone nel parco, che cominciano a guardare la scena.

Can you identify the verbs in bold above? Most likely, you can infer their meaning because they are similar to English. Can you identify their infinitive forms, though? Probably not, or at least not all of them. This is because they belong to some 'families' of irregular verbs that you have likely not seen before. The good news is that if you learn the base conjugation for these verbs, then you can conjugate all of the verbs from that family. Let's look at an example.

Es. Jovanotti **compone** una canzone d'amore per la sua fidanzata. ?

The verb *compone* is the *lui/lei* form of the verb *comporre*. Yes, there are verbs that end in *-rre*! Specifically, ones that end in *-orre*, *-arre*, and *-urre*. Many of them are close to cognates in English, and if you learn the basic conjugation, you can conjugate all of the other verbs in that category.

porre (to pose, to place)	trarre (to pull, to draw)	tradurre (to translate)
proPORRE (to propose) supPORRE (to suppose) comPORRE (to compose)	disTRARRE (to distract) atTRARRE (to attract)	proDURRE (to produce) conDURRE (to conduct, to lead)

Let's look at the first category:

	porre	proporre	supporre	comporre
io	pongo	propongo	suppongo	compongo
tu	poni	proponi	supponi	componi
lui/lei/Lei	pone	propone	suppone	compone
noi	poniamo	proponiamo	supponiamo	componiamo
voi	ponete	proponete	supponete	componete
loro	pongono	propongono	suppongono	compongono

As you can see, these verbs follow a clear pattern. The endings are all consistent with regular *-ere* verbs. There is the addition of the "n" throughout, of course, and even more notable is the addition of the "g" to the *io* and *loro* forms. You have seen this phenomenon before with the verbs *venire* (*vengo, vengono*) and *rimanere* (*rimango, rimangono*).

We see something similar with the second category, though the "g" is doubled:

	trarre	distrarre	attrarre
io	traggo	distraggo	attraggo
tu	traì	distraì	attraì
lui/lei/Lei	trae	distrae	attrae
noi	traiamo	distraiamo	attraiamo
voi	traete	distraete	attraete
loro	traggono	distraggono	attraggono

In the third category, the root gets changed slightly, much like you've seen with verbs like *bere* (*bev-*) and *dire* (*dic-*).

	tradurre	produrre	condurre
io	traduco	produco	conduco
tu	traduci	produci	conduci
lui/lei/Lei	traduce	produce	conduce
noi	traduciamo	produciamo	conduciamo
voi	traducete	producete	conducete
loro	traducono	producono	conducono

Finally, there are two other categories of irregular verbs that you might encounter, those with *tenere* and those ending in *-gliere*:

tenere	cogliere
manTENERE	sceGLIERE
conTENERE	toGLIERE accoGLIERE

The first category will look very familiar. In fact, if you can remember how to conjugate *venire*, you remember how to conjugate any verb ending in *-tenere*.

	tenere	venire
io	tengo	vengo
tu	tieni	vieni
lui/lei/Lei	tiene	viene
noi	teniamo	veniamo
voi	tenete	venite
loro	tengono	vengono

As you can see, with the exception of the *voi* form, the two conjugations are identical. Both also feature the added “g” to the *io* and *loro* forms that you saw above.

The final category also features a spelling change to the *io* and *loro* forms, but this time it’s a simple letter reversal:

	cogliere	scegliere	togliere	accogliere
io	colgo	scelgo	tolgo	accolgo
tu	cogli	scegli	togli	accogli
lui/lei/Lei	coglie	sceglie	toglie	accoglie
noi	cogliamo	scegliamo	togliamo	accogliamo
voi	cogliete	scegliete	togliete	accogliete
loro	colgono	scelgono	tolgono	accolgono

You should have observed that the “gl” switches to “lg” in the *io* and *loro* forms of these verbs.

Una prova



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Struttura 1.5 I verbi impersonali

In contesto

Ti piace l'italiano?

Ti piacciono i verbi irregolari in italiano?

Why do we use *piace* in the first example and *piacciono* in the second? Hopefully you remember that *piacere* works a little differently in Italian than it does in English. In the first example, the subject of the sentence is actually *l'italiano*, literally meaning “Is Italian pleasing to you?” That “ti” at the beginning of the sentence is NOT a subject but rather an indirect object pronoun (no worries if you need a review on that—we’ll get to it!). The important thing to remember is that in Italian, the

thing you like is actually the subject of the sentence, which also dictates the form of the verb. We use *piace* because *l'italiano* is singular. In the second example, we use *piacciono* because *i verbi irregolari* is plural.

There are a couple different formulas we can use to construct these sentences. The first is **indirect object + piacere + subject**, like above.

Mi piace la musica tradizionale.
(indirect object) (piacere) (subject)

(Literally, “to me is pleasing traditional music”. Or, “I like traditional music”.)

The **indirect object** can be represented by a pronoun (*mi, ti, gli, le, ci, vi* – NOT *loro*, which would follow the verb) or the preposition “a” followed by either a noun (like the name of a person) or a **tonic pronoun** (*me, te, lui, lei, noi, voi, loro*).

Mi piace la musica tradizionale.

A me piace la musica tradizionale.

A Marta piace la musica tradizionale.

A lei piace la musica tradizionale.

Le piace la musica tradizionale.

The other way to construct these sentences is to reverse that formula: **subject + piacere + indirect object**. If you use this construction, then you cannot use **indirect object pronouns**. The “**a + tonic pronoun/noun**” is the option here.

La musica tradizionale piace a me.
(subject) (piacere) (indirect object)

La musica tradizionale piace a Marta.

La musica tradizionale piace a lei.

That “a” is important! Without it, your sentence is incorrect.

Piacere is not the only verb that functions this way in Italian.

There are a handful of other **“impersonal” verbs** that work the same way and differ a bit from their English translations.

One common verb is *mancare*, or “to miss”. Instead of saying that you (in the active) miss someone, in Italian it is the person who is missing to you. Therefore, if you want to say “I miss you” in Italian, you say *mi manchi* – literally, “you are missing to me.”

Mi *mancano* *i miei nonni.*
(indirect object) **(mancare)** **(subject)**

I miei nonni *mancano* *a me.*
(subject) **(mancare)** **(indirect object)**

(Literally, “my grandparents are missing to me” OR “I miss my grandparents”)

Here are some other verbs like *piacere* and *mancare*.

bastare	to be enough
dare fastidio	to annoy, to bother
dispiacere	to be sorry
(non) importare	to (not) matter
interessare	to interest
occorrere	to need
sembrare	to seem
servire	to be useful; to need
stare a cuore	to matter

Una prova



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Unità 2

Un viaggio nella storia

Obiettivi per il capitolo

At the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- recount an event from the past
- talk about things they have and have not done
- discuss their past habits and routine
- read and comprehend literary and historical texts
- express things that happened in the distant past

Vocabolario: la storia italiana. Il ventesimo secolo.

Here are some words that will help you participate in the conversations in this chapter. Add these, and any other new words you find, to your course dictionary.

la razza	race
il razzismo	racism
anti-semita	anti-Semitic
il fascio	Fascist symbol, black armband
le Brigate Rosse	Red Brigades
la Democrazia Cristiana	Christian Democrats (political party)
l'autoarchia	autarchy
il partigiano	partisan
la Resistenza	the Resistance
il ventennio fascista	Italy's fascist period (of 20 years)
la Seconda Guerra Mondiale	World War II
il 25 aprile (Festa della Liberazione)	Liberation Day
l'imperialismo	imperialism
la libertà di stampa	freedom of the press
i diritti civili	civil rights
le leggi razziali	racial laws (during the Fascist period)
il confino	a form of exile practiced during Fascism to punish detractors
la dittatura	dictatorship
il capo	boss, leader
la guerra civile	civil war
gli Anni di Piombo	Years of Lead / Lead Years (1968 – 1982)

la Prima Repubblica	the First Republic
la costituzione	constitution
la repubblica costituzionale	constitutional republic

Struttura 2.1 Ripasso del passato prossimo

In contesto

*L'anno scorso **ho viaggiato** in Italia.*

***Sono stata** in Italia l'anno scorso.*

You have now studied the **passato prossimo** in both 110 and 120, but it never hurts to review it again!

