

Greetings

The standard greeting in Italy is "Buon Giorno". After midday it should really change to "Buona Sera" but not everybody does. In fact, in Italy, not many people stick to rules at all! When greeting someone you don't know well, you would use "Salve" rather than "Ciao". To family and friends, "Ciao" is used as both "Hello" and "Goodbye". You might also hear: "Come stai?"; "Tutto bene?"; "Come va?"; "Tutt'a posto?". Which are all ways of asking how you are...

Please & Thank you

Contrary to what is taught in most Italian courses, the phrase "Per Favore" is not often used by Italians to say "Please" except in a very formal way, i.e. "Excuse me Madam, could I please borrow your pencil?" or in a slightly sarcastic way. i.e "Do you think you could possibly move your car... please".

It is more common to use:

1. "Per piacere"

or...

2. "Per cortesia" (if you are asking a favour).

Italians also rarely use "Please" if they are asking for something. i.e "Two coffees please" would be simply "Due Caffè". However, they always say "Thank You" which is "Grazie" and the response will always be "Prego" which means "You're welcome".

"Prego" also means "Please", as in "After You" if you are letting someone go first, or in "Please do" if a waiter asks "Posso?" which means "Is it all right for me to clear your plates away".

Useful questions:

Where is...? - Dov'è...?

At what time? - A che ora?

How much does it cost? - Quanto costa?

How much is the bill? - Quanto pago?

How long? - Quanto tempo?

How long will it take? - Quanto tempo ci vuole?

How do you say...? - Come si dice...?

Where is the toilet? - Dov'è il bagno?

Is there a toilet? - C'è il bagno?

Where is a cashpoint? - Dov'è il bancomat?

Traveling:

Airport - Aeroporto

Station - Stazione

Train - Treno

Platform - Binario

Ticket - Biglietto

Return ticket - Biglietto andata e ritorno

One way ticket - Biglietto solo andata

Parking - Parcheggio

Car hire - Noleggio auto

Garage (fuel) - Distributore

Bus - Pulman (Autobus)

Bus stop - Fermata

Ferry - Traghetto

Timetable - Orario

Food & Drink:

Sandwich - Panino

Drink (soft) - Bibite

The bill - Conto

Change - Resto

Starter - Primo

Main course - Secondo

Sweet - Dolce

Fruit - Frutta

Sugar - Zucchero

Water - Acqua

Still water - Acqua liscia

Sparkling water - Aqua frizzante

Red wine - Vino rosso

White wine - Vino bianco

Glass - Bicchiere

Plate - Piatto

Knife - Coltello

Fork - Forchetta

Spoon - Cucchiaino

Teaspoon - Cucchiaino

Cutlery - Posate

Knapkin - Tovagliolo

Beer - Birra

Draught beer - Birra alla spina

Half pint (approx) - Piccola

Pint (approx) - Media

Coffee:

The bewildering array of different coffees in Italy is something of an illusion. There is one basic ingredient - a slug of strong espresso coffee. The issue is how much milk you want with it:

Espresso - small and black

Lungo - double dose

Macchiato - small with a dash of milk

Espressino - slightly more milk

Cappuccino - Normal cup size with frothy milk (and cacao)

Latte Macchiato - Large cup with frothy milk

Latte - NO COFFEE JUST MILK

In Italy, nobody drinks a milky coffee in the afternoon. You might get away with a Macchiato, but anything more than that and you give yourself away as a foreigner immediately!

Useful statements:

See you later - Ci vediamo

Talk to you later - Ci sentiamo

I am a foreigner - Sono straniero

I don't speak Italian - Non parlo l'Italiano

Do you speak English? - Parli l'Inglese?

HELP! - Aiuto!

Posso...? - Can I... ?

Puoi...? - Can you...?

Possono...? - Can they...?

Communication:

Telephone - Telefono

Mobile - Cellulare (telefonino)

Internet - Internet

Post office - Posta

Letter - Lettera

Envelope - Busta

Stamp - Francobollo

International - Internazionale

Useful numbers:

Emergency - 113

Police - 112

Ambulance - 118

Fire Brigade - 115

Car Breakdown - 116

**Spelling words on the phone
(phonetic alphabet used in Italy):**

A come Ancona

B come Bologna

C come Como

D come Domodossola

E come Empoli

F come Firenze

G come Genova

H come Hotel

I come Imola

K come Chilo

L come Livorno

M come Milano

N come Napoli

O come Otranto

P come Palermo

Q come Quadro

R come Roma

S come Savona

T come Torino

U come Udine

V come Venezia

Z come Zeta (or Zara)

The Vowels:

A - ah (as in car)

E - ay (as in day)

I - ee (as in feet)

O - o (as in hot)

U - oo (as in food)

Italian peculiarities:

The letters 'C' and 'G' have a hard or soft sound depending on which letter follows them:

Ca - Hard as in car
Ce - Soft as in change
Ci - Soft as in cheese
Co - Hard as in cod
Cu - Hard as in coop
Che - Hard as in came
Chi - Hard as in key

Ga - Hard as in garment
Ge - Soft as in james
Gi - Soft as in jeep
Go - Hard as in gone
Ghe - Hard as in game
Ghi - Hard as in gift

Alphabet:

A = Ah
B = Bee
C = Chee
D = Dee
E = Aye
F = Effay
G = Gee
H = Acka
I = Eee
J = Eee lungo
K = Cappa
L = Ellay
M = Emmay
N = Ennay
O = O (like not)
P = Pee
Q = Coo
R = Erray
S = Essay
T = Tee
U = Ooo
V = Voo
W = Dopia Voo
X = Ix
Y = Ipsilon
Z = Zeta

Remember, in an Italian word, every letter is pronounced.

Main Italian verbs:

To be - Essere
To have - Avere
To go - Andare
To come - Venire
To arrive - Arrivare
To fly - Volare
To drive - Guidare
To take - Prendere
To depart - Partire
To eat - Mangiare
To sleep - Dormire
To speak - Parlare
To pay - Pagare
To call (Telephone) - Chiamare
To send (by post) - Spedire
To ask - Chiedere
To do - Fare

Italian numbers:

0 - Zero
1 - Uno
2 - Due
3 - Tre
4 - Quattro
5 - Cinque
6 - Sei
7 - Sette
8 - Otto
9 - Nove
10 - Dieci
11 - Undici
12 - Dodici
13 - Tredici
14 - Quattordici
15 - Quindici
16 - Sedici
17 - Diciassette
18 - Diciotto
19 - Diciannove
20 - Venti

21 - Ventuno
22 - Ventidue
23 - Ventitré
24 - Ventiquattro
25 - Venticinque
26 - Ventisei
27 - Ventisette
28 - Ventotto
29 - Ventinove
30 - Trenta
40 - Quaranta
50 - Cinquanta
60 - Sessanta
70 - Settanta
80 - Ottanta
90 - Novanta
100 - Cento
200 - Duecento
1,000 - Mille
2,000 - Duemilla

Italian Days of the Week:

Monday - Lunedì
Tuesday - Martedì
Wednesday - Mercoledì
Thursday - Giovedì
Friday - Venerdì
Saturday - Sabato
Sunday - Domenica

Italian Months of the Year:

January - Gennaio
February - Febbraio
March - Marzo
April - Aprile
May - Maggio
June - Giugno
July - Luglio
August - Agosto
September - Settembre
October - Ottobre

November - Novembre

December - Dicembre