



SOLUZIONI

FOURTH EDITION
A PRACTICAL GRAMMAR OF CONTEMPORARY ITALIAN

DENISE DE RÔME

Soluzioni

Soluzioni: A Practical Grammar of Contemporary Italian combines an engaging reference and practice grammar explained in clear and concise language with numerous supporting exercises.

Aimed at keen students of all levels, *Soluzioni* offers:

- a complete grammar review in tabular form for easy navigation and at-a-glance comprehension;
- 650 graded practice exercises with an answer key for self-assessment;
- extensive examples, using a wide range of useful up-to-date vocabulary;
- authentic material from Italian media and literature, with vocabulary notes and linked exercises to show how grammar works in practice;
- special help sections throughout, dedicated to clarifying tricky points or avoiding common pitfalls;
- a comprehensive user-friendly index for ease of access in both Italian and English;
- a glossary of grammatical terms;
- a companion website at www.routledge.com/cw/derome with over 240 free interactive language quizzes for on-the-spot testing, plus supplementary downloadable material such as a comprehensive verb section and full answer key to the book exercises.

This fourth edition continues the accessible methodology and focus on contemporary usage that has made *Soluzioni* the clearest and most comprehensive pedagogic grammar on the market today. Fully updated, it covers key areas of difficulty such as tense usage, the subjunctive, causative verbs, combined pronouns and word order. It also pays attention to the links between grammar and communicative functions as well as those between grammar, context and register.

Suitable for class use and independent study, *Soluzioni* is the ideal reference and practice resource for learners of Italian. It is particularly suitable for fast-track use in *ab initio* courses at university and college.

Denise De Rôme holds degrees from the Universities of Cambridge and Reading, UK, and has taught Italian to all levels. She has authored BBC multimedia language courses, devised and presented several series of educational radio programmes, and has contributed translations and articles on language learning to academic journals. Now a writer and translator, she was previously Principal Lecturer and Head of the Italian Department at the University of Westminster, UK.

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Soluzioni

A Practical Grammar of Contemporary Italian, Fourth Edition

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Fourth Edition

Denise De Rôme

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Introduction

Soluzioni is a reference and practice grammar designed for those of you who are enthusiastic learners of Italian – whether you have only recently begun, or whether you have been studying for several years.

This fourth edition retains the popular features of earlier editions, such as the tabular format for easy-to-understand explanations, but it has been fully revised and updated to include new material as well as a Glossary of grammatical terms and an expanded Spelling and Pronunciation section, both previously included on the companion website.

This is essentially a practical grammar that you can use for independent study or in a group: it is designed as a flexible tool for successful learning, aimed at helping you to communicate with confidence and ease. *Soluzioni* combines comprehensive explanations and examples with extensive practice at every stage, and gives you the opportunity to proceed at your own pace. You can consolidate and check up on what you learn by doing the numerous exercises, taking all the time you want, because the more advanced grammar and accompanying exercises are signposted with the symbol ▲, allowing you to come back to them at a later stage. The explanations are devised with English speakers in mind so that the important areas of contrast between English and Italian are consistently highlighted to assist rapid comprehension.

In its exploration of the Italian language and its grammar, *Soluzioni* aims to enhance your communication skills. The explanations of the grammatical structures underpinning contemporary spoken and written Italian are accompanied by a large number of real language examples and a rich variety of longer authentic texts. These will not only help you to place the grammar in context, but should also stimulate you to further independent study, whether it is exploring the resources on the companion website or branching out and finding your own reading, listening and viewing material.

For historical reasons Italian is a particularly diverse language, as you will certainly come to realise, but *Soluzioni* inevitably focuses on what is generally considered to be ‘standard’ Italian. It provides an in-depth review of most aspects of modern Italian grammar, including some points rarely covered in traditional teaching grammars, but without trying to account for all linguistic variation. In the latter part of the book, however, you are introduced to the concept of grammatical variation: you will see, for example, how context or different registers (i.e. levels of formality) can affect the use of grammatical forms. In addition, the communicative functions of the grammar are flagged up from the beginning.

USING *SOLUZIONI*

- You do not need formal knowledge of either English or Italian grammar before you begin, as all the essential terminology is clearly explained at the beginning of each chapter as well as in the supplementary Glossary on p. 480.

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- There is no set order for working through *Soluzioni*. Go at your own pace, but make sure that you do not skip the exercises once you have studied a section. Pay particular attention to any tips in the *Attenti!* sections.
- Little and often is best, so there is no need to complete a whole chapter in one sitting. Remember that the harder grammar and exercises are signposted with the ▲ symbol so that you can return to them at a later date.
- Take time to build up your vocabulary regularly, using the examples and authentic texts. Get into the habit of systematically noting down any useful words so you can go over them later. This should not take long, as all the examples are translated.
- Use the cross references where they appear, as they will help to consolidate your knowledge by perhaps reminding you of points you had forgotten or need to revise.
- The Index can be a useful tool. It is easy to use effectively, as you can consult it under a variety of headings in both English and Italian without needing to know all the technical grammatical terms.
- Practice makes perfect. Do use the website for revision and further practice, in particular the 242 interactive quizzes. There are quizzes for Chapters 1–28 and they offer you the chance of double-checking your progress while also learning some new vocabulary. You can also download the nine-page *Italian Verbs* section. This has three tables covering all the important information in a rapidly accessible form and you can use these to test your verbs.
- The Answer Key to the 650 exercises in the book is downloadable from the website.

A NOTE ON LANGUAGE AND GRAMMAR

In any language what is ‘acceptable’ grammar may vary considerably. This is most obvious when considering the difference between the grammar of the spoken and the written word and is particularly true of Italy where, as a result of her history, regional dialects have had a strong influence. Italy was only united as a nation in 1870 and as late as the 1950s it is estimated that at least two-thirds of the Italian population habitually spoke regional dialects to family and friends rather than standard Italian. By the mid-1990s this figure was down to just under a quarter. Nowadays, however, despite the spread of ‘standard’ Italian, especially through the media, as many as 40% of Italians still speak a dialect or regional variation of Italian alongside standard Italian.

There is, therefore, a wider divergence between spoken and written Italian than between spoken and written English. So you should not be surprised or dismayed if what you hear spoken in Italian does not always match what you have learned from a grammar book. Some Italians, however, do speak very formally, following the rules of standard grammar. On the other hand, many contemporary Italian writers deliberately mimic the informal spoken word and adopt a colloquial style that deviates from ‘standard’ written norms.

Language, therefore, is creative. Most languages have a more or less standard body of ‘correct’ grammar, but in reality there are acceptable ‘deviations’ from this. Indeed, what constitutes ‘correct’ Italian is often a matter of furious debate amongst Italians themselves. Be aware that grammar is a dynamic tool, not a collection of stultifying, immutable rules. It will vary according to context, style, register – and location. So in order to communicate correctly and appropriately, you need to consider what you are talking or writing about, to whom and for what purpose. This is something that you, the learner, can only fully achieve after prolonged contact with the Italian language, but it is not an impossible goal!

LEARNERS' TOOLS

Grammar is a crucial language-learning tool, but apart from getting the most out of your grammar book, you should seriously consider paying attention to how to use a dictionary. You may not wish to read this right now, but do consult this section at some stage for useful tips.

Types of dictionaries

The main types you might consider using are:

- bilingual (English–Italian; Italian–English)
- Italian monolingual (Italian words explained in Italian)
- Italian synonyms (Italian words explained and similar words given, sometimes with opposites)

Whatever the dictionary, there are usually four kinds of information which tend to be provided:

- spelling
- meaning
- grammar
- pronunciation and stress pattern

Essential abbreviations

Get to know your dictionary: learning to use one effectively is an important language-learning skill. No two dictionaries are alike, so familiarise yourself with the one you are using in order to make the most of the information it contains. Begin by understanding the abbreviations – **abbreviazioni**. There is usually a table at the front. This may seem unnecessarily time-consuming, but the effort pays off. The most basic abbreviations include the following: **agg.** adjective; **art.** article; **adv.** adverb; **f.** feminine; **intr.** Intransitive; **inv.** invariable; **m.** masculine; **sost.** or **s.** noun; **tr.** transitive; **v.** verb. So if you come across **s.m.inv.** you will know the word is an invariable masculine noun; if you encounter **v.tr.** you will know that it refers to a transitive verb. Finally, two abbreviations can help you avoid embarrassment: **gerg.** slang, and especially **volg.** vulgar.

Trying out a monolingual dictionary

Most learners begin with a bilingual dictionary, but as you progress you may find it rewarding to consult a monolingual dictionary; the definitions provided by a bilingual dictionary may not be detailed enough, whereas a monolingual dictionary will provide more information. You will also find that on the whole the grammatical information in a monolingual dictionary is more complete – for example when it comes to irregular or controversial plurals.

Finally, bear in mind that it takes time and perseverance to learn a language, so do not be discouraged if the road is sometimes rocky and your progress is less rapid than you would like. There will certainly be other times when everything goes smoothly and you amaze yourself by how much you know and how effectively you communicate. The key to success

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is to use Italian as much as you can: whether you are in Italy or not, you can make giant strides by using the Internet, tuning in to social media and satellite TV, as well as reading regularly and trying out your Italian in shops, restaurants or a class.

Learning a foreign language is one of the most worthwhile things you will ever do. I hope you will find *Soluzioni* a clear and useful guide along the way.

Buon lavoro!

Denise De Rôme

1 Nouns

Nouns (**i sostantivi**) are words for naming people, animals, places, things and abstractions such as emotions and ideas. *Anna, dog, Rome, car, anger* and *justice* are all nouns. In Italian, nouns have a gender (**un genere**): they are either masculine (**maschili**) or feminine (**femminili**) and most of them have a different form for the singular (**il singolare**) and the plural (**il plurale**).

Nouns are often used with articles – words for *the* and for *a/an*. In this chapter the examples are given with definite articles – words for *the* – but these are not translated.

1.1 REGULAR NOUNS

Regular nouns follow a common and predictable pattern depending on their gender (masculine or feminine) and on their number (singular or plural). The gender and number of nouns are very important. This is because in Italian they affect the form of other words, such as articles or adjectives. Compare: **il ragazzo alto** *the tall boy* and **la ragazza alta** *the tall girl*. In English the article *the* and the adjective *tall* remain the same, but in Italian there are different forms for *the* (**il** and **la**), and for *tall* (**alto** and **alta**), because they depend on the gender and number of the all-important nouns, **ragazzo** and **ragazza**.

(See Chapter 2 for articles and Chapter 3.1 (d), p. 47 for more on number and agreement.)

(a) Nouns ending in -o

Most regular nouns ending in **-o** are masculine and form their plural in **-i**.

<i>Sing. → plural</i>	<i>Examples</i>	<i>Explanations</i>
-o/-io → -i	il treno → i treni <i>train/s</i> lo sconto → gli sconti <i>discount/s</i> l'aereo → gli aerei <i>plane/s</i>	In the plural -i replaces -o .
Exceptions	il cucchiaino → i cucchiaini <i>spoon/s</i> il figlio → i figli <i>son/s/children</i> lo zio (stressed -i) → gli zii <i>uncle/s</i>	If the final -i of the singular is stressed, the plural ends in -ii .
	But: il dio → gli dei <i>god/s</i> il tempio → i templi <i>temple/s</i> l'uomo → gli uomini <i>man/men</i> And note the feminine noun: la mano → le mani <i>hand/s</i>	There are a few important exceptions which involve spelling changes.