The passato prossimo is a compound past tense consisting of an **auxiliary verb** and the **past participle** of the **main verb**. In Italian, the auxiliary verb can either be *avere* or *essere*.

This form is equivalent to two different past tense forms in English, the **simple past** or the **present perfect**. This means that a sentence like *Ho viaggiato in Italia* can translate to “I traveled to Italy” or “I have traveled to Italy”.

In that example, *ho* is the auxiliary verb (the *io* form of *avere*)

and *viaggiato* is the past participle of the main verb, which in this case is *viaggiare*.

Regular past participles are formed by making the following changes and are invariable in verbs that take *avere*:

viaggiare + ato = viaggiato	vendere + uto = venduto	dormire + ito = dormito
--------------------------------	----------------------------	----------------------------

Most *-are* and *-ire* verbs have regular past participles, but watch out for *-ere* verbs! Many of the most commonly used *-ere* verbs have irregular past participles. A good dictionary will have the past participle of the verb at the beginning of its entry, so you can double check. You'll learn some and start to recognize some patterns, but in general you should always be wary of an *-ere* verb in the *passato prossimo*! Here are some common irregular past participles:

infinitive	past participle
bere	bevuto
conoscere venire	conosciuto venuto
correggere	corretto
dire leggere scrivere fare	detto letto scritto fatto
chiedere	chiesto
rispondere vedere	risposto visto*
chiudere	chiuso
decidere perdere prendere scendere	deciso perso* preso sceso
discutere	discusso
mettere	messo
aprire	aperto
offrire morire nascere	offerto morto nato

Remember that *vedere* and *perdere* have two different past participles, a regular one (*veduto*, *perduto*) and an irregular one (*visto*, *perso*). Both are correct, but you will probably encounter the irregular one more often.

One difficult thing with the *passato prossimo* is determining which auxiliary verb to use – *avere* or *essere*? Let's look at the differences between the two.

Il passato prossimo con avere

In contesto

Hanno mangiato la carbonara.

Abbiamo visto Marcella al concerto.

Transitive verbs (i.e. verbs that take a direct object and/or respond to the questions *What?* or *Who?*) take the auxiliary verb *avere* in the *passato prossimo*.

	mangiare	vendere	dormire
io	ho mangiato	ho venduto	ho dormito
tu	hai mangiato	hai venduto	hai dormito
lui/lei/ Lei	ha mangiato	ha venduto	ha dormito
noi	abbiamo mangiato	abbiamo venduto	abbiamo dormito
voi	avete mangiato	avete venduto	avete dormito
loro	hanno mangiato	hanno venduto	hanno dormito

A LOT of the most common verbs take *avere* in the *passato prossimo*. In fact, sometimes it is easier to just learn the basic

list of the verbs that go with *essere*, and by process of elimination determine that the others go with *avere*.

Il passato prossimo con essere

In contesto

Siamo andati a Venezia per Carnevale.

Lamont Marcell Jacobs **è nato** in Texas.

If *avere* goes with transitive verbs, **intransitive verbs** (i.e. verbs that do not take a direct object) take the auxiliary verb *essere* in the passato prossimo. The past participle is formed in the same way as verbs that go with *avere*. Many verbs that take *essere* are verbs of movement (or lack thereof) or states/transformations of being.

When a verb takes *essere* in the passato prossimo, its past participle changes according to the gender and number of the subject.

	andare	cadere	salire
io	sono andato/a	sono caduto/a	sono salito/a
tu	sei andato/a	sei caduto/a	sei salito/a
lui/lei/Lei	è andato/a	è caduto/a	è salito/a
noi	siamo andati/e	siamo caduti/e	siamo saliti/e
voi	siete andati/e	siete caduti/e	siete saliti/e
loro	sono andati/e	sono caduti/e	sono saliti/e

The following verbs take *essere* in the *passato prossimo*:

andare – to go

arrivare – to arrive

cadere – to fall

crescere – to grow

diventare – to become

entrare – to enter

essere – to be

morire – to die

nascere – to be born

partire – to depart

restare – to stay

rimanere – to remain

(ri)tornare – to return

salire – to go up

scendere – to go down

stare – to stay

uscire – to go out, exit

venire – to come

****All reciprocal and reflexive verbs also use *essere* in the *passato prossimo* (ex – *alzarsi, abbracciarsi, etc.*)****

Una prova



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Struttura 2.2 Ripasso dell'imperfetto

In contesto

Da bambina, **guardavo** Sesame Street.

Mentre **camminavo**, **parlavo** con mia madre al telefono.

The **imperfetto** is a past tense form used to describe ongoing or habitual events in the past.

Quando si usa?

Like the passato prossimo, the **imperfetto** can correspond to at least two different forms in English:

1. **the past progressive (-ing form). This can express ongoing actions in the past.**

*Es. **Giocavo** a calcio ieri sera alle 5. → I was playing soccer yesterday at 5.*

2. **or, it is the form we use to describe something we used to do, or would do in the past.**

*Es. **Giocavo** a calcio alla scuola media. → I used to play soccer in middle school. / I would play soccer in middle school.*

In addition to these examples, when we tell stories in the past, the imperfetto is also used in specific instances in comparison with the passato prossimo. We use the imperfetto to express:

age	<i>Avevo 5 anni quando ho imparato ad andare in bicicletta.</i>
dates	<i>Era il 14 febbraio.</i>
time	<i>Erano le 11.</i>
weather	<i>Faceva bel tempo.</i>
descriptions (physical and emotional)	<i>Aveva i capelli lunghi ed era molto spiritosa.</i>
after the word <i>mentre</i>	<i>Mentre dormivo, ha cominciato a nevicare.</i>

Come si forma?

I verbi regolari

The conjugations for the **imperfect** are mostly regular! After removing the final *-re* from the infinitive form, the same endings are added to all of the verb categories.

	giocare	leggere	dormire
io	giocavo	leggevo	dormivo
tu	giocavi	leggevi	dormivi
lui/lei/Lei	giocava	leggeva	dormiva
noi	giocavamo	leggevamo	dormivamo
voi	giocavate	leggevate	dormivate
loro	giocavano	leggevano	dormivano

I verbi irregolari

There are only four (4) irregular verbs you need to know in the **imperfect** right now, and with the exception of *essere*, they only require the addition of two letters to complete the conjugation. You can see the patterns among them below.

	essere	fare	dire	bere
io	ero	facevo	dicevo	bevevo
tu	eri	facevi	dicevi	bevevi
lui/lei/Lei	era	faceva	diceva	beveva
noi	eravamo	facevamo	dicevamo	bevevamo
voi	eravate	facevate	dicevate	bevevate
loro	erano	facevano	dicevano	bevevano

Una prova



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Struttura 2.3 Ripasso del passato prossimo vs. l'imperfetto

In contesto

Avevo 5 anni quando **ho imparato** ad andare in bicicletta.

Faceva caldissimo quando **siamo arrivati** in città.

One of the most difficult grammatical topics to master in

Italian is when to use the **passato prossimo** and when to use the **imperfetto**. Sometimes the difference is straightforward and clear, and other times it is not. And sometimes both answers could be right, depending on the context. As a general rule, we can think of the **passato prossimo** as the trunk of a tree—without it, the story has nothing to stand on. It's the substance of the narrative. The **imperfetto**, on the other hand, represents the branches and the leaves—all of the things that make the tree interesting and unique. It can be used for a lot of background information and description, but it can also be used to describe multiple actions that are ongoing at the same time. Again, context and key words are important.

passato prossimo	imperfetto
<p>-completed actions</p> <p>Es. Abbiamo vinto la partita.</p> <p>-actions that interrupt ongoing actions</p> <p>Es. <i>Dormivo</i> quando la mia amica mi ha telefonato.</p> <p>-actions that express a beginning or an end</p> <p>Es. La lezione è cominciata alle 10. / Ho cominciato la lezione alle 10.</p>	<p>-ongoing actions with no clear beginning or end</p> <p>Es. Camminavo nel bosco.</p> <p>-ongoing actions that are interrupted</p> <p>Es. Dormivo quando la mia amica mi ha telefonato.</p> <p>-habitual actions in the past</p> <p>Es. Da piccola, giocavo con i Legos.</p> <p>-physical/emotional description</p> <p>Es. Era bella e felice.</p> <p>-dates</p> <p>Es. Era il 4 luglio.</p> <p>-time</p> <p>Es. Erano le 8 di sera.</p> <p>-age</p> <p>Es. Avevo 20 anni.</p> <p>-weather</p> <p>Es. Faceva freddo e tirava vento.</p>
<p>parole chiave:</p> <p>una volta all'improvviso in quel momento domenica scorsa nel 2006 due mesi fa</p>	<p>parole chiave:</p> <p>tutti gli anni / ogni anno sempre di solito spesso ogni settimana tutti i giorni mentre</p>

Some verbs actually change their meaning slightly between the two verb forms. *Sapere* is one example. *Ho saputo* means “I found out”, while *sapevo* means “I knew”. Here are some others:

verb	passato prossimo	imperfetto
<i>sapere</i>	to find out	to know
<i>conoscere</i>	to meet	to know or be familiar with
<i>dovere</i>	to have to	to be supposed to
<i>volere</i>	to insist on	to want to
<i>potere</i>	to be able to/to succeed at	to be able to

Una prova



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Struttura 2.4 Il passato remoto

In contesto

Carlo Collodi **scrisse** Pinocchio.

Michelangelo **nacque** nel 1475.

Like the *passato prossimo*, the **passato remoto** expresses completed actions in the past. As its name suggests, it tends to be used to refer to events in the distant past and is often used in literature and historical accounts. It is less common in speech, though it is used, particularly in southern Italy, in place of the *passato prossimo*. For our purposes, it is more important to recognize and comprehend it within the context of reading rather than be able to use it in conversation. It is very useful for reading, because you will find it not only in literature but in magazines and newspapers as well. Your knowledge of Italian at this point should really help you to recognize these forms.

Come si forma?

I verbi regolari

Similar to the *imperfetto*, to conjugate the **passato remoto** of regular verbs, we take off the final *-re* of the infinitive and then add the endings.

	cantare	potere	capire
io	cantai	potei/potetti	capii
tu	cantasti	potesti	capisti
lui/lei/Lei	cantò	potè/potette	capì
noi	cantammo	potemmo	capimmo
voi	cantaste	poteste	capiste
loro	cantarono	poterono/potettero	capirono

I verbi irregolari

Notice that, as in the passato prossimo, -ere verbs tend to be irregular. In fact, many of the irregular verbs in the passato remoto follow the pattern you can see in the verb *cadere* above: that is to say, the irregular forms are the *io*, *lui/lei* and *loro* forms. These are known as **1-3-3 verbs**. If you know the first person form, you can deduce the others. Some examples include:

leggere	scrivere	vedere
lessi	scrissi	vidi
leggesti	scrivesti	vedesti
lesse	scrisse	vide
leggemmo	scrivemmo	vedemmo
leggeste	scriveste	vedeste
lessero	scrissero	videro

Other examples include: *avere (ebbi)*, *mettere (misi)*, *nascere (nacqui)*, *perdere (persi)*, *prendere (presi)*, *rispondere (risposi)*, *sapere (seppi)*, and *venire (venni)*.

Other commonly used verbs are completely irregular in the passato remoto:

essere	bere	fare	dare
fui	bevvi	feci	diedi/detti
fosti	bevesti	facesti	desti
fu	bevve	fece	diede/dette
fummo	bevemmo	facemmo	demmo
foste	beveste	faceste	deste
furono	bevvero	fecero	diedero/dettero

Here are some examples of the passato prossimo vs. the passato remoto:

passato prossimo	passato remoto
<p>Mio fratello è nato nel 1986.</p> <p>Stephen King ha scritto <i>It</i>.</p> <p><i>It</i> è uscito nel 1986.</p> <p>È stata una bella giornata.</p>	<p>Michelangelo nacque nel 1475.</p> <p>Dante Alighieri scrisse <i>La divina commedia</i>.</p> <p><i>La divina commedia</i> uscì nel 1321.</p> <p>Fu una bella giornata.</p>

Una prova



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Struttura 2.5 Il trapassato prossimo

In contesto

Avevo studiato l'italiano prima di andare in Italia per la prima volta.

Ero andata in Italia prima di viaggiare in Grecia.

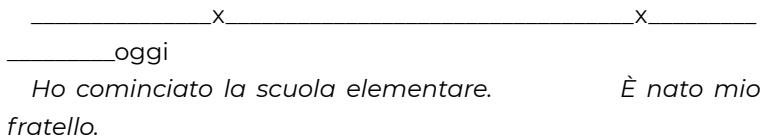
Up until now, you have only encountered one compound verb form in Italian – the passato prossimo. These are those forms that are composed of two parts, the auxiliary or helping verb of *essere* or *avere*, and the past participle. All you have to do is change the tense of the helping verb – to future, conditional, imperfect, etc... – and you have a brand new verb form. The same rules apply for deciding whether to use *essere* or *avere*, and the past participle is formed the same way. The form we're going to look at now, called the **trapassato prossimo**, is used in English in much the same way.

Quando si usa?

As you can see in the examples above, the trapassato prossimo is formed with *essere* or *avere* in the **imperfetto + the past participle of the main verb**. Note also that, just like the passato prossimo, the past participle must agree in gender and number with the subject **ONLY WHEN THE AUXILIARY VERB IS ESSERE**.

We use the **trapassato prossimo** to express events that happened before other events in the past. It is the equivalent in English of saying you “*had done*” something.

If you look at the following timeline, you can see the sequence of past events:



If we put these actions together in a sentence, the first action would be in the trapassato prossimo.

*Quando è nato mio fratello, **avevo già cominciato** la scuola elementare.*

***Avevo già cominciato** la scuola elementare quando è nato mio fratello.*

Come si forma?

Here is the full conjugation of *studiare* in the trapassato prossimo:

io avevo studiato	noi avevamo studiato
tu avevi studiato	voi avevate studiato
lui/lei/Lei aveva studiato	loro avevano studiato

And here is the full conjugation of *andare* in the trapassato prossimo:

io ero andato/a	noi eravamo andati/e
tu eri andato/a	voi eravate andati/e
lui/lei/Lei era andato/a	loro erano andati/e

Just like in the passato prossimo, **reflexive and reciprocal verbs** take *essere* in the trapassato prossimo:

io mi ero divertito/a	noi ci eravamo divertiti/e
tu ti eri divertito/a	voi vi eravate divertiti/e
lui/lei/Lei si era divertito/a	loro si erano divertiti/e

The irregular past participles are also consistent among all compound tenses:

*Es. Non **aveva letto** il libro prima dell'esame.*

(She hadn't read the book before the exam.)

***Erano già venuti** a casa.*

(They had already come home/to the house.)

*Non **avevate ancora fatto** i compiti.*

(You hadn't done the homework yet.)

*Non **avevo mai bevuto** un vero caffè italiano prima di viaggiare in Italia.*

(I had never had a real Italian coffee before traveling to Italy.)

The underlined words *già* (already) and *non...ancora* (not yet) are typical of the trapassato prossimo and may help you remember the unique usage of this tense.