6 Nouns

<i>Sing. → plural</i>	<i>Examples</i>	<i>Explanations</i>
-go → -ghi	l'albergo → gli alberghi <i>hotel/s</i> il catalogo → i cataloghi <i>catalogue/s</i> il dialogo → i dialoghi <i>dialogue/s</i> il gergo → i gerghi <i>slang/s</i> il lago → i laghi <i>lake/s</i> But: l'asparago → gli asparagi	-ghi is the most common -go plural. An -h is needed before -i to keep the hard sound of the singular.
-ologo → -ologi (people only)	il biologo → i biologi <i>biologist/s</i> lo psicologo → gli psicologi <i>psychologist/s</i> il sociologo → i sociologi <i>sociologist/s</i>	These mostly have -gi plurals.
Consonant or stressed vowel before -co -co → -chi	il bosco → i boschi <i>wood/s</i> l'elenco → gli elenchi <i>list/s</i> il tacco → i tacchi <i>heel/s</i> il turco → i turchi <i>Turk/s</i> But: il porco → i porci <i>pig/s</i> il buco → i buchi <i>hole/s</i> il cuoco → i cuochi <i>cook/s</i> il fico → i fichi <i>fig/s</i> il fuoco → i fuochi <i>fire/s</i> l'eco (m. or f.) → gli echi (m.) <i>echo/es</i> But: l'amico → gli amici <i>friend/s</i> il greco → i greci <i>Greek/s</i> il nemico → i nemici <i>enemy/ies</i>	If -co is preceded by a consonant or by a stressed vowel, the plural is normally -chi .
Unstressed vowel before -co -co → -ci	il farmaco → i farmaci <i>medicine/s</i> il medico → i medici <i>doctor/s</i> il sindaco → i sindaci <i>mayor/s</i> lo stomaco → gli stomaci <i>stomach/s</i>	There are significant exceptions with stressed vowels. When the first, not the last vowel in the word is stressed, the plural is -ci .

(b) Nouns ending in **-a**

Most regular nouns ending in **-a** are feminine and form their plural in **-e**.

<i>Sing. → plural</i>	<i>Examples</i>	<i>Explanations</i>
-a → -e	la casa → le case <i>house/s</i> l'idea → le idee <i>idea/s</i> la galleria → le gallerie <i>gallery/ies, tunnel/s</i> But: l'ala → le ali <i>wing/s</i> l'arma → le armi <i>weapon/s</i>	In the plural -e replaces -a .
-ca → che -ga → ghe	l'amica → le amiche <i>friend/s</i> la giacca → le giacche <i>jacket/s</i> la collega → le colleghe <i>colleague/s</i> la paga → le paghe <i>pay (packet/s)</i>	An -h is inserted before -e to keep the hard sound.
Consonant + -cia → ce -gia → ge	l'arancia → le arance <i>orange/s</i> la pelliccia → le pellicce <i>fur coat/s</i> la pioggia → le piogge <i>rain/s</i> la spiaggia → le spiagge <i>beach/es</i>	The -i is usually dropped from the plural.
Vowel + -cia → cie -gia → gie	la farmacia → le farmacie <i>chemist/s</i> la bugia → le bugie <i>lie/s</i> (stressed final -i) la ciliegia → le ciliegie <i>cherry/ies</i> la valigia → le valigie <i>suitcase/s</i> (unstressed final -i)	The -i is normally kept. The plural is sometimes made without the -i e.g. ciliegie , but not if -i is stressed, (hence never buge).

(c) Nouns ending in -e

Nouns ending in **-e** can be masculine or feminine and form their plural in **-i**.

<i>Sing. → plural</i>	<i>Examples</i>	<i>Explanations</i>
-e → -i	il fiume → i fiumi <i>river/s</i> il leone → i leoni <i>lion/s</i> la luce → le luci <i>light/s</i> la tigre → le tigri <i>tiger/s</i> But: il bue → i buoi <i>ox/oxen</i>	The masculine and feminine forms differ only in the use of the articles.

Esercizi

- You're setting up house. Say what you need, beginning, 'Ho bisogno di . . . ' and make each noun plural.
 - lampada • letto • armadio • tavolo • sedia • poltrona • tendina • specchio • tappeto
- Now say what you need to bring for the picnic, beginning 'Abbiamo bisogno di . . . '
 - piatto • coltello • forchetta • cucchiaio • bicchiere • tazza • scodella • tovagliolo
- You're buying fruit and vegetables. Draw up your shopping list by making the nouns plural.
 - lattuga • asparago • fungo • peperone • fico • albicocca • limone • pesca
 - arancia • ciliegia
- The following nouns all refer to people. Four of them form their plural in **-ci** and four in **-chi**. Which is which?
 - greco • polacco • idraulico • medico • cuoco • tedesco • parroco • turco
- All except two of the following nouns form their plural in **-gi**. Which two end in **-ghi**?
 - archeologo • biologo • chirurgo • dermatologo • drammaturgo • psicologo
 - sociologo

(d) The gender of nouns ending in -e

Unlike regular nouns in **-o** and **-a**, the gender of nouns in **-e** is not easily predictable unless the noun denotes a person.

<i>Masculine nouns</i>	<i>Feminine nouns</i>
l'attore <i>actor</i>	l'attrice <i>actress</i>
il banchiere <i>banker</i>	la levatrice <i>midwife</i>
il padre <i>father</i>	la madre <i>mother</i>
lo scrittore <i>writer</i>	la scrittrice <i>woman writer</i>

8 Nouns

Some **-e** nouns referring to people can be both masculine and feminine.

il/la cantante <i>singer</i>	il/la nipote <i>nephew, niece</i>
il/la cliente <i>client</i>	l'ospite [m. & f.] <i>guest, host</i>
il/la complice <i>accomplice</i>	il/la superstite <i>survivor</i>
l'interprete [m. & f.] <i>interpreter</i>	il/la testimone <i>witness</i>

Attenti! Learn the gender of **-e** nouns

Most of the time the meaning of a noun does not clarify its gender, so you must learn this, paying particular attention to nouns beginning with a vowel, as these have identical singular definite articles (**I'**) for both masculine and feminine words. The plural articles, however, do change, so repeating these to yourself can help you memorise the gender.

Masculine nouns	Feminine nouns
l'ambiente gli ambienti <i>environment/s</i>	l'alluvione le alluvioni <i>flood/s</i>
l'animale gli animali <i>animal/s</i>	l'eccezione le eccezioni <i>exception/s</i>
l'elefante gli elefanti <i>elephant/s</i>	l'edizione le edizioni <i>edition/s</i>
l'errore gli errori <i>error/s</i>	l'indagine le indagini <i>enquiry/ies</i>
l'esame gli esami <i>exam/s</i>	l'immagine le immagini <i>picture/s</i>
l'incidente gli incidenti <i>accident/s</i>	l'opinione le opinioni <i>opinion/s</i>
l'ordine gli ordini <i>order/s</i>	l'uniforme le uniformi <i>uniform/s</i>
l'ufficiale gli ufficiali <i>officer/s</i>	l'unione le unioni <i>union/s</i>

Gender patterns

Some word endings can help predict gender, but few are fully reliable. The following tables provide some guidance.

Endings	Masculine nouns
-ore	l'amore <i>love</i> il calciatore <i>footballer</i> il colore <i>colour</i> il cuore <i>heart</i> il motore <i>motor</i> il traduttore <i>translator</i> il vapore <i>steam</i> il vincitore <i>winner/victor</i>
-one	il balcone <i>balcony</i> il lampone <i>raspberry</i> il pallone <i>football</i> il trombone <i>trombone</i>
-iere	il bicchiere <i>glass</i> il mestiere <i>job</i> il portiere <i>porter</i> il quartiere <i>neighbourhood</i>
-ale	il canale <i>canal, TV channel</i> il capitale <i>capital</i> (sum) il giornale <i>newspaper</i> il personale <i>staff/personnel</i> il segnale <i>sign</i> But: la capitale <i>capital city</i> la cattedrale la tangenziale <i>bypass</i> la vocale <i>vowel</i>

Endings	Feminine nouns
-gione	la carnagione <i>complexion</i> la prigionia <i>prison</i> la ragione <i>reason</i>
-sione	la conclusione <i>conclusion</i> la decisione <i>decision</i> la tensione <i>tension</i>
-zione	l'azione <i>action</i> la colazione <i>breakfast</i> la nazione <i>nation</i> l'obbiezione <i>objection</i>
-udine	l'abitudine <i>habit</i> l'altitudine <i>altitude</i> la gratitudine <i>gratitude</i>

Note that the gender of nouns with other **-ione** endings must be learned. la riunione *meeting* **But:** il campione *champion, sample*. The same applies to nouns in **-ine**; la grandine *hail* **But:** il fulmine *lightning*.

Endings in **-ice** are masculine if the stress falls on the third but last syllable and feminine if the stress is on the final **-i**.

-ice : m.	il codice <i>code</i> il giudice <i>judge</i> l'indice <i>index</i> , <i>index finger</i> il pollice <i>thumb</i>
-ice: f.	l'appendice <i>appendix</i> la cornice <i>frame</i> la fenice/Fenice <i>phoenix/Venice opera house</i> la narice <i>nostril</i> la traduttrice <i>translator</i>

Esercizi

6 Group the following nouns into masculine or feminine.

- abitudine • animale • appendice • azione • elefante • esame • esplosione • immagine
- incidente • indagine • ospedale • ordine • origine • umore • unione

7 Now establish the gender of the following. Make sure you know what they mean.

- | | | | |
|----------------|----------|---------------|----------------|
| (a) consonante | vocale | (d) alluvione | acquazzone |
| (b) temporale | monsone | (e) appendice | indice pollice |
| (c) fulmine | grandine | (f) dente | mente |

1.2 IRREGULAR NOUNS

Although irregular nouns do not follow the predictable patterns shown in the previous sections, their forms are governed by clear rules.

(a) Irregular nouns ending in **-a**

Masculine and feminine

Many nouns denoting people end in **-a**, and are masculine as well as feminine.

<i>sing → plural</i>	<i>Examples</i>	<i>Explanations</i>
-ista (m./f.)	→ -isti (m.) l'autista gli autisti le autiste <i>driver/s</i> il/la giornalista i giornalisti le giornaliste <i>journalist/s</i> → -iste (f.) il/la pianista i pianisti le pianiste <i>piano player/s</i> lo/la stilista gli stilisti le stiliste <i>fashion designer/s</i>	There is one singular form but two singular articles (il/lo and la), unless the noun begins with a vowel in which case it is l' . The two plural forms are regular, with m. and f. endings in -i and -e respectively.
-a (m./f.)	→ -i (m.) l'atleta gli atleti le atlete <i>athlete/s</i> l'omicida gli omicidi le omicide <i>murderer/s</i> → -e (f.) il/la belga i belgi le belghe <i>Belgian/s</i> il/la collega i colleghi le colleghe <i>colleague/s</i> l'idiota gli idioti le idiote <i>idiot/s</i> lo/la psichiatra gli psichiatri le psichiatre <i>psychiatrist/s</i> But invariable: il/la sosia i/le sosia <i>double/s/twin/s</i>	

10 Nouns

The gender of traditionally male occupations e.g. **il pilota** *pilot, racing driver*, is sometimes controversial, as they can now refer to women. See p. 16.

Masculine

The following are masculine, though a few can also refer to either sex.