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Unità 3

L'Italia del nuovo millennio

Obiettivi per il capitolo

At the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- express plans and intentions for the future
- make conjectures based on evidence
- discuss cause/effect relationships
- make predictions for the future
- compare and contrast issues regarding immigration in Italy and their home countries

Vocabolario: l'Italia multiculturale

Here are some words that will help you participate in the conversations in this chapter. Add these, and any other new words you find, to your course dictionary.

l'immigrazione	immigration
l'emigrazione	emigration
l'immigrato / l'immigrante	immigrant
l'emigrante	emigrant
immigrare	to immigrate
emigrare	to emigrate
il multiculturalismo	multiculturalism
l'extracomunitario/a	non-European citizen
il clandestino/a	illegal immigrant
l'identità ibrida	hybrid identity
ius solis	'right of soil'; birthright citizenship (based on where one is born)
ius sanguinis	'right of blood'; citizenship acquired through the nationality or ethnicity of a parent
la cittadinanza	citizenship
i diritti umani	human rights
la giustizia	justice
l'uguaglianza	equality
il potere	power
la libertà	freedom
passare (una legge)	to pass (a law)
il partito politico	political party
l'oppressione	oppression
oppresso/a	oppressed

l'attivista

activist

Struttura 3.1 Ripasso del futuro semplice

In contesto

*Emilia e Alessandra **studieranno** a Firenze il prossimo semestre.*

*Dopo l'università, **farò** l'avvocato.*

We have now reviewed all the different ways we can communicate in the past and present tenses in Italian...so what about the future?

As we already discussed, in Italian we can use the present tense to talk about the future – specifically, to **express future plans**.

This means that *Visito Palermo* can mean:

- *I visit Palermo*
- *I'm going to visit Palermo / I'm visiting Palermo*
- *I will visit to Palermo*

Determining whether or not the person is referring to the present or future depends on context and is normally not difficult to determine. Certain key words or phrases like *fra 10 giorni* or *il prossimo mese* o *tra una settimana* can help you to understand that the person is referring to the future.

There is, however, an actual **future tense** that you should have studied in elementary Italian, and it can be used in exactly the same situation:

Visiterò Palermo la prossima settimana.

- *I'm visiting Palermo next week.*
- *I'll visit to Palermo next week.*

Come si forma? I verbi regolari

Visiterò shows us a couple of the key elements of the future tense conjugation. First, note that the *io* form has an accent on the final “o”. There is also a final accent in the *lui/lei* form. Second, we can see that *-are* verbs undergo a spelling change in the future. To form these conjugations, we change the “a” to an “e” and then we take off the final *-re* before adding the endings.

io	visiterò
tu	visiterai
lui/lei/Lei	visiterà
noi	visiteremo
voi	visiterete
loro	visiteranno

This spelling change is only true of *-are* verbs. *-Ere* and *-ire* do not undergo a spelling change, but all three verb forms share

the same endings. This also means that *-are* and *-ere* verbs are identical in the future.

	visitare	credere	finire
io	visiterò	crederò	finirò
tu	visiterai	crederai	finirai
lui/lei/Lei	visiterà	crederà	finirà
noi	visiteremo	crederemo	finiremo
voi	visiterete	crederete	finirete
loro	visiteranno	crederanno	finiranno

Verbs ending in *-care* and *-gare* add an “h” after the “c” and “g” to preserve the hard “c” and “g” sounds:

	giocare	pagare
io	gioch er ò	pag h erò
tu	gioch er ai	pag h erai
lui/lei/Lei	gioch er à	pag h erà
noi	gioch er emo	pag h eremo
voi	gioch er ete	pag h erete
loro	gioch er anno	pag h eranno

Verbs ending in *-ciare* and *-giare* lose the “i” after the spelling change:

	cominciare	viaggiare
io	comincerò	viaggerò
tu	comincerai	viaggerai
lui/lei/Lei	comincerà	viaggerà
noi	cominceremo	viaggeremo
voi	comincerete	viaggerete
loro	cominceranno	viaggeranno

I verbi irregolari

There are a couple very irregular verbs in the future (like *essere*), but most either involve the elimination of a single vowel, the addition of “rr” to the root, in substitution of the consonant immediately preceding the ending, or are *-are* verbs that do not undergo the spelling change of “a” to “e”.

Essere

io sarò	noi saremo
tu sarai	voi sarete
lui/lei/Lei sarà	loro saranno

Vowel elimination

	andare	avere	dovere	potere	vedere
io	andrò	avrò	dovrò	potrò	vedrò
tu	andrai	avrà	dovrai	potrai	vedrai
lui/lei/Lei	andrà	avrà	dovrà	potrà	vedrà
noi	andremo	avremo	dovremo	potremo	vedremo
voi	andrete	avrete	dovrete	potrete	vedrete
loro	andranno	avranno	dovranno	potranno	vedranno

-RR

	volere	tenere	rimanere	venire
io	vorrò	terrò	rimarrò	verrò
tu	vorrai	terrai	rimarrai	verrai
lui/lei/Lei	vorrà	terrà	rimarrà	verrà
noi	vorremo	terremo	rimarremo	verremo
voi	vorrete	terrete	rimarrete	verrete
loro	vorranno	terranno	rimarranno	verranno

-are verbs without the spelling change

	fare	stare	dare
io	farò	starò	darò
tu	farai	starai	darai
lui/lei/Lei	farà	starà	darà
noi	faremo	staremo	daremo
voi	farete	starete	darete
loro	faranno	staranno	daranno

Quando si usa?

1. To express future plans, intentions and actions

Es. Sofia **studierà** a Siena il prossimo semestre.

(Sofia is studying in Siena next semester.)

Es. **Andremo** al mare domenica.

(We're going to the beach on Sunday.)

2. To make predictions for the future

Es. **Troverai** l'amore della tua vita.

(You will find the love of your life.)

Es. **Vi piacerà** quel ristorante molto.

(You will really like that restaurant.)

*3. To express probability or to make hypotheses based on evidence

Es. Quella signora **avrà** 60 anni.

(That woman must be 60 years old.)

Es. **Farà** freddo fuori.

(It must be cold outside.)

***This last one is probably new. It's the way you can express this concept of "must be" in terms of probability or speculation. If you see someone bundled up in winter clothes, you might surmise that "it must be cold outside" – thus, farà freddo.**

You can also speculate in other ways:

Es. Lo studente non è in classe. **Sarà ancora a letto.**

Una prova



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Struttura 3.2 Il futuro anteriore

In contesto

*Entro la prossima settimana, **avrò finito** tutti i miei esami.*

*Tra cinque anni, **mi sarò laureata** dall'università e **avrò trovato** un lavoro.*

Just like there are compound tenses to express the past, as we learned in the previous unit, there is also a compound future tense, called the **futuro anteriore** or the **future perfect**. We use this tense to express something that will have taken place by a certain, pre-determined point in the future. It is very similar to

saying “by this time next week, I will have done x, y, z” in English. Let’s look at the previous examples again:

*Es. Entro la prossima settimana, **avrò finito** tutti i miei esami.*

(By next week, I will have finished all of my exams.)

*Es. Tra cinque anni, **mi sarò laureata** dall’università e **avrò trovato** un lavoro.*

(Five years from now, I will have graduated from college and I will have found a job.)

Come si forma?

Like the other compound tenses you have learned, the **futuro anteriore** is formed with the **future simple of either essere or avere** and the **past participle of the main verb**. All of the same rules apply: transitive verbs with *avere*, intransitive verbs with *essere*, verbs with *essere* must agree in gender and number with the subject, and **reflexives and reciprocals** take *essere*.

finire

io avrò finito	noi avremo finito
tu avrai finito	voi avrete finito
lui/lei/Lei avrà finito	loro avranno finito

partire

io sarò partito/a	noi saremo partiti/e
tu sarai partito/a	voi sarete partiti/e
lui/lei/Lei sarà partito/a	loro saranno partiti/e

Just like in the other compound tenses, reflexives and reciprocals take *essere*.

laurearsi

io mi sarò laureato/a	noi ci saremo laureati/e
tu ti sarai laureato/a	voi vi sarete laureati/e
lui/lei/Lei si sarà laureato/a	loro si saranno laureati/e

All irregular past participles remain irregular in the **futuro anteriore**:

*Avranno **letto** quel nuovo bestseller.*

*Avrete già **preso** il caffè.*

*Non sarai ancora **venuto** a trovarmi.*

Quando si usa?