<i>sing → plural</i>	<i>Examples</i>	<i>Explanations</i>
-a → -i	<p>il duca i duchi <i>duke/s</i> il monarca i monarchi <i>monarch/s</i> l'eremita gli eremiti <i>hermit/s</i> il poeta i poeti <i>poet/s</i> il papa i papi <i>pope/s</i> lo stratega gli strateghi <i>strategist/s</i> But invariable: il boia i boia <i>executioner/s</i></p> <p>l'aroma gli aromi <i>aroma/s, flavour/s</i> il diploma i diplomi il fantasma i fantasmi <i>ghost/s</i> il problema i problemi il poema i poemi il sistema i sistemi lo schema gli schemi il dilemma i dilemmi lo stratagemma gli stratagemmi il dramma i drammi il programma i programmi il clima i climi il pianeta i pianeti il parassita i parassiti il pesticida i pesticidi</p>	<p>Some nouns in -a referring to persons are masculine with a regular plural in -i.</p> <p>Masculine nouns ending in -ma, -ta, -ita or -ida, often derived from the Greek, are familiar, and mostly require no translation.</p>

Attenti! Many nouns ending in **-ma** and **-ta** are regular feminine nouns

Many nouns ending in **-ma** and **-ta** are regular feminine nouns, e.g. la cometa/le comete *comet/s*, la firma/le firme *signature/s*, la lacrima/le lacrime *tear/s*, la porta/le porte, la salma/le salme *corpse/s*, la trama/le trame *plot/s*.

(b) Invariable nouns

Invariable nouns have the same singular and plural forms except for the article, and have a variety of different endings. Here are some common examples.

Masculine

<i>Endings</i>	<i>Examples</i>	<i>Explanations</i>
-a	<p>il/i boia <i>executioner</i> il/i cinema <i>cinema/s</i> il/i cobra <i>cobra/s</i> il/i delta <i>delta/s</i> il/i gorilla <i>gorilla/s</i> il/i koala <i>koala bear/s</i> il/i panda <i>panda/s</i> il/i vaglia <i>money order/s</i></p>	<p>Some common invariable nouns ending in -a are of foreign origin.</p>
-è -é	<p>il/i caffè <i>coffee/s</i> il karatè <i>karate</i> il/i soufflé <i>soufflé/s</i></p>	<p>These are quite small-groups.</p>
-ò	<p>il/i comò <i>chest/s of drawers</i> il/i falò <i>bonfire/s</i></p>	
-i	<p>il/i lunedì <i>Monday/s</i> il/i tassi <i>taxi/s</i> But: la pipi <i>wee</i></p>	

Endings	Examples	Explanations
One syllable	lo/gli gnu <i>gnu/s</i> il/i re <i>king/s</i> il/i tè <i>tea/s</i> lo/gli sci <i>ski/s</i> But: la/le gru <i>crane/s</i>	Nouns of one syllable are mostly masculine.

Feminine

Endings	Examples	Explanations
-à	l'attività/le attività <i>activity/ies</i> la/le città <i>town/s</i> l'età/le età <i>age/s</i> la/le società <i>society/ies</i> But: il/i papà <i>Daddy/ies</i> lo/gli scià <i>Shah/s</i> il/i sofà <i>sofa/s</i>	This is a very large group.
-o	l'auto/le auto <i>car/s</i> la/le biro <i>pen/s</i> la/le foto <i>photo/s</i> la/le moto <i>motorbike/s</i> la/le radio <i>radio/s</i> But: il/i frigo <i>fridge/s</i> il/i lavabo <i>wash basin/s</i> il/i video <i>video/s</i> lo/gli stereo <i>stereo/s</i>	Many are shortened nouns, e.g. l'automobile → l'auto A few invariable nouns in -o are masculine.
-i	l'analisi/le analisi <i>analysis/es</i> la/le crisi <i>crisis/es</i> la/le diagnosi <i>diagnosis/es</i> l'eclissi/le eclissi <i>eclipse/s</i> l'ipotesi/le ipotesi <i>hypothesis/es</i> la/le metropoli <i>metropolis/es</i> l'oasi/le oasi <i>oasis/es</i> la/le tesi <i>thesis/es</i> l'alibi/gli alibi <i>alibi/s</i> il/i bisturi <i>scalpel/s</i> il/i brindisi <i>toast/s</i> (drink) il/i safari <i>safari/s</i> il/i sari <i>sari/s</i>	Feminine nouns in -i are generally of Greek origin – the masculine ones below are not. A few invariable nouns in -i are masculine.
-ie	la/le serie <i>series</i> la/le specie <i>type/s, species</i> But: la moglie/le mogli <i>wife/wives</i> la superficie/le superfici <i>surface/s</i>	A small group. Note the important exceptions.

Masculine and feminine

-ù	il/i bambù <i>bamboo/s</i> l'emù/gli emù <i>emus/s</i> il/i menù <i>menu/s</i> il/i ragù <i>meat sauce/s</i> il/i tabù <i>taboo/s</i> la gioventù <i>youth</i> la/le tivù <i>TV/s</i> la/le tribù <i>tribe/s</i> la/le virtù <i>virtue/s</i>	The genders of nouns in -ù must be learned.
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12 Nouns

Foreign nouns

Masculine foreign nouns are more numerous than feminine ones.

Masculine	l'AIDS l'/gli autobus <i>bus/es</i> il/i blog il/i compact disc/CD il/i computer il/i film il/i flashback il/gli hacker il/i modem il/i pacemaker il/i rapper il/i record l'/gli sms <i>text message/s</i> lo/gli sport il/i takeover il/i database l'/gli euro il/i file il/i mascara il/i mouse il software il/i single <i>unmarried</i> <i>person/s</i> il reggae	Ending in a consonant Most end in a consonant, but some end in a vowel. Ending in a vowel
Feminine	la/le brioche (a kind of croissant) l'/le élite la/le hit-parade la moquette <i>fitted carpet</i> l'/le overdose/overdosi la/le routine la/le toilette la/le roulotte <i>caravan</i> la/le chat room l'/le email la/le jeep la/le holding la/le hostess la/le reception	Ending in a vowel Most end in a vowel, but a few end in a consonant. Ending in a consonant

Esercizi

- The following are all people. Make them plural, giving two plurals where necessary and including appropriate definite articles.
• atleta • collega • ginnasta • tennista • pilota • pediatra • poeta
- Make these plural nouns singular.
• le analisi • le crisi • i dilemmi • i diplomi • le mogli • i problemi • i programmi
• i sistemi
- The following nouns all relate to the natural world. Identify their gender and make each one plural, including appropriate definite articles.
• clima • cometa • delta • eclissi • oasi • pianeta
- Sort the nouns below into masculine and feminine.
• auto • foto • frigo • moto • stereo • video
- Words for the workplace.* Give their gender. Which is the odd one out?
• computer • cursore • email • fax • file • scanner • software • mouse • modem

▲ 1.3 COMPOUND NOUNS

Compound nouns are common in Italian. They are made up of two or more separate words combined as one and are nearly always masculine. There are complicated rules for forming their plurals, so it is easier to learn them individually, always referring to a dictionary. Italians themselves may vary in their use of compound plurals and so occasionally do dictionaries! Below are some general guidelines.

The formation of plurals

Regular plural	il/i grattacielo/i <i>skyscraper/s</i> il/i passaporto/i <i>passport/s</i> il/i portafoglio/i <i>wallet/s</i> il/i reggiseno/i <i>bra/s</i> il/i capoluogo/ghi <i>capital town/s</i> la/le calzamaglia/e <i>tights</i> il/i pescecane/i <i>shark/s</i>	Either: verb + singular masculine noun or: two nouns of the same gender
Invariable	lo/gli scaldapiedi <i>footwarmer/s</i> lo/gli stuzzicadenti <i>toothpick/s</i> l'/gli apriscatole <i>tin opener/s</i> la/le lavastoviglie <i>dishwasher/s</i> il/i portamonete <i>purse/s</i> il/i battiscopa <i>skirting board/s</i> il/i cavalcavia <i>flyover/s</i> But: il cacciavite, i cacciaviti <i>screwdriver/s</i> l'/gli aspirapolvere <i>vacuum cleaner/s</i> il/la/i/le portavoce <i>spokesperson/s</i> il/la/i/le senzatetto <i>homeless person/s</i> il/i dopobarba <i>aftershave/s</i> il/i fuorilegge <i>outlaw/s</i> il/i sottoscala <i>basement/s</i> But: il salvagente i salvagenti <i>lifejacket/s</i>	The most common noun of this type consists of a verb + a plural masculine noun or any feminine noun (singular or plural). Also common is a verb or preposition + an uncountable noun (e.g. polvere), or a noun not normally plural in the context (e.g. tetto).

Some nouns are made up of two separate words: noun + noun, or noun + adjective. The first word forms its plural regularly, and the second is invariable unless it is a regular adjective.

Noun + noun:	l'asilo nido/gli asili nido <i>nursery/ies</i> , la conferenza stampa/le conferenze stampa <i>press conference/s</i> , la linea guida/le linee guida <i>guideline/s</i> , la ragazza madre/le ragazze madre <i>single mother/s</i> .
Noun+ adjective	la suora operaia/le suore operaie <i>worker nun/s</i> il braccio destro/ i bracci destri <i>right-hand man/men</i> , il conto corrente i conti correnti <i>current account/s</i>

▲ Esercizi

1 Make the following gadgets plural.

- l'accendisigaro • l'apribottiglie • l'aspirapolvere • il cavatappi • il portacenere
- il portasapone • lo scaldasonno (*electric blanket*) • il tagliaerba • il tritacarne
- il tritadocumenti (*shredder*) • il tritarifiuti (*waste disposal unit*)

2 Group these nouns into those with a regular plural ending and those that are invariable.

- il portachiavi • il portafoglio • il portamonete • il/la portavoce • il doposcuola
- il dopobarba • il senzatetto • il sottotitolo

▲ **1.4 DEFECTIVE NOUNS**

Very few nouns are truly defective, i.e. possessing only a singular or only a plural form. However, many are used defectively, i.e. mainly in the singular or mainly in the plural.

In Italian and English, their use occasionally coincides, e.g. le forbici *scissors*, gli occhiali *glasses*, i vestiti *clothes*, but this is not often the case.

Italian plural, English singular	gli affari <i>business</i> i bagagli <i>luggage</i> i capelli <i>hair</i> i compiti <i>homework</i> i consigli <i>advice</i> le dimissioni <i>resignation</i> le informazioni <i>information</i> i lavori di casa <i>housework</i> i (mass) media (<i>mass</i>) <i>media</i> i mobili <i>furniture</i> le notizie <i>news</i> le nozze <i>wedding</i> le posate <i>cutlery</i> i progressi <i>progress</i> i soldi <i>money</i> gli spaghetti <i>spaghetti</i> gli spiccioli <i>change</i> gli spinaci <i>spinach</i> le stoviglie <i>crockery</i>
Italian singular, English plural	il binocolo <i>binoculars</i> il pigiama <i>pyjamas</i> la roba <i>things/stuff</i> l'uva <i>grapes</i>

Attenti! *Verbs must match the noun*

Remember to use (i) a plural verb when the Italian noun is plural and (ii) a singular verb when it is singular:

- (i) Come vanno gli affari? *How is business?* Sono consigli inutili. *It is useless advice.*
(ii) La tua roba è pesante. *Your things are heavy.* L'uva è buonissima. *The grapes are delicious.*

▲ **Esercizio**

1 Express the following in Italian.

- (a) *The luggage is here.*
(b) *I need information.*
(c) *He/She has too much money.*
(d) *The media must be independent.*
(e) *I have no change.*
(f) *Are they seedless grapes? (senza semi)*
(g) *Are your pyjamas new?*
(h) *The news is good.*

1.5 COLLECTIVE NOUNS

Collective nouns are used to refer to people, animals or things as a group.

Collective nouns	l'esercito <i>army</i> la famiglia <i>family</i> la gente <i>people</i> il governo <i>government</i> il partito <i>party</i> il personale <i>staff</i> la polizia <i>police</i> il popolo <i>the people</i> la stampa <i>the press</i> e.g. Il governo è stato sconfitto <i>The government was/were defeated</i> Il popolo inglese ha votato contro l'UE <i>The English people have voted against the EU</i>	Italian collective nouns are generally used with a singular verb.
Numerical collectives	un centinaio <i>about a hundred</i> la maggioranza <i>the majority</i> un migliaio <i>about a thousand</i> e.g. La maggioranza della Camera ha votato a favore <i>The majority of the Chamber have/has voted in favour</i> But: La maggioranza degli inquilini ha/hanno protestato <i>The majority of the tenants have protested</i>	In English the preference is for a plural verb. When there is a clear reference to plural subjects, plural agreements are also possible in Italian.

For the use of singular or plural verbs with percentages, fractions and other collective numbers, see Chapter 17 pp. 278–9 and pp. 281–2. For **la maggior parte** *most*, see Chapter 12, p. 211.

Esercizio

- 1 Choose the appropriate verb(s) to complete the sentences in Italian.
 - (a) Il popolo danese **era/erano** contro la UE. (*The Danish people were against the EU.*)
 - (b) **C'è/Ci sono** troppa gente qui. (*There are too many people here.*)
 - (c) **È arrivato/Sono arrivati** un centinaio di ospiti. (*A hundred or so guests have arrived.*)
 - (d) La maggioranza dei prigionieri **è stata/sono stati** torturati. (*The majority of the prisoners were tortured.*)

▲ 1.6 MORE ON GENDER

The gender of nouns in Italian is important because it affects both form and meaning. It affects the form of articles, pronouns, adjectives and participles. In addition, a different gender can give the same word a different meaning. Gender needs to be learned, as even in the case of nouns referring to people, it is not always possible to predict.

(a) The gender of nouns referring to people

Most nouns referring to people are either masculine or feminine according to the sex of the person and many have separate, though similar, forms (see also p. 9):

l'autore/l'autrice <i>author</i>	l'operaio/l'operaia <i>worker</i>	il padrone/la padrona <i>boss, owner</i>	il conte/la contessa <i>count/countess</i>
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Some nouns, however, have a single form and gender for both men and women:

Single-gender nouns

Single-gender nouns usually refer to either sex irrespective of their gender.

Feminine only	la guida <i>guide</i> la guardia <i>guard</i> l'icona <i>icon</i> la persona <i>person</i> la sentinella <i>sentry</i> la spia <i>spy</i> la star <i>star</i> la vittima <i>victim</i> e.g. Guy Burgess è stato /Mata Hari è stata una spia famosa	The adjectives are always feminine but the past participle agrees with the subject.
Masculine only	il braccio destro <i>right-hand man</i> il fantasma <i>ghost</i> il monarca <i>monarch</i> il personale <i>staff</i> il contralto <i>contralto</i> il mezzosoprano <i>mezzosoprano</i> But: la /(il) soprano (il is less common) e.g. Pino/Pina è diventato/a il mio braccio destro Lidia è diventata un mezzosoprano famoso But: Callas fu la soprano più famosa al mondo	These refer to either sex apart from the feminine singers. The adjectives are masculine but the past participle agrees with the subject.

Naming women's professions, especially male-dominated ones, is controversial. There are few hard and fast rules. The tendency is to reject feminine endings such as **-essa** or **-ice** and to adopt a masculine form, sometimes with the feminine article. However, old feminine endings do persist.

Masculine and feminine for professions	il /la giudice <i>judge</i> il/la preside <i>principal/head</i> il/la presidente <i>president</i> il/la vigile <i>policeman/</i> <i>woman</i> il/la designer il/la manager e.g. È diventata la prima presidente della Camera. However: il campione (m.) la campionessa (f.) <i>champion</i> il senatore (m.) la senatrice (f.) <i>senator</i>	la is increasingly used with some m. nouns ending in -e and with foreign words.
Masculine preferred for many professions	l'architetto (m/f) <i>architect</i> l'avvocato (m/f) <i>lawyer</i> il deputato <i>MP; congressman</i> il medico <i>doctor</i> il ministro <i>minister</i> il redattore <i>editor</i> e.g. Mia zia è un noto avvocato (not avvocatessa or avvocatessa)	Feminine forms of m. nouns in -o , now exist, e.g. la deputata/ministra/sindaca etc., but are not popular.
Donna and feminine forms	la donna poliziotto /la poliziotta la donna soldato/la soldata la donna carabiniere/la carabiniere il sindaco donna/la sindaca	Neither is donna with some m. professions. The masculine form is often preferred instead.

▲ Esercizi

- 1 The following nouns are all masculine, although most of them can refer to both men and women. Which two refer only to women?
 - architetto • capo • contralto • direttore • ministro • presidente • medico
 - mezzosoprano
- 2 The nouns below are all feminine but most of them can refer to men as well. Spot the two that refer only to women.
 - comparsa • guardia • guida • icona • levatrice • persona • regina • spia • star
 - vittima
- 3 Make the correct agreement of adjectives and participles in these sentences.
 - (a) Maria è diventato/a un architetto molto bravo/a.
 - (b) Mio figlio è diventato/a una guida molto conosciuto/a.
 - (c) Le vittime più tragici/tragiche sono stati/e i bambini.

(b) The gender of geographical names

The gender of geographical names is important, as this affects the use of other parts of speech such as the agreement of adjectives and the article used with the prepositions **di**, **da**, **a**, **su** and **in**. (See Chapter 2, pp. 35–6.)

Masculine geographical names	seas	l'Atlantico lo Jonio il Mediterraneo But: la Manica <i>the Channel</i>
	rivers	il Po il Tevere il Tamigi <i>the Thames</i> But: la Senna <i>the Seine</i> la Loira <i>the Loire</i>
	mountains	gli Appennini l'Everest i Pirenei il Monte Bianco il Gran Sasso l'Himalaia But: le Alpi le Ande le Dolomiti
	lakes	il Garda il Trasimeno
Feminine geographical names	continents	l'Africa l'Europa
	towns	Londra Milano Parigi But: il Cairo il Pireo <i>Piraeus</i>
	islands	la Sicilia le Canarie But: il Madagascar

Regions and countries can be masculine or feminine. There are no clear-cut rules governing their gender.

Feminine and masculine geographical names	f. regions	la Toscana le Marche la Cornovaglia <i>Cornwall</i>
	m. regions	il Friuli il Lazio il Piemonte gli Abruzzi lo Yorkshire il Texas
	f. countries	l'Arabia Saudita l'Australia la Francia la Germania l'Inghilterra l'Irlanda l'Italia la Nuova Zelanda la Scozia la Spagna la Svizzera
	m. countries	il Belgio il Bengala il Brasile il Canada il Galles il Guatemala il Pakistan lo Sri Lanka il Sudafrica and: Israele

Attenti! Learn the gender of countries.

When you come across the name of a new country or region, learn its gender as well, since this is not always easy to predict from the endings. Most countries ending in **-a**, such as la Nigeria, la Somalia and l'Uganda, are feminine, but some are masculine: e.g. il Botswana, il Kenya, lo Zambia. Note that countries ending in a consonant or in **-e** tend to be masculine: e.g. l'Afghanistan, l'Iraq, il Kuwait, il Nepal, il Cile, lo Zimbabwe.

For practice with geographical names, see pp. 37–8.

(c) Gender and meaning

The gender of similar or related words can cause confusion. Sometimes the difference in meaning resulting from a different gender is slight, but at other times it is considerable.

Different gender: different meaning

Many nouns with quite different meanings are identical in form apart from the article.

il boa <i>boa constrictor</i>	la boa <i>buoy</i>	il capitale <i>capital</i> (funds)	la capitale <i>capital</i> (city)
il fine <i>aim</i>	la fine <i>end</i>	il fronte <i>front</i> (war)	la fronte <i>forehead</i>
il lama <i>llama, lama</i>	la lama <i>blade</i>	il morale <i>morale</i>	la morale <i>moral</i>

Others are almost identical in form.

il banco <i>counter, desk</i>	la banca <i>bank</i>	il bilancio <i>budget, toll</i>	la bilancia <i>scales, balance</i>
il cappello <i>hat</i>	la cappella <i>chapel</i>	il cartello <i>sign (post)</i>	la cartella <i>file, briefcase</i>
il manico <i>handle</i>	la manica <i>sleeve</i>	il mostro <i>monster</i>	la mostra <i>exhibition</i>
il partito <i>party</i> (political)	la partita <i>match</i> (game)	il pasto <i>meal</i>	la pasta <i>pasta, cake</i>
il soffitto <i>ceiling</i>	la soffitta <i>attic</i>	il testo <i>text</i>	la testa <i>head</i>

Different gender: related meaning

Some nouns differ in gender but have closely related meanings.

<i>Masculine: the plant</i>	<i>Feminine: the fruit/produce</i>
il ciliegio <i>cherry tree</i>	la ciliegia <i>cherry</i>
il melo <i>apple tree</i>	la mela <i>apple</i>
il pero <i>pear tree</i>	la pera <i>pear</i>
il susino <i>plum tree</i>	la susina <i>plum</i>
il fico <i>fig tree</i>	But: il fico <i>fig</i>
il limone <i>lemon tree</i>	il limone <i>lemon</i>
il mandarino <i>mandarine tree</i>	il mandarino <i>mandarine</i>

The following nouns with two singular forms and one plural also have closely related meanings.

<i>Two singular forms – m. and f.</i>	<i>One m. plural</i>
il frutto <i>a (piece of) fruit/fruit</i> (of labour)	i frutti <i>individual fruits</i>
la frutta <i>type of fruit/fruit</i> (in general)	
il legno <i>wood</i>	i legni <i>types of wood, woodwind</i> (orchestra)
la legna <i>firewood</i>	

Plural gender changes: related meanings

Some masculine nouns have two plurals, masculine and feminine. These are related in meaning, but not usually interchangeable. The most common plural is feminine, while the masculine plural generally – but not always – expresses a figurative (non-literal) meaning.

<i>Masculine singular</i>	<i>Feminine plural</i>	<i>Masculine plural</i>
il braccio	le braccia <i>arms</i>	i bracci <i>arms</i> (of chair, lake, cross, etc.)
il ciglio	le ciglia <i>eyelashes</i>	i cigli <i>edges</i> (of road/ditch)
il dito	le dita <i>fingers</i> (of the hand)	i diti <i>individual fingers</i>
il gesto	le gesta <i>exploits</i>	i gesti <i>gestures</i>
il grido	le grida <i>cries</i> (human)	i gridi <i>cries</i> (of animals)
il labbro	le labbra <i>lips</i>	i labbri <i>rim, edge</i> (of cup, jug, wound)
il membro	le membra <i>members, limbs</i> (of body)	i membri <i>members</i> (of family, club, etc.)
il muro	le mura <i>city/castle/house walls</i>	i muri <i>individual walls</i>
l'osso	le ossa <i>bones</i> (of the body)	gli ossi <i>individual bones</i> (of dead animals)
l'urlo	le urla <i>yelling, roar</i> (of crowd)	gli urli <i>shouts, shrieks</i> (of an individual)
il ginocchio	le ginocchia <i>knees</i> (see also ginocchi)	i ginocchi <i>knees</i> (similar in use to ginocchia)
il lenzuolo	le lenzuola <i>sheets</i> (a pair of sheets)	i lenzuoli <i>separate sheets</i>

The following masculine nouns have an irregular feminine plural ending in **-a**, but there is no change in meaning except in the case of the numbers, where the shift is very slight.