1. To express an action that will have happened by a specific future time

*Es. Entro la fine di agosto **sarà nato** il mio nipotino.*

(By the end of August, my nephew will have been born.)

2. To express an action completed before another action in the future. Note that this is a bit different from English.

*Es. Quando **avranno finito** di preparare la cena, mangeremo.*

(When they have finished making dinner, we will eat.)

3. To express probability or to make hypotheses in the past

*Es. Dov'è Fabrizio? **Avrà trovato** traffico.*

(Where is Fabrizio? He must have hit traffic.)

Una prova



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Struttura 3.3 Ripasso dei pronomi diretti e indiretti

In contesto

I tuoi amici studiano le lingue straniere?

*-Purtroppo nessuno **le** studia!*

***Ci** telefoni quando arrivi?*

*-Certo che **vi** telefono!*

Remember **direct and indirect object pronouns** from your previous studies? Let's review them before we look at how to combine them (so fun!).

Pronomi di oggetto diretto

Let's start with **direct object pronouns**. Remember that a direct object is something that directly receives the action in the sentence. It usually answers the questions *What?* or *Who?*

So in the sentence *Mangio gli spaghetti* ("I eat spaghetti"), the direct object of the sentence is *gli spaghetti* because it answers the question "What did I eat?"

To avoid repetition (imagine I really wanted to talk about that *spaghetti*), we can use direct object pronouns to take the place of the noun; essentially, instead of continuing to repeat the word *spaghetti*, we would refer to it with the pronoun "it". These pronouns are typically placed before the conjugated verb:

Es. **Li** mangio.

In this case *li* is the direct object pronoun for a word like *spaghetti*, which is masculine and plural. There are four different ways to say "it" or "them" in Italian, depending on the gender and number of the word.

Come si forma?

	maschile	femminile
singolare	lo	la
plurale	li	le

Es. *Mangio il pane.* → **Lo** mangio.

Mangio la pasta. → **La** mangio.

Mangio gli spaghetti. → **Li** mangio.

Mangio le verdure. → **Le** mangio.

These are not the only direct object pronouns, however.

Es. *Mi vedi?* → Sì, **ti** vedo.

Here is the full table:

mi	ci
ti	vi
lo, la, La	li, le

Generally speaking, the direct object pronoun precedes the conjugated verb, with a few exceptions:

1. with verb+ infinitive phrases like avere bisogno di, avere voglia di, desiderare, preferire

Es. Ho voglia di prendere un gelato. → Ho voglia di prenderlo.*

2. with dovere, potere, volere

*Es. Voglio prendere un gelato. → **Lo** voglio prendere. / Voglio prenderlo.*

***Note that when a direct object pronoun attaches to the end of an infinitive, the infinitive drops the final “e”.**

3. in the imperative

Es. Compra il gelato! → Compralo!

***Note that some verbs take an indirect object in English but NOT in Italian. For example, aspettare (to wait) takes a direct object in Italian (Aspetto l'autobus → L'aspetto) but in English it needs a preposition (“for”). Chiedere (to ask) is another example: Chiedo il conto → Lo chiedo.**

Pronomi di oggetto diretto al passato prossimo

Remember when you learned that verbs that take *avere* in the passato prossimo have invariable past participles—that is to say, that they don't change according to gender and number? Well, that's not entirely true. Look at this example:

*Es. Ho comprato la giacca. → **La** ho comprato. → **L'ho** comprata.*

You should notice two things here:

1. that *comprato* changes to *comprata*. The “a” ending represents *la giacca*—it reflects the gender and number of the OBJECT, not the SUBJECT (like the verbs that go with *essere* do)
2. that *la* and *ho* elide to form *L'ho*. This is true of singular object pronouns (*lo, la*) and is mostly a question of similar vowel sounds next to each other. For this reason, *li* and *le* do NOT elide.

*Es. Abbiamo visto il film. → **L'**abbiamo visto.*

*Hanno fatto la spesa. → **L'**hanno fatta.*

*Hai preso le verdure? → **Le** hai prese?*

*Ha comprato i biglietti. → **Li** ha comprati.*

Una prova





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I pronomi di oggetto indiretto

Now that you've re-mastered direct object pronouns, let's take a look at **indirect object pronouns**. An indirect object is something that indirectly receives the action of the verb. It usually answers the questions “*to or for whom*” and tends to be used with verbs that have to do with giving and/or communication (actions in which someone receives something).

In the sentence *Regalo le rose alla mia mamma*, the indirect object of the sentence is *alla mia mamma* because it answers the question “To whom do I give the roses?”

We can replace this indirect object with a pronoun to avoid repetition, to say “to her”. There are two options:

1. with a tonic pronoun, which are always preceded by a preposition: *a me, a te, a lui, a lei, a noi, a voi, a loro*

Es. *Regalo le rose **a lei**.*

2. with an indirect object pronoun, which will precede the conjugated verb (just like direct object pronouns)

Es. **Le** regalo le rose.

In this case, *le* is the pronoun we use for a singular, feminine

object. It is understandable if this particular pronoun causes you confusion! It is a PLURAL direct object and a SINGULAR indirect object—have a sense of humor! ?

Come si forma?

Here are the rest of the indirect object pronouns, with their tonic forms in parentheses. You will notice other similarities with direct object pronouns:

mi (a me)	ci (a noi)
ti (a te)	vi (a voi)
gli (a lui)	loro
le (a lei) Le (a Lei)	gli (a loro)

You will notice that *mi*, *ti*, *ci*, *vi* can be both direct and indirect object pronouns. The same rules apply for the position of these pronouns in a sentence, with the exception of *loro*, which comes after the verb:

*Es. Diamo **loro** le chiavi dell'appartamento.*

However, *gli* tends to be used more often, in both the singular and the plural.

***Gli** diamo le chiavi dell'appartamento.*

Una prova



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Struttura 3.4 I pronomi combinati

In contesto

La professoressa dà spesso i compiti agli studenti?

*-Mamma mia, **glieli** dà tutti i giorni!*

Mi presti una penna?

*-Sì, **te la** presto–ma **me la** devi restituire!*

So what happens when you combine the two? It's perfectly reasonable in English to substitute both ("I give it to her") and the same is true in Italian. These are called **combined, or double-object pronouns (pronomi combinati)** and they can be...fun?

Let's take the last example from the previous section:

Es. Diamo le chiavi dell'appartamento a loro.

direct object

le

indirect object

gli

We have identified the direct and indirect objects in the sentence and selected the appropriate pronouns for each. Now, let's do the math:

The indirect object pronoun comes first, followed by the direct object pronoun:

gli + le

To fully combine them, we add an "e" in the middle, almost like a glue: *glielle*

***Glielle* diamo.**

The pronunciation is something like "yay-lay". Fun, right??

Come si forma?

Here is the full chart of these double object pronouns. See if you can notice any patterns:

indirect object pronoun	direct object pronoun	combined pronoun
mi	lo, la, li, le	me lo, me la, me li, me le
ti		te lo, te la, te li, te le ce lo, ce la, ce li, ce le
ci		ve lo, ve la, ve li, ve le glielo, gliela, glieli, glielle
vi		glielo, gliela, glieli, glielle
gli		
le		

The primary things to notice about these forms are:

1. When the indirect object pronouns are *mi*, *ti*, *ci*, *vi*, the combined pronoun remains two words, with the "i"

changing to an “e”.

2. When the indirect object pronouns are *gli* or *le*, the pronouns combine to form one word, with the added “e” binding them together.
3. When combined with a direct object pronoun, the indirect object pronoun *le* transforms to *gli* regardless of the gender of the indirect object. The two forms are identical in the combined form.

The placement of the combined pronouns follows the same rules of the singular direct and indirect object pronouns.

1. before the conjugated verb

Es. Scrivo i messaggi agli amici. → Glieli scrivo.

2. at the end of the infinitive with verb+infinitive phrases

Es. Preferisco fare le telefonate agli amici. → Preferisco fargliele.

3. either before the conjugated verb or after the infinitive with *dovere, potere, volere*

Es. Devo mandare l'email al professore. → Gliela devo mandare. / Devo mandargliela.

4. at the end and attached to the imperative

Es. Da' le chiavi a me! → Dammele!

I pronomi combinati con i verbi riflessivi

Double-object pronouns are also possible with **reflexive pronouns** in place of indirect object pronouns. Most of the forms remain the same, with the exception of the *lui/lei* and *loro* forms:

reflexive pronoun	lo	la	li	le
mi	me lo	me la	me li	me le
ti	te lo	te la	te li	te le
si	se lo	se la	se li	se le
ci	ce lo	ce la	ce li	ce le
vi	ve lo	ve la	ve li	ve le
si	se lo	se la	se li	se le

*Es. Ti metterai la crema solare? → **Me la** metterò.*

*Es. Si laverà le mani? → **Se le** laverà.*

Una prova



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Unità 4

Ce la facciamo!

Obiettivi per il capitolo

At the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- analyze advertisements in Italy and the USA
- discuss Italian cultural products and practices
- compare and contrast Italian products and practices with those of their own countries
- describe how something is made

Vocabolario: Made in Italy

Here are some words that will help you participate in the conversations in this chapter. Add these, and any other new words you find, to your course dictionary.

la fabbrica	factory
fabbricare	to make, to fabricate
l'industria (di) -tessile -automobilistica -(agro)alimentare -della moda -del turismo / turistica -i beni per la casa -l'arredamento -l'oreficeria -le calzature -la pelletteria	industry -textile -automotive -food / agricultural -fashion -tourism -house/homewares -home furnishings / furniture -jewelry / jewelry-making -footwear -leather
il prodotto	product
il settore	sector
la finanza	finance
la Guardia di Finanza	police force for the Ministry of Economy and Finance
l'economia	economy / economics
lo sfruttamento	exploitation
l'impresa	business / enterprise / firm / company
l'azienda	company / firm / business
la ditta	company / firm / enterprise
la multinazionale	multinational corporation
la pubblicità	advertisement / commercial
la campagna pubblicitaria	advertising campaign

l'artigiano	artisan
l'artigianato	craft / craftsmanship
artigianale	handcrafted / handmade
la marca	brand / brand name

Struttura 4.1 I comparativi

In contesto

Antonio è **più** introverso **di** Carmela.

Antonio parla **meno di** Carmela.

Il comparativo di maggioranza e minoranza

Comparativi di maggioranza o minoranza, or **comparisons of inequality**, are the ways we express that something is “more than” or “less than” something else, which can be expressed with these words plus an adjective, or with the suffix *-er* in English. These are expressed with the structures **più...di** and **meno...di** or (and this is probably new to you) **più...che** and **meno...che**. Let's look at the differences between the two structures.

Più/meno di...

We use *più/meno di...* when comparing two people or things (**nouns/pronouns**) in terms of one quality or action (**adjective/adverb**) (the examples you've probably seen the most up to this point).

*Es. Giorgio è **più studioso di** Gianluca. / Gianluca è **meno studioso di** Giorgio.*

(Giorgio is more studious than Gianluca. / Gianluca is less studious than Giorgio.)

*Es. Giorgio **studia più di** Gianluca. / Gianluca **studia meno di** Giorgio.*

(Giorgio studies more than Gianluca. / Gianluca studies less than Giorgio.)

Two nouns + one adjective	Giorgio è più studioso di Gianluca. / Gianluca è meno studioso di Giorgio.
Two nouns + one verb	Giorgio studia più di Gianluca. / Gianluca studia meno di Giorgio.

Più/meno che...

If we are comparing other things, such as **two qualities**, or **two objects**, then we substitute the preposition *di* with *che*, and the structure becomes **più/meno...che**. This can be a bit confusing for native English speakers, because the translation remains the same: whether we use *di* or *che* in Italian, the English equivalent is still “more than” or “less than.” This is another example that really requires you to be able to identify the different parts of speech in a sentence—a sign that you’re really mastering the Italian language!

Es. Giorgio è più studioso che socievole.

(Giorgio is more studious than [he is] social.)

Es. Giorgio legge più libri di storia che romanzi.

(Giorgio reads more history books than novels.)

Es. Giorgio studia meno la sera che la mattina.
 (Giorgio studies less in the evening than in the morning.)

Es. Giorgio studia meno a casa che in biblioteca.
 (Giorgio studies less at home than in the library.)

Es. Per Giorgio è più importante studiare che dormire.
 (For Giorgio, it is more important to study than to sleep.)

One noun + two adjectives	Giorgio è più studioso che socievole .
One verb + two objects	Giorgio legge più libri di storia che romanzi .
One verb + two adverbs	Giorgio studia meno la sera che la mattina .
Before prepositional phrases	Giorgio studia meno a casa che in biblioteca .
Before infinitives	Per Giorgio è più importante studiare che dormire .

Il comparativo di uguaglianza

Comparativi di uguaglianza, or **comparisons of equality**, is how we express that something is “as” something “as” something else. There are two different structures we can use to express these comparisons, and like the comparisons of inequality, their usage depends on the different parts of speech in the sentence.

*Es. Giorgio è **(così) gentile come** Gianluca.*

*Giorgio è **(tanto) gentile quanto** Gianluca.*

(Giorgio is as kind as Gianluca.)

*Es. Giorgio pulisce la casa **(così) come** Gianluca.*

*Giorgio pulisce la casa **(tanto) quanto** Gianluca.*

(Giorgio cleans the house as much as Gianluca.)

Es. *Giorgio è (così) gentile come paziente.*
Giorgio è (tanto) gentile quanto paziente.
 (Giorgio is as kind as he is patient.)

<p>Two nouns + one adjective</p>	<p>Giorgio è (così) gentile come Gianluca. Giorgio è (tanto) gentile quanto Gianluca.</p>
<p>Two nouns + one verb/ adverb</p>	<p>Giorgio pulisce la casa (così) come Gianluca. Giorgio pulisce la casa (tanto) quanto Gianluca.</p>
<p>One noun + two adjectives</p>	<p>Giorgio è (così) gentile come paziente. Giorgio è (tanto) gentile quanto paziente.</p>

***Note that in all of the above examples, the structures *così...come* and *tanto...quanto* can be used interchangeably. You should also notice that both *così* and *tanto* can be omitted.**

In this next set of examples, these circumstances change:

Es. *Giorgio ha tanti fratelli quanto Gianluca.*
 (Giorgio has as many brothers as Gianluca.)
 Es. *Giorgio ha tanti fratelli quante sorelle.*
 (Giorgio has as many brothers as sisters.)

In this case, we are comparing **nouns**, and the only structure that works for this type of comparison is *tanto...quanto*. You will also notice that *tanto...quanto* agrees in gender and numbers with the nouns it modifies.

You can choose whichever form you want for the first examples, but for nouns there is only one!

I comparativi irregolari

Gli aggettivi

There are also some irregular forms for some of the most common adjectives in the comparative. You can use either the regular or irregular forms!

*Es. Quel pane con le olive è **più buono della** crostata alla marmellata.*

(That olive bread is better than the jam tart.)