<i>Masculine singular</i>	<i>Feminine plural</i>
il miglio <i>mile</i>	le miglia <i>miles</i>
il paio <i>pair</i>	le paia <i>pairs</i>
il riso <i>laugh</i>	le risa <i>laughs</i>
l'uovo <i>egg</i>	le uova <i>eggs</i>
un centinaio <i>about 100</i>	centinaia <i>hundreds</i>
un migliaio <i>about 1000</i>	migliaia <i>thousands</i>

Different gender: same or similar meaning

Occasionally a difference in gender has little significant impact on the meaning, although in practice the different nouns are rarely interchangeable in all contexts. The use of gender with the following words may depend on the speaker's regional origin or on individual preference.

il mattino/la mattina <i>morning</i>	La mattina is the general word for morning, e.g. Mi alzo presto la mattina <i>I get up early in the morning</i> . However, these are often interchangeable: Mi alzo alle sette di mattino/mattina <i>I get up at seven in the morning</i> .
l'orecchio/l'orecchia <i>ear</i>	It is more common to use orecchio , but the feminine is used in some regions. Both m. and f. plural forms are used with no change in meaning, but the feminine orecchie is more common.
il tavolo/la tavola <i>table</i>	Tavolo usually refers to the item of furniture with a practical use: a table in a restaurant, an ironing board (tavolo da stiro , etc.). Tavola has a wider range of meanings, e.g. sedersi a tavola <i>to sit down to eat</i> , apparecchiare la tavola <i>to lay the table</i> .
terrazzo/terrazza	Terrazzo is a terrace of cultivated land or a balcony, while terrazza is larger, often a roof terrace.

▲ **Esercizi**

- 4 Complete the following sentences in Italian by making the nouns given plural, including an appropriate article if necessary.
- Mi fanno male (orecchio).
 - Ho comprato una dozzina di (uovo).
 - Il calzolaio fabbricava tante (paio) di scarpe.
 - Il giornalaio vendeva (migliaio) di giornali.
 - Il fioraio vende (centinaio) di fiori al giorno.
- 5 The following are trees; give the names of their fruits.
- l'arancio • il fico • il pesco • il mandorlo • l'olivo
- 6 Make these parts of the body plural. Which is the odd one out?
- il braccio • il ciglio • il dito • il ginocchio • il labbro • la mano
- 7 Complete the sentences using the words in brackets with the correct gender.
- È (il/la fine) dell'anno scolastico.
 - Gli manca (il/la capitale) per comprare la ditta.
 - (Il/la capitale) dell'Australia non è Sydney.
 - Non hanno capito (il/la morale) della favola.
 - Sono senza soldi, devo andare in (banco/banca).
 - Devo far riparare (il manico/la manica) della borsa.
 - Il maestro era già (nel buco/nella buca) dell'orchestra.
 - Ho prenotato (un tavolo/una tavola) per le otto.
- 8 Read the following text about Africa, paying particular attention to the geographical names and the words in bold, then answer the questions below.

L'Africa è il terzo continente per **estensione** dopo l'Asia e le Americhe. La sua **superficie** rappresenta il 20, 2% delle terre emerse del **pianeta**; i suoi **abitanti** costituiscono un settimo della popolazione mondiale. È attraversata dall'**equatore** e caratterizzata da una grande **varietà** di **climi**. Lo stato più grande del continente è il Sudan mentre quello più piccolo sono le Seychelles, un **arcipelago** al largo della costa orientale.* Lo stato più piccolo sulla terraferma* è **invece** il Gambia.

Le montagne più alte dell'Africa sono il Ruwenzori (5110 m di **altitudine**), il Kilimangiaro (5895 m di altitudine) e il Monte Kenya (5199 m di altitudine). Il principale fiume africano è il Nilo che attraversa l'Africa nord-orientale e quando raggiunge il Mediterraneo sfocia con un'ampia foce a **delta**.*

Una lunga catena di **laghi** corre lungo la Rift Valley, ai **confini tra** il Congo, l'Uganda, la Tanzania, il Burundi e il Ruanda: i più importanti sono il Lago Vittoria e il Lago Tanganica.

(Wikipedia)

VOCABULARY

orientale *eastern* **terraferma** *mainland* **sfocia** . . . *delta flows into a wide delta*

QUESTIONS

- (a) Identify the gender of: **estensione, abitanti, equatore, altitudine.**
- (b) Give the gender and singular of: **climi, laghi, confini.**
- (c) Give the gender and plural of: **superficie, pianeta, varietà, arcipelago, delta.**
- (d) Of the eight countries mentioned, name the two feminine ones.

2 Articles

Articles (**gli articoli**) can be definite, indefinite, prepositional or partitive. In English there is one definite article, *the*, and there are two indefinite articles, *a/an*. Prepositional articles are combinations of prepositions with the definite article, e.g. *on the, to the*, etc. and they have special forms in Italian. Partitive articles correspond to *some/any* and also have special forms in Italian.

2.1 THE INDEFINITE ARTICLE

There are four indefinite articles (**articoli indeterminativi**) in Italian: two masculine and two feminine. They can be used before singular nouns, e.g. *a dog, an animal*, and sometimes before an accompanying adjective, e.g. *a big dog, a tiny animal*. In Italian their form depends on the gender and spelling of the noun or adjective which follows.

(a) Indefinite articles: masculine and feminine forms

The form of the article depends on the gender, number and spelling of the following word.

un (m.)	un amico <i>a friend</i> un impermeabile <i>a raincoat</i> un negozio <i>a shop</i> un operaio <i>a worker</i> un signore <i>a man</i> un treno <i>a train</i>	Used before most consonants and all vowels.
uno (m.)	uno sbaglio <i>a mistake</i> uno sconto <i>a discount</i> uno straniero <i>a foreigner</i> uno psicologo <i>a psychologist</i> uno zio <i>an uncle</i> uno yogurt <i>a yoghurt</i> uno gnomo <i>a gnome</i> uno xilofono <i>a xylophone</i> uno chalet <i>a chalet</i>	Used before s + consonant, gn , ps , x , y , z and a few French words beginning with ch .
una (f.)	una casa <i>a house</i> una straniera <i>a foreigner</i> una zia <i>an aunt</i> una psichiatra <i>a psychiatrist</i>	Used before all consonants.
un' (f.)	un'amica <i>a friend</i> un'elezione <i>an election</i> un'idea <i>an idea</i> un'operaia <i>a worker</i> un'uniforme <i>a uniform</i>	Used before all vowels.

Attenti! Masculine and feminine articles before a vowel: different spelling

Indefinite articles used with nouns beginning with a vowel sound the same but actually differ in the masculine and feminine form: **un** amico (m.) but **un'**amica (f.) *friend*, **un** infermiere (m.) but **un'**infermiera (f.) *nurse*.

Esercizi

- 1 You're a busy cook. Say what you've made, beginning, 'Ho fatto un/uno/una/un' . . .'
- frullato di frutta • arrosto • insalata • zabaglione • zuppa inglese • spezzatino
 - sugo di pomodoro
- 2 **Un** or **uno**? The nouns below are all masculine and refer to people. Which require **un** and which **uno**?
- studente • scienziato • signore • spettatore • soldato • sacerdote • psichiatra
 - pediatra • profugo • produttore • psicologo • poliziotto
- 3 **Un** or **un'**? These nouns all begin with a vowel. Which require **un** and which require **un'**?

amico	elicottero	inchiesta	offerta	uccello
amica	enciclopedia	ingresso	ombrello	ufficio
appartamento	estate	isola	operaio	uniforme
automobile	etto	ispettore	opinione	uscita

Changes in form of the indefinite article

A noun may not always be used with the same indefinite article.

un → uno	un castello → uno splendido castello <i>a splendid castle</i>	The form of the article depends on the initial sound and spelling of the word it immediately precedes, (as well as its gender and number) – and this is not always a noun. See also table (a) p. 24.
uno → un	uno studente → un ottimo studente <i>an excellent student</i>	
una → un'	una casa → un' immensa casa <i>an immense house</i>	
un' → una	un' idea → una buona idea <i>a good idea</i>	

Esercizio

- 4 Describe these people and places by using an appropriate indefinite article.
- (a) È _____ signora elegante. È _____ elegante signora spagnola.
 (b) È _____ chef famoso. È _____ famoso chef francese.
 (c) È _____ palazzo strano. È _____ strano palazzo barocco.
 (d) È _____ isola meravigliosa. È _____ meravigliosa isola mediterranea.

(b) Some uses of the indefinite article

The indefinite article is used much as the English *a/an*, but there are some important cases in which it is omitted.

Omission of the indefinite article

Occupation, status or religion	Sono ingegnere <i>I am an engineer</i> Mia zia è vedova <i>My aunt is a widow</i> Sandro è diventato buddista <i>Sandro has become a Buddhist</i> But: È un ingegnere <u>molto bravo</u> <i>He is an excellent engineer</i>	No article is required unless an adjective or adjectival phrase is used.
Exclamations	Che peccato! <i>What a shame/pity!</i> Che bella ragazza! <i>What a beautiful girl!</i>	No article with exclamations.

Esercizio

5 Complete the following sentences, inserting an indefinite article where necessary. Then translate into English.

- | | |
|--|---|
| (a) Sono _____ medico. | (d) Sono _____ studente. |
| (b) È _____ bravo medico. | (e) È _____ cattolica tua zia? |
| (c) È _____ studente che studia tanto. | (f) Mia zia è _____ cattolica molto tradizionale. |

2.2 THE DEFINITE ARTICLE

In Italian the definite article (**l'articolo determinativo**) has four singular forms and three plural forms, all of which correspond to *the* in English. Like indefinite articles, they come before a noun and sometimes before an adjective. Their form depends on the gender, number and initial letter(s) of the following word.

(a) The definite article: masculine and feminine forms

Singular → *plural*

il → i (m.)	il bambino → i bambini <i>the child, children</i> il sugo → i sughi <i>the sauce/s</i>	Used before most consonants.
l' → gli (m.)	l'amico → gli amici <i>the friend/s</i> l'esercizio → gli esercizi <i>the exercise/s</i>	Used before vowels.
lo → gli (m.)	lo scandalo → gli scandali <i>the scandal/s</i> lo psichiatra → gli psichiatri <i>the psychiatrist/s</i> lo zoo → gli zoo <i>the zoo/s</i> lo yacht → gli yacht <i>the yacht/s</i> lo gnocco → gli gnocchi <i>the gnoccho/i</i> lo xilofono → gli xilofoni <i>the xylophone/s</i> lo chef → gli chef <i>the chef/s</i>	Used before s + consonant, ps, z, y, gn, x and a few words beginning with ch (usually of French origin).
la → le (f.)	la bicicletta → le biciclette <i>the bicycle/s</i> la scuola → le scuole <i>the school/s</i> la zanzara → le zanzare <i>the mosquito/es</i>	Used before all consonants.
l' → le (f.)	l'amica → le amiche <i>the friend/s</i> l'opinione → le opinioni <i>the opinion/s</i> l'università → le università <i>the university/ies</i>	Used before all vowels.