*Es. Quel pane con le olive è **migliore della** crostata alla marmellata.*

In these examples, you can see that *più buono/a/i/e* (and also *più bravo/a/i/e*) and *migliore/i* have the same meaning. The regular form must agree in gender and number with the word(s) it modifies, and the irregular form must agree in number.

***Note that the irregular form of *migliore/i* does not require the use of *più*.**

Here are the other examples of regular comparatives and their irregular equivalents:

regular comparative	irregular comparative
più buono/a/i/e	migliore/i
più cattivo/a/i/e	peggiore/i
più grande	maggiore/i
più piccolo	minore/i

Sometimes the regular and irregular forms can be used

interchangeably, but in the case of *grande* and *piccolo*, there tends to be a distinction. In those cases, the regular forms refer to physical size, while the irregular forms refer to age:

*Es. Antonio è **più grande** di me.*

(Antonio is bigger than me.)

*Es. Io sono **maggiore** di Antonio.*

(I am older than Antonio.)

*Es. Nicola è **più piccolo** di Andrea.*

(Nicola is smaller than Andrea.)

*Es. Andrea è **minore** di Nicola.*

(Andrea is younger than Nicola.)

Gli avverbi

There are also four primary irregular comparative adverbs. Unlike the adjectives, only the irregular form is correct here—the “regular” form does not exist.

*Es. Gianni balla **meglio** dei suoi amici.*

(Gianni dances better than his friends.)

In this case, *meglio* also means “better”, just like *migliore/i*, but we use it to describe a verb, not a person, place or thing. It is the irregular equivalent of *più bene*, a construction that does not exist!

adverb	irregular comparative
bene	meglio
male	peggio
poco	meno, di meno
molto	più, di più

*Es. Ballo **peggio di** Gianni.*

(I dance worse than Gianni.)

Es. Ballo **meno di** Gianni.

(I dance less than Gianni.)

Es. Mi piace ballare, ma a Gianni piace **di più**.

(I like to dance, but Gianni likes it more.)

Una prova



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Struttura 4.2 Il superlativo

In contesto

Roberto è **il più giovane** dei suoi fratelli.

Il Colosseo è **antichissimo!**

If we want to express that something is “the most” or “the least” of a certain group in Italian, we use a **superlative**. This is the equivalent of saying “the most/least + adjective” OR with the suffix *-est* in English, depending on the length of the word. In Italian this is called the **superlativo relativo**. We can also express a superlative with words that represent the magnitude of something (like “amazing”! Or “super”! Or “extra”!), which is referred to as the **superlativo assoluto**.

Il superlativo relativo

There is a general formula to follow to create the **relative superlative**, or the **superlativo relativo**, of adjectives:

*La professoressa è **la persona più vecchia della classe**.*

(definite article + più/meno + adjective + di)

This formula also works if you flip the sentence around:

La persona più vecchia della classe è la professoressa.

The **definite article** is the real essential element here, and it’s the same in English. If we want to say that something is THE most, then we need “the”—hence, the need for the definite article.

To create the relative superlative of adverbs, however, you can omit the definite article (unless the adverb is followed by the word *possibile*):

*Es. Giorgio **studia più di** tutti gli altri studenti.*

(Giorgio studies more than all of the other students.)

*Es. Giorgio **studia il più possibile**.*

(Giorgio studies as much as possible.)

Il superlativo assoluto

The **absolute superlative**, or the **superlativo assoluto**, on the other hand, is a way of expressing the absolute quality of an adjective or adverb. Unlike the relative superlative, it doesn't actually compare something to something else—it evaluates it on its own merits.

One common way of expressing the absolute superlative is with the **-ssimo/a/i/e** form that you have likely already seen:

*Es. L'italiano è **bellissimo**!*

(Italian is very beautiful!)

*Es. La professoressa parla **benissimo** l'italiano!*

(The professor speaks Italian very well!)

There are two ways to think about how to form these **absolute superlatives of adjectives**:

1. by adding the endings **-ssimo/a/i/e** to the **masculine, plural form of the adjective**:

complicato → *complicati* → *complicatissimo/a/i/e*

*Es. La formula è **complicatissima**.*

(The formula is very complicated.)

intelligente → *intelligenti* → *intelligentissimo/a/i/e*

*Es. Gli studenti nel corso d'italiano sono **intelligentissimi**.*

(The students in the Italian course are very intelligent.)

2. by dropping the final letter of the adjective and adding the endings **-issimo/a/i/e**

complicato → *complicat* → *complicatissimo/a/i/e*

intelligente → *intelligent* → *intelligentissimo/a/i/e*

They are essentially two paths to get to the same place—choose whichever makes the most sense for you!

The **absolute superlative of adverbs** is formed in much the same way:

1. if the adverb ends in a vowel, either add **-ssimo/a/i/e** to the plural, masculine form of the word OR drop the final vowel and add **-issimo/a/i/e**

bene → *beni* → *benissimo*

male → *mal* → *malissimo*

2. if the adverb ends in **-mente**, that ending attaches to the feminine singular form of the absolute superlative adjective

sincero → *sincer* → *sincerissima* →
sincerissimamente

We can also form absolute superlatives by adding adverbs before the adjectives like *molto*, *assai*, or *incredibilmente*:

*Es. Gli atleti olimpici sono **incredibilmente** forti.*

(Olympic athletes are incredibly strong.)

We can also add prefixes like *uber*, *super*, *stra*, and *ultra* to adjectives and adverbs.

*Es. Gli atleti olimpici sono **superforti**.*

(Olympic athletes are super strong.)

Una prova



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Struttura 4.3 Espressioni di quantità

In contesto

*Al supermercato ho comprato **alcune** mele, **qualche** albicocca, e **dell'**uva.*

So far in your study of Italian, you have dedicated time to learning your numbers and being able to express precise

measurements. But what if you want to express indefinite amounts like “some” or “a little” or “a few”? Well, there are several different ways to express these quantities, and they can depend on the form of the word they are modifying.

Il partitivo

One way to express “some” or “any” in Italian is with the **partitive**, or **il partitivo**. It is formed by combining the preposition *di* and the definite article. *Attenzione!* This looks exactly like the combined prepositions (**preposizioni articolate**) you learned back in Italian 110, but the meaning is different:

il	lo	l'	la	i	gli	le	
di	del	dello	dell'	della	dei	degli	delle

If we take the ingredients for a dish like *tiramisù*, for instance, we could write them using the **partitive**:

Il tiramisù

- **delle** uova (di + le)
- **dello** zucchero (di + lo)
- **del** caffè (di + il)
- **dei** biscotti savoiardi (di + i)
- **del** mascarpone (di + il)
- **del** cacao (di + il)

In all of these examples, the partitive translates to “some” (some eggs, some sugar, some coffee, etc...). It can be used with **all nouns**, whether they are singular or plural, or countable or uncountable (things like liquids).

There are also other ways to express “some”, or “several”, or “a few”, or “a little”:

expression of quantity	type of nouns	example
un po' di	singular, typically uncountable	Metto un po' di formaggio sulla pasta. (I put a little cheese on the pasta).
qualche	singular*, countable *(even though it expresses a plural meaning)	Compro qualche bottiglia di vino per la festa. (I buy some/several bottles of wine for the party.)
alcuni/e	plural, countable	Compro alcune bottiglie di vino per la festa. (I buy some/several/a few bottles of wine for the party.)

You likely noticed that *qualche* and *alcuni/e* share a meaning – the difference is that the former is invariable and always modifies a singular noun, while the latter always accompanies a plural noun and must agree in gender with that noun.

If we go back to our recipe for *tiramisù*, here are some other options:

Il tiramisù

- uova
 - delle uova
 - alcune uova
 - qualche uovo
- zucchero
 - dello zucchero
 - un po' di zucchero
- caffè
 - del caffè
 - un po' di caffè
- biscotti savoiardi

- dei biscotti savoiardi
- alcuni biscotti savoiardi
- qualche biscotto savoiardo
- mascarpone
 - del mascarpone
 - un po' di mascarpone
- cacao
 - del cacao
 - un po' di cacao

Espressioni di quantità

There are other expressions of quantity that we use often in Italian (and which you have already encountered many times) like *molto* (very, many, much, a lot of), *poco* (little, few, not many, not much), *tanto* (a lot of, many, much), *troppo* (too many, too much).