Attenti! *Definite articles before a vowel*

Singular masculine and feminine definite articles used before a vowel are the same, but the plural articles differ: **l'**amico, **l'**amica **but: gli** amici, **le** amiche; **l'**infermiere, **l'**infermiera, **but: gli** infermieri, **le** infermiere.

Esercizi

- 1 Name some of the contents of the bathroom, using the singular definite article.
 - asciugamano • carta igienica • dentifricio • sapone • shampoo • spugna • rasoio
- 2 The following nouns refer to animals. Give their singular definite articles.
 - gnu • scimmia • scoiattolo • serpente • struzzo • yak • zanzara
- 3 Give the definite article for the signs of the zodiac, beginning with 'zodiac' itself.
 - zodiaco • Capricorno • Acquario • Pesci • Ariete • Toro • Gemelli • Cancro
 - Leone • Vergine • Bilancia • Scorpione • Sagittario
- 4 Say you would like to see these different types of shoe, using the plural definite articles. Begin, 'Mi fa vedere i/le. . . '
 - l'espadrille (f.) • il mocassino • la pantofola • il sandalo • la scarpa da tennis
 - lo scarpone • lo stivale • lo zoccolo
- 5 Give the definite article for the following: which word sums up the others?
 - intolleranza • omofobia • razzismo • sessismo • xenofobia

Attenti! *Changes in form of the definite article*

A noun does not necessarily always have the same article. As you can see from the table on p. 24 the form of the article depends on the initial sound and spelling of the word it immediately precedes, as well as its number and gender.

il bambino	il bambino il bel bambino →	l' altro bambino lo stupido bambino
l' amico	l' amico l' incredibile amico →	il mio amico lo stesso amico
lo scandalo	lo scandalo lo strano scandalo →	il grande scandalo l' ultimo scandalo
i bambini	i bambini i bei bambini →	gli altri bambini gli stupidi bambini
gli amici	gli amici gli incredibili amici →	i miei amici i vecchi amici
gli scandali	gli scandali gli strani scandali →	i grandi scandali gli ultimi scandali
la scuola	la scuola la mia scuola →	l' enorme scuola l' orribile scuola
le: no changes	le scuole le mie scuole	le enormi scuole le orribili scuole

Esercizio

6 Use the appropriate definite article with the following phrases.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| (a) _____ edificio grande | _____ grande edificio moderno |
| (b) _____ palazzo stupendo | _____ stupendo palazzo rinascimentale |
| (c) _____ messaggio urgente | _____ urgente messaggio telefonico |
| (d) _____ invito strano | _____ strano invito illegibile |

(b) Some uses of the definite article

In Italian, as in English, the definite article is used to refer to something known or specific.

A specific or known thing	Mi piace la camicia verde <i>I like the green shirt</i> I bambini sono stanchi <i>The children are tired</i> È il gatto di Nina <i>It's Nina's cat</i> (the cat of Nina)	Definite articles indicate a specific or known thing, person or creature.
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In Italian the use of the definite article often does not coincide with English usage. Here are some of the most important cases.

Plural nouns used in a general sense	Mi piacciono i bambini <i>I like children</i> I volontari non sono pagati <i>Volunteers are not paid</i> Gli animali selvatici sono pericolosi <i>Wild animals are dangerous</i> But: I leoni sono animali selvatici <i>Lions are wild animals</i> Lavorano come volontari <i>They work as volunteers</i>	When plural nouns indicate a general category, the article is used unless the noun comes after essere or come .
Specific categories	L'ossigeno è un gas <i>Oxygen is a gas</i> Lo zucchero fa ingrassare <i>Sugar makes you fat</i> Il rosso è il mio colore preferito <i>Red is my favourite colour</i> L' Aids e la tubercolosi sono molto diffusi <i>Aids and tuberculosis are very widespread</i> Il tennis fa bene <i>Tennis is good for you</i> È arrivata la primavera <i>Spring has arrived</i> But: Ho comprato zucchero, burro e olio <i>I bought sugar, butter and oil</i>	Categories such as substances, food, colours, diseases, sports and seasons are all used with the definite article unless part of a list. (See Partitive articles p. 38.)
Abstract nouns	L' arte è la mia materia preferita <i>Art is my favourite subject</i> La gelosia è un brutto vizio <i>Jealousy is an ugly vice</i> Mi piace l' insegnamento <i>I like teaching</i>	Singular nouns can indicate a category, as in English. Abstract nouns refer to things which are not physical entities.
Languages	Studiano il tedesco <i>They are studying German</i> Non capisco il cinese <i>I don't understand Chinese</i> Parla tedesco <i>He/She speaks German</i> Ha studiato inglese alle medie <i>He/She has studied English in middle school</i> But: Parla bene/perfettamente il tedesco <i>She/he speaks German well/perfectly</i>	Used to name a language. Not normally used with parlare or when referring to a school subject. With an adverb, e.g. bene , the article is more commonly used.

Proper names with titles	<p>C'è la dottoressa Poli? <i>Is Dr Poli in?</i></p> <p>I signori Velli sono partiti <i>Mr and Mrs Velli have left</i></p> <p>Buongiorno, dottoressa Poli <i>Good morning, Dr Poli</i></p> <p>Come sta, signor Velli? <i>How are you, Mr Velli?</i></p>	<p>Used with titles when talking <u>about</u> a person.</p> <p>No article when talking <u>directly</u> to a person.</p>
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In Italian the definite article is also required in the following cases relating to time and place.

Telling the time	<p>Sono le undici <i>It's eleven o'clock</i></p> <p>È partito all' una <i>He left at one</i></p>	<p>The time of day requires a definite article. See also p. 279.</p>
Days of the week	<p>Il martedì mattina vado in palestra <i>On Tuesday mornings I go to the gym</i></p> <p>But:</p> <p>È partito martedì mattina <i>He left on Tuesday morning</i></p> <p>Domenica vado al cinema <i>On Sunday I'm going to the cinema</i></p>	<p>The article expresses habitual action but is dropped to refer to specific days.</p>
Years and dates	<p>Il 1321 è la data della sua nascita <i>1321 is the year of his birth</i></p> <p>È nato il 25 aprile 1945 <i>He was born on the 25th of April 1945</i></p> <p>Si sposeranno il 16 giugno <i>They will get married on the 16th of June</i></p> <p>But:</p> <p>Si sposeranno sabato, 16 giugno <i>They will get married on Saturday the 16th of June</i></p>	<p>The article is used with years unless the date precedes it, in which case it goes before the date. But where the weekday is included the article is dropped.</p>
Time of day	<p>La mattina mi alzo presto e la sera mi corico tardi <i>In the morning I get up early and in the evening I go to bed late</i></p> <p>Il pomeriggio mi riposo <i>In the afternoon I rest</i></p>	<p>The article expresses habitual action (where 'every' is implied).</p>
Continents, countries, regions and groups of islands	<p>L'Europa non è unita <i>Europe is not united</i></p> <p>L'America confina con il Messico <i>America borders on Mexico</i></p> <p>La Sardegna e il Piemonte sono regioni italiane <i>Sardinia and Piedmont are Italian regions</i></p> <p>La Corsica fa parte della Francia <i>Corsica is part of France</i></p> <p>Le Canarie appartengono alla Spagna <i>The Canaries belong to Spain</i></p>	<p>Exceptions are Israele <i>Israel</i>, and most countries which are islands, e.g. Cuba, Haiti, Malta. Islands which are regions (e.g. la <i>Sicilia</i>), mostly require the article. See also pp. 35–6.</p>
Mountains, volcanoes, lakes, rivers and seas	<p>il Monte Bianco <i>Mont Blanc</i> le Ande <i>the Andes</i></p> <p>il Vesuvio <i>Vesuvius</i> l'Etna <i>Mount Etna</i></p> <p>il Lago Maggiore <i>Lake Maggiore</i> il Garda <i>Lake Garda</i></p> <p>But: Loch Lomond Loch Ness</p> <p>il Po <i>the Po</i> il Tamigi <i>the Thames</i></p> <p>l'Adriatico <i>the Adriatic</i> la Manica <i>the English Channel</i></p>	<p>For mountain ranges, rivers and seas the use of the article coincides with English</p>

In Italian the definite article is used with possessives and expressions with **fare**.

With possessive adjectives and pronouns	Mi piace il tuo iPhone <i>I like <u>your</u> iPhone</i> Qual è il mio biglietto? <i>Which is <u>my</u> ticket?</i> Questo non è il tuo <i>This isn't <u>yours</u></i> Qual è il nostro ? <i>Which is <u>ours</u>?</i>	The article is nearly always used. For exceptions see Possessives pp. 166–7.
Some expressions with fare	Fa il medico <i>He/She is <u>a</u> doctor</i> Vorrebbe fare l' infermiera <i>She would like to be <u>a</u> nurse</i> Sta facendo il bagno <i>He is having <u>a</u> bath</i> Bisogna fare il biglietto <i>You have to buy <u>a</u> ticket</i>	Fare takes the definite article before the name of many professions and in some set expressions. Others include fare la doccia <i>to shower</i> , farsi la barba <i>to (have a) shave</i> . See also p. 81.

For further uses of the definite article, see p. 31.

Esercizi

- 7 Insert a definite article where appropriate and then translate each sentence into English.
- (a) Cani sono animali fedeli.
 (b) Cani che abbiamo visto erano adorabili.
 (c) In Italia bambini vanno a scuola a sei anni.
 (d) Ieri bambini erano stanchi.
 (e) Guerra risolve poco.
 (f) Guerra nei Balcani è stata una tragedia.
- 8 Give the Italian equivalent of the following.
- (a) *I don't like tea but I love coffee.*
 (b) *I love tennis but I don't like football.*
 (c) *I hate winter but I love spring.*
 (d) *Life is beautiful.*
 (e) *Time flies. (volare)*
 (f) *Work is necessary.*
- 9 Insert a definite article where necessary.
- (a) Mi piace italiano.
 (b) Parli greco? – No, ma parlo bene spagnolo.
 (c) Al liceo studio tedesco e inglese.
 (d) Dottor Binni, le presento signor Giusti.
- 10 *When?* Complete the following sentences by translating the English phrases into Italian.
- (a) Vado a teatro (*on Friday*).
 (b) Vado in palestra (*on Tuesdays*).
 (c) (*In the evening*) non bevo mai caffè.
 (d) Siamo arrivati (*on 5 February 1993*).
 (e) Partono (*on Monday 10 June*).
 (f) Ci vediamo (*on 27 May*).

- 11 Insert a definite article where necessary.
- (a) Gran Bretagna è un'isola.
 - (b) Messico confina con Stati Uniti.
 - (c) Cuba e Haiti non sono paesi ricchi.
 - (d) Sardegna e Sicilia sono isole e regioni italiane.
- 12 In which sentences is there an article missing? Supply the correct one.
- (a) Dammi tuo libro.
 - (b) Mi presti la tua penna?
 - (c) Avete visto mio cappotto?
 - (d) Questa è la tua giacca e questa è la mia.
- 13 Express the following in Italian. The first part has been done.
- (a) *I am a doctor.* Faccio _____.
 - (b) *Maria is having a bath.* Maria sta facendo _____.
 - (c) *I need to have a shower.* Ho bisogno di _____.
 - (d) *I haven't bought a/my ticket.* Non ho fatto _____.

(c) Omission of the definite article

Towns and most single islands	<p>Roma, Torino, Firenze e Napoli sono città italiane Capri, Lampedusa e Lipari sono isole italiane But: Mi affascina la vecchia Torino <i>Old Turin fascinates me</i> Note the names of the following towns and islands: l'Aia (<i>the Hague</i>) l'Aquila il Cairo l'Havana la Mecca il Pireo (<i>Piraeus</i>) l'isola del Giglio l'isola d'Elba/ l'Elba</p>	No articles are used with towns and most single islands (as opposed to groups of islands) unless they are modified by an adjective or adjectival phrase or are part of the name itself.
Expressions with a and in	<p>Vado a casa (mia) <i>I'm going home</i> Ci vediamo a scuola <i>See you at school</i> But: Si trova vicino alla casa di Mario <i>It is near Mario's house</i></p> <p>Ci vediamo in centro <i>I'll see you in town</i> È nato/arriva in autunno <i>He was born/he is coming in the autumn</i> But: Si trova nel centro storico <i>It is in the historic centre</i> È nato nell'autunno del 1948 <i>He was born in the autumn of 1948</i> Arriva l'autunno prossimo <i>He's/She's coming next autumn</i></p>	The article is usually omitted with certain expressions of place and time requiring a and in unless they are modified by an adjective or adjectival phrase. See also Prepositional articles p. 37 and Prepositions, p. 237.
Possessives + singular family members	<p>Questo è mio fratello <i>This is my brother</i> Questa è mia moglie <i>This is my wife</i> But: Questo è il mio fratellino <i>This is my little brother</i> Questa è la mia sorella più grande <i>This is my big/older/est sister</i> Gina è la sorella di mio marito <i>Gina is my husband's sister</i></p>	No article for singular family members unless modified by a diminutive, a descriptive adjective or a phrase. For more details see Possessives p. 166.

Esercizio

14 Decide which of the underlined nouns require a definite article and insert them where necessary, remembering to join them to any prepositions. (See pp. 32–3.)

- (a) Roma è una bella città.
 (b) Aia si trova in Olanda.
 (c) Lipari è un'isola affascinante.
 (d) Mi ha fatto vedere Parigi di Sartre e Camus.
 (e) Oggi Gianni non è andato a scuola.
 (f) Studia a scuola di suo fratello.
 (g) Siamo arrivati primavera dell'anno scorso.
 (h) Siamo arrivati in primavera.

(d) Further uses of the definite article

In most of the following cases the Italian article is used where in English there is none.

Proper names: institutions, clubs	<p>La Fiat è stata fondata a Torino <i>Fiat was founded in Turin.</i></p> <p>La Juventus e il Milan sono in serie A <i>Juventus and Milan are in the Premier League</i></p>	La is used with companies, but both il and la are used with clubs. They are best learned individually.
Proper names: famous people	<p>La Loren e la Callas sono famose <i>Sophia Loren and Maria Callas are famous</i></p> <p>Il Petrarca e il Boccaccio sono scrittori del Trecento <i>Petrarch and Boccaccio are 14th-century writers</i></p> <p>But: Dante fu un grande poeta <i>Dante was a great poet</i></p>	<p>The article must be used with surnames of famous women. With masculine surnames it is optional.</p> <p>The article cannot be used with Dante, Leonardo, Michelangelo or Raffaello, as these are not surnames.</p>
Approximation	<p>Avrà tra gli 11 e i 13 anni <i>He/She must be between 11 and 13</i></p> <p>Erano tutti ragazzi sotto i 10 anni <i>They were all boys under 10</i></p> <p>La temperatura si aggira sui 30 gradi <i>The temperature is around 30°</i></p> <p>Partiamo fra un 35 minuti <i>We're leaving in about 35 minutes/35 minutes or so</i></p> <p>Si trova a un 200 chilometri da qui <i>It's about 200 km from here/200 km or so from here</i></p>	<p>The definite article + a preposition is used for age and temperature.</p> <p>Note: the <u>indefinite</u> article is used colloquially to express approximate time, distance and quantity.</p>
Percentages and fractions	<p>Gli sconti online sono del 25 per cento <i>The discounts online are 25 per cent</i></p> <p>Nonostante la diffusione della banda larga, più della metà dei toscani non naviga in Internet <i>Despite the spread of broadband, more than half of Tuscans do not use the internet</i></p>	<p>Percentages are used with the definite article, as is the fraction metà (see pp. 278, 282). In these examples they are combined with di as prepositional articles.</p>

Esercizio

15 Insert definite articles as appropriate.

- (a) Olivetti, Pirelli e Fiat sono famose società italiane.
- (b) Juventus è in testa alla serie A.
- (c) Leonardo e Michelangelo erano grandi artisti.
- (d) Petrarca e Leopardi erano grandi poeti.
- (e) Morante e Ginzburg sono note scrittrici italiane.
- (f) Giuseppe Verdi è morto fra 86 e 87 anni, credo.

2.3 SPECIAL USES OF THE DEFINITE AND INDEFINITE ARTICLES

In Italian the definite article is often used to express an English possessive as well as the indefinite or partitive *a, any*.

Definite articles with the body, clothing and personal belongings

Italian definite article, English possessive	Ha gli occhi azzurri <i>His/Her eyes are blue (He's/She's got blue eyes)</i> Hanno i capelli biondi <i>Their hair is blond (They've got blond hair)</i>	Description of parts of the body require the definite article.
	Mi sto lavando le mani <i>I'm washing my hands</i> Mi sono rotto il braccio <i>I broke my arm</i> Mettiti le scarpe <i>Put on your shoes</i>	When reflexive verbs are used with parts of the body and clothing the definite article is used. See also p. 170.
	Ho perso l' ombrello <i>I've lost my umbrella</i> Hai la patente? <i>Have you got your driving licence?/ Can you drive?</i> Parte con il marito <i>She is leaving with her husband</i>	The Italian definite article expresses an English possessive when the ownership of the object is obvious.

Definite articles with familiar objects

Italian definite article, English indefinite article: <i>a, any</i>	Non ho la macchina <i>I haven't got a car</i> Hai la TV satellite? <i>Have you got (a) satellite TV?</i> Il burro non c'è <i>There's no butter</i> Il sapone c'è? <i>Is there any soap?</i>	The Italian definite article often expresses an English indefinite, <i>a</i> , when it is used with the names of familiar things. The definite article can express <i>no</i> or <i>any</i> when you refer to something you expect to be there. See also p. 40.
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Definite and indefinite articles: illness and ailments

On the whole, the use of the Italian articles does not correspond to the English usage.

Italian definite article, English indefinite article or no article	Ho la febbre/ la tosse/ il raffreddore/ l' emicrania <i>I've got a temperature/a cough/a cold/a migraine</i> Ho la pressione alta/ la diarrea/ l' influenza <i>I've got high blood pressure/diarrhoea/flu.</i> But also: Ho un raffreddore	Illnesses mostly require a <u>definite</u> article in Italian. Raffreddore may be used with un .
	Ho mal di gola/di denti/di testa/d'orecchio/di pancia/di schiena <i>I've got a sore throat/a tooth/head/ear/stomach/back ache</i>	Aches and pains require no article in Italian.
Indefinite article for Italian and English	Ho un terribile mal di testa <i>I've got an awful headache</i> Ho un brutto raffreddore <i>I've got a bad cold</i>	If the above ailments are modified the indefinite article is used.

For the use of the articles with numbers, see pp. 277–8 and pp. 281–2. For the use of the article in expressions involving the Italian equivalents of *most* and *all*, see Indefinites pp. 207–8 and 211.

Esercizi

- 1 Describe this man and his condition by using the definite article where appropriate. Give English equivalents.
 - (a) Ha capelli biondi, occhi azzurri, pelle chiara e orecchie a sventola.
 - (b) Ha raffreddore e mal di gola ma non ha tosse.
 - (c) Purtroppo si è rotto gamba!
- 2 Substitute the underlined words with an appropriate definite article.
 - (a) Arriva domani con sua moglie.
 - (b) Non ho uno smartphone e nemmeno un laptop.
 - (c) I miei figli vanno alla partita con il loro zio.
 - (d) Hai dimenticato i tuoi occhiali?

2.4 THE PREPOSITIONAL ARTICLE

Prepositional articles (**le preposizioni articolate**) are formed by combining the prepositions **a**, **da**, **di**, **in** and **su** with the definite article to form one word. With the preposition **con** the combination is optional and much less common.

(a) Forms and uses of prepositional articles

	Masculine definite articles					Feminine definite articles		
	<i>il</i>	<i>lo</i>	<i>l'</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>gli</i>	<i>la</i>	<i>l'</i>	<i>le</i>
a	al	allo	all'	ai	agli	alla	all'	alle
da	dal	dallo	dall'	dai	dagli	dalla	dall'	dalle
di	del	dello	dell'	dei	degli	della	dell'	delle
in	nel	nello	nell'	nei	negli	nella	nell'	nelle
su	sul	sullo	sull'	sui	sugli	sulla	sull'	sulle
con¹	col	collo	coll'	coi	cogli	colla	coll'	colle

1 **Con** is often left unchanged before a preposition: **con** il cugino, **con** le amiche.

Italian prepositional articles generally express two English words in one: a preposition and a definite article, e.g. *from the, of the, on the*. They are required when a preposition is used before a definite article followed by a noun or adjective; their form depends on the number, gender and spelling of that noun or adjective.

in + il cassetto su + la vecchia scrivania	La chiave non è nel cassetto, è sulla vecchia scrivania <i>The key isn't in the drawer; it's on the old desk</i>
a + l' entrata di + il luna-park	Ci vediamo all' entrata del luna-park <i>We'll meet at the entrance of the funfair</i>

As with all articles, the form of prepositional articles is determined by the number and gender of the word immediately following. Compare these examples.

in + il parco	I bambini giocano sempre nel parco <i>The children always play in the park</i>
in + lo stesso parco	I bambini giocano sempre nello stesso parco <i>The children always play in the same park</i>
da + i cinesi	I fuochi d'artificio sono stati inventati dai cinesi <i>Fireworks were invented by the Chinese</i>
da + gli antichi cinesi	I fuochi d'artificio sono stati inventati dagli antichi cinesi <i>Fireworks were invented by the ancient Chinese</i>

Attenti! Do not forget the prepositional article

When the use of the definite article in Italian and English does not coincide, it is less easy to spot the need for a prepositional article. In the following examples there are no definite articles in the English, but they are required in Italian.

di + i miei amici	La casa dei miei amici è bellissima <i>My friends' house is beautiful (the house of my friends)</i>
di + la macchina	Il motore della macchina è rotto <i>The car motor is broken (the motor of the car)</i>
da + le nove: a + le cinque	Lavoro dalle nove fino alle cinque <i>I work from nine until five</i>
da + la A: a + la Z	Idee pratiche dall' A alla Z <i>Practical ideas from A to Z</i>

If you need to, take another look at pp. 26–30 to brush up on the use of the definite article. For the omission of prepositional articles, see geographical names, pp. 35–6.