When these expressions of quantity modify **nouns**, they agree in gender and number with those words:

*Es. Bevo **troppo** caffè.*

(I drink too much coffee.)

*Es. Bevo **poca** acqua.*

(I drink little water.)

*Es. Ci sono **molti** ristoranti in centro.*

(There are many restaurants downtown.)

*Es. Mangio **tante** verdure ad ogni pasto.*

(I eat a lot of vegetables at every meal.)

***When these expressions of quantity modify adjectives or adverbs, they are invariable (which**

means they do not change). Remember this! This is a very common mistake in Italian.

*Es. Quella trattoria è **molto** buona.*

(That trattoria is very good.)

*Es. Siamo **troppo** stanchi per andare a cena.*

(We are too tired to go to dinner.)

There are also other specific measurements of quantity, some using the English system and some using the metric system. Most of them use *di*:

un chilo di / mezzo chilo di	a kilo of / a half-kilo of
un grammo di	a gram of
un etto di (*a typical way of ordering cured meats or cheeses at the deli counter)	hectogram (100 grams)
un litro di / un millilitro di	a liter of / a milliliter of
una tazza di	a cup of
un cucchiaino di	a teaspoon of
un cucchiaio di	a tablespoon of

Una prova



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Struttura 4.4 Ci/Ne e i verbi idiomatici

In contesto

Quanti fratelli hai?

–Ne ho 2.

Vai spesso in palestra?

–Ci vado tre volte alla settimana.

At this point, you've dedicated quite a bit of study to **pronouns** – that is, those tiny little words that take the place of nouns that can sometimes be difficult and confusing and comical to pronounce. Well, there are two more small words that you have probably encountered but perhaps not studied explicitly:

ci and *ne*. These two words tend to be studied together, even though they are technically two different parts of speech: *ci* is actually an adverb, and *ne* is a pronoun. Both can take the place of certain prepositional phrases, among other functions.

Ne

Let's look first at the uses of *ne*.

1. Quantità

Quanti etti di prosciutto compri?

-**Ne** compro 2.

(How many hectograms of prosciutto are you buying? I'm buying 2 [of them]).

Quante uova usi nella ricetta?

-**Ne** uso 3.

(How many eggs are you using in the recipe? I'm using 3 [of them]).

As you can see in these examples, we use *ne* with expressions of quantity. It is the way we say "x number of it/them". We do not need to repeat the noun we are substituting, and just like with other pronouns, we tend to place *ne* before the conjugated verb (all previous rules for placement apply here as well).

2. Partitivi e frasi con la preposizione *di*

Prendi del pane prima di tornare a casa?

-**Certo che ne** prendo.

(Will you pick up some bread before you come home? Certainly, I'll pick some up.)

This example represents a quantity, like those above, but it also shows another key use of *ne*: to replace the **partitive with *di***.

In fact, *ne* is used to replace any combination of the **preposition *di* + a noun or infinitive**, even if it does not represent quantity.

Es. Ho voglia di prendere un gelato.

–**Ne** ho voglia.

(I feel like an ice cream. → I feel like it)

Es. Parliamo del menù più tardi.

–**Ne** parliamo più tardi.

(We'll talk about the menu later. → We'll talk about it later)

If *ne* is combined with other pronouns, it comes second:

Es. Ti serve del sale?

–No, non **me ne** serve.

(Do you need some salt? No, I don't need it)

Ci

You have already seen *ci* in a lot of different capacities: as a **reflexive, reciprocal, direct** and **indirect object pronoun**. But that's not all!

1. Luogo

Remember when you learned the expressions *c'è* and *ci sono* (there is, there are)? Well, the *ci* in that case means “there” and functions as an adverb. In general, because it can refer to a place, it can replace phrases that begin with the prepositions *a*, *in*, *su* and *da*.

Es. Vai in biblioteca per studiare?

–**Ci** vado.

(Do you go to the library to study? Yes, I go there.)

Es. Sei mai andato in Italia?

–Non **ci** sono ancora andato.

(Have you ever been to Italy? I haven't been there yet.)

Hai lasciato il libro sulla scrivania?

–Sì, **ci** ho lasciato il libro.

(Did you leave the book on the desk? Yes, I left the book there.)

Sei passata da Diana ieri sera?

-Non ho avuto tempo per passarci.

(Did you pass by Diana's last night? I didn't have time to pass by there.)

This last example (*da* + **noun/pronoun**) is the equivalent of saying “someone’s house or place of business”. Think of the Italian restaurants you know that have names like *Da Luigi* – this means Luigi’s!

I verbi idiomatici

In English, there are a lot of idiomatic expressions, or expressions that have a figurative, rather than a literal, meaning. If you say: “Wow, *ci* and *ne* in Italian are a piece of cake”, then you are using an idiomatic expression because obviously these two grammatical elements are not actually cake. In Italian, there are also certain verbs that have idiomatic meanings, and these verbs often include *ci* or *ne* in their infinitive forms. A little particular, but also fun and useful phrases to learn!

*Es. ‘Ci’ e ‘ne’ sono difficili, ma gli studenti **se la cavano**.*

(‘Ci’ and ‘ne’ are difficult, but the students are managing.)

*Es. Quando finisco l’università, **me ne** vado da Massachusetts.*

(When I finish college, I’m getting out of Massachusetts.)

*Es. Martina ha un appuntamento e non **ce la** fa a venire alla nostra festa.*

(Martina has a date and can't make it to our party.)

As you can see in these examples, the verb conjugations have “built in” double pronouns—some reflexive verbs that add *ne* or the direct object pronoun *la*, and some that use *ci* in a similar way. Here are the infinitive forms of the verbs in the examples above:

<i>se la cavano</i>	cavarsela	to get by, to manage, to succeed
<i>me ne vado</i>	andarsene	to leave, to go away
<i>ce la fa</i>	farcela	to make it, to manage, to succeed

Here are some other examples:

-reflexive pronoun + la

verb	meaning	example
prendersela	to get angry, upset, annoyed, offended	<i>Quando gli studenti non studiano, la professoressa se la prende con loro.</i>
passarsela (bene o male)	to get on well/badly (sometimes economically)	<i>Noemi se la passa bene, dopo la promozione al lavoro.</i>
sentirsela	to feel like doing something, to feel up to doing something	<i>Non me la sento di viaggiare durante la pandemia.</i>

-ci

verb	meaning	example
farcela	to make it, to manage, to succeed	<i>Martina ha un appuntamento e non ce la fa a venire alla nostra festa.</i>
avercela (con)	to be angry with someone, to have it in for someone	<i>Sono arrivato in ritardo per il nostro appuntamento, e ora il mio ragazzo ce l'ha con me.</i>
metterci	to take x amount of time (all subjects)	<i>Mio fratello ci ha messo tre ore per andare da Milano a Parma.</i>
volerci	to take x amount of time (only third person, singular or plural)	<i>Ci vogliono due ore per andare da Milano a Parma.</i>
tenerci	to care about	<i>I professori ci tengono tanto ad insegnare le loro materie agli studenti.</i>
entrarci	to have to do with	<i>La pallacanestro non c'entra niente con l'arte rinascimentale.</i>

-ne

verb	meaning	example
andarsene	to leave, to go away, to get away from	<i>Quando finisco l'università, me ne vado da Massachusetts.</i>
intendersene	to be an expert in, to know a lot about	<i>Guardo sempre il Food Network—me ne intendo di cucinare, e di mangiare!</i>

Una prova



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For verb charts or other explanations, check out the appendices from *Tutt* a tavola, vol. 2!*

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