Esercizi

- 1** Provide the correct form of the appropriate prepositional article.
- (a) *To the* _____ Say where you are going, using **a** and a definite article. Begin, ‘Vado . . . ’
- il mercato • l’aeroporto • lo stadio • la stazione
- (b) *In the* _____ Say where these items are, using **in** and the definite article. Begin, ‘La carta è . . . ’
- la carta (il cassetto) • i biscotti (l’armadio) • la lampada (lo studio)
 - le matite (la scatola)
- (c) *On the* _____ Say what these items are on.
- il pane (il tavolo) • la chiave (l’armadietto) • il dizionario (lo scaffale)
 - la penna (la scrivania)
- (d) *From the* _____ What can be seen from these places? Begin, ‘Dai/Dalle, etc. . . . si vede . . . ’
- i giardini (la casa) • gli scalini (la fontana) • le montagne (la pianura)
- 2** Complete these extracts from an Italian guide to the Highlands by supplying the correct form of the prepositional article where required.

Centro visitatori (1 di) distilleria (2 di) Talisker

L’unica distilleria (3 di) isola di Skye, situata in una zona di grande bellezza naturale (4 su) riva (5 di) Loch Harport. Aperta tutto l’anno (6 da) lunedì (7 a) venerdì, (8 da) 9.30 (9 a) 16.30.

Centro visitatori (10 di) distilleria (11 di) Oban

Costruita (12 in) 1794, la nostra favolosa ubicazione (13 in) centro (14 di) città ci rende una (15 di) distillerie più interessanti (16 di) Scozia. Aperta tutta l’anno (17 da) lunedì (18 a) venerdì. (19 Da) dicembre (20 a) febbraio ore limitate (21 di) apertura. Ingresso (22 a) pagamento.

- 3** Provide the correct form of the prepositional article to complete each sentence and then translate into English. There is one sentence where the prepositional article is not required.
- (a) La baby sitter (di) i miei figli è greca.
- (b) Il finestrino (di) la macchina è chiusa?
- (c) La ragazza (di) mio figlio è molto gentile.
- (d) Il gatto dorme (in) lo studio.
- (e) Mi piace lavorare (in) il mio studio.

(b) Further uses of prepositional articles: geographical names

The use of definite articles and prepositional articles with geographical names differs in English and Italian. (For the definite article see pp. 26–32.) In Italian it depends largely on the category of the geographical place.

Continents, countries and regions

Use of the article with **in**: saying in and to

È nato **in** Australia/Gran Bretagna/Sicilia
He was born in Australia/Great Britain/Sicily
 Andiamo **in** Canada/Piemonte
We are going to Canada/Piedmont

But:

Andrò **nell'**Australia **del nord** *I'll go to northern Australia*
 Passerò le ferie **nella** Sicilia **orientale**
I will spend my holidays in eastern Sicily
 Abito **nei** Paesi Bassi/**nelle** Marche/**nel** Regno Unito
I live in the Netherlands/the Marches/the UK

Sono nato **in/nel** Belgio *I was born in Belgium*
 Sono nato **nel** Veneto *I was born in the Veneto*
 Ho una casa **nel** Molise/Texas
I have a house in the Molise/Texas

No prepositional articles.

Used with continents, countries, regions (including islands which are regions, e.g. Sicily), **in** means both *to* and *in*. The article is omitted unless the place name is modified by an adjective, is plural or is a masculine compound name such as **il Regno Unito**.

Exceptions. The article may be used with some masculine countries and regions even when they are not modified.

Articles with other prepositions: a, da, di and su

Ha intenzione di viaggiare **dall'**Australia fino **all'**Africa
He/She intends to travel from Australia to Africa
 Arriva **dal** Sudafrica/**dal** Trentino/**dalla** Corsica
He/She is arriving from South Africa/Trentino/Corsica
 La capitale **del** Galles è Cardiff
The capital of Wales is Cardiff
 Il capoluogo **della** Sicilia è Palermo
The (regional) capital of Sicily is Palermo
 Ho bisogno di informazioni **sulla** Sardegna
I need some information on Sardinia

È partito **da** Israele/Cuba
He left from Israel/Cuba
 La capitale **di** Haiti è Port au Prince
The capital of Haiti is Port au Prince

Prepositional articles are required

with continents, countries and regions (including regional islands, e.g. Sardinia, Sicily). The exception is **in**, where the article is usually omitted (see previous table).

No prepositional articles

because Israel and most countries which are islands require no article.

Omission of the article with di

La capitale **d'**Italia, le capitali **d'**Europa, etc.
 Luigi XIV, re **di** Francia, Elisabetta **d'**Inghilterra,
 il Granduca **di** Toscana, Cosimo I

But:

Ferdinando II **delle Due Sicilie**
 La capitale **dell'**Italia **unita**, le capitali **dell'**Europa **centrale**

Note:

Paola **di/del** Belgio, Carlo, Principe **di/del** Galles

Di is mostly used with an article but it is often omitted with **Italia** and **Europa** or after a noble title + place name, unless it is plural, masculine, or modified by an adjective. Masculine places may sometimes be used with **di**.

Towns, single islands and groups of islandsUse of the article with **a**: saying to and in

È nato **a**/Andrà **a** Firenze
He was born in/He'll go to Florence
 Siamo andati **a** Capri, **a** Lipari, **a** Lampedusa,
 e **a** Malta
We went to Capri, Lipari, Lampedusa and Malta
 Abitano **a** Creta/**a** Cuba
They live in Crete/in Cuba
But:
 Lavoro **al** Cairo/**all'**Aia/**all'**Elba
I work in Cairo/in the Hague/in Elba

No prepositional articles
 with towns and single islands.
 Both *to* and *in* are expressed
 by **a**. It only combines
 with the article when it is
 part of the name, or when the
 place name is modified.

È nato **nella** Berlino degli Anni venti
He/She was born in the Berlin of the 1920s
 Ha lavorato per anni **nella** Cuba **di** Castro
He/She worked for years in Castro's Cuba

Note that when these places
 are modified, **in** + definite
 article is used.

With groups of islands, note that **in**, as well as **a**, may be used to express *in*.

Andiamo **alle** Canarie/**alle** Eolie
We are going to the Canaries/to the Aeolian islands
 Andrò **all'**Isola di Man/**all'**isola d'Elba¹
I'll go to the Isle of Man/to Elba
 Ho trovato un paradiso terrestre **alle/nelle** Seychelles
I've found a paradise on earth in the Seychelles
 Abita **nelle** Eolie, **a** Lipari
He/She lives in the Aeolian islands on Lipari
 Ho passato il Capodanno **nelle** Canarie, **a** Lanzarote
I spent the New Year in the Canaries, in Lanzarote
 Abita **nell'/sull'**Isola di Man/**nell'/sull'**isola d'Elba
He/She lives on the Isle of Man/on Elba

**Prepositional articles are
 required** with groups of
 islands and islands where
isola is part of the name.
a + definite article = *to*
 and sometimes *in*.
in + definite article =
in or *on*.

su + definite article is
 also used for *on*.

¹ Sometimes just **l'Elba** (see previous table).

Articles with other prepositions: da, di, su

L'aereo è partito **da** Cuba *The plane left from Cuba*
 Le fontane **di** Roma sono belle
Rome's fountains are beautiful
 Scrive libri **su** Creta *He/She writes books on/about Crete*
But: Scrive libri **sulla** Creta antica
He writes books on/about ancient Crete
Dalle Tremiti fino a Termoli il viaggio è breve
It is a short journey from the Tremiti islands to Termoli
 Mi hanno parlato per ore **delle** Maldive/**dell'**Isola d'Elba
They talked to me for hours about the Maldives/Elba
 Vorrei delle informazioni **sulle** Eolie/**sulle** Tremiti
*I would like some information on/about the Tremiti islands/
 the Aeolian islands*

Towns and single islands:
mostly no articles. The
 same rules as above apply,
 i.e. no articles unless
 modified or part of the
 name itself.

Groups of islands and
 islands where **isola** is part
 of the name always require
 articles.

For the gender of geographical names, see Nouns, p. 17.

Esercizi

4 Fill in the boxes using an appropriate form of **in** or **a** in Italian

VADO . . . (<i>to</i>)	Roma Capri l'Isola d'Elba Le Tremiti Cipro	VIVIAMO . . . (<i>in</i>)	Boston Il Cairo Lampedusa Malta le Eolie
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5 Fill in the boxes using the appropriate Italian preposition.

VADO . . . (<i>to</i>)	Inghilterra Paesi Bassi Asia Toscana Sicilia	LAVORIAMO . . . (<i>in</i>)	Europa Italia Italia meridionale Sardegna Emilia Romagna
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6 Use prepositional articles where appropriate.

- (a) Passo sempre le ferie (in) Francia, (in) Francia del sud.
- (b) Io lavoro (in) Gran Bretagna.
- (c) Carlo è nato (in) Regno Unito.

7 Combine **in** and **di** with the definite article where necessary.

- (a) Torino è (in) Piemonte. È il capoluogo (di) Piemonte.
- (b) L'Aquila è (in) Abruzzi. È il capoluogo (di) Abruzzi.
- (c) Cagliari è (in) Sardegna. È il capoluogo (di) Sardegna.

8 Combine **di** with the definite article where necessary.

- (a) La capitale (di) Scozia è Edimburgo.
- (b) La capitale (di) Italia è Roma.
- (c) La capitale (di) Israele è Tel Aviv.
- (d) La capitale (di) Canada è Ottawa.
- (e) La capitale (di) Cuba è l'Avana.
- (f) La capitale (di) Filippine è Manila.

9 Complete these sentences by using each of the words given once. There are two cases which require no article.

il le la in da dall' dell' dell' della della

- (a) _____ Cipro è situata a sud _____ Turchia. (*Cyprus is situated south of Turkey.*)
- (b) Ci sono molti libri e guide _____ isola d'Elba. (*There are lots of books and guides of Elba.*)

- (c) _____ Sicilia non è lontana _____ Africa. (*Sicily is not far from Africa.*)
 (d) _____ Bratislava è _____ Slovakia, ma non è lontana _____ Vienna.
 (*Bratislava is in Slovakia but is not far from Vienna.*)
 (e) _____ Eolie sono al largo _____ Sicilia. (*The Aeolian islands are off the coast of Sicily.*)
 (f) _____ Canada occupa la parte nord _____ America settentrionale.
 (*Canada occupies the northern part of North America.*)

10 Give the Italian equivalent of the English.

- (a) *Fiona lives on the island of Skye.*
 (b) *Donald lives in the Orkneys. (le Orcadi)*
 (c) *Alberto lives in Capri.*
 (d) *Barbara is going to the Isle of Man.*
 (e) *Alistair is going to the Hebrides. (le Ebridi)*
 (f) *Sandra is going to Cuba.*

11 Choose the appropriate form of **di**.

- (a) Il futuro re di/dell'Inghilterra è Carlo, Principe di/del Galles.
 (b) Carlo Alberto di/della Savoia abdicò nel 1849.
 (c) Nel 1861 Vittorio Emanuele II, re di/della Sardegna, fu proclamato Re d'/dell'Italia.

2.5 THE PARTITIVE ARTICLE

(a) Forms and uses of the partitive article

Partitive articles (**gli articoli partitivi**) express *some*, *any* and are formed by combining **di** and the definite article.

Masculine partitive articles		Feminine partitive articles	
di + il	del pane	di + la	della carta
di + lo	dello zucchero	di + l'	dell' acqua
di + l'	dell' olio		
di + i	dei pantaloni	di + le	delle matite
di + gli	degli amici		

In Italian there is no distinction between *some* for statements and *any* for questions. Both *some* and *any* are expressed by **di** plus the definite article.

Expressing <i>some</i>	Mi serve dell' olio d'oliva <i>I need some olive oil</i>
Expressing <i>any</i>	Ho comprato dei libri inglesi <i>I bought some English books</i>
	Ti serve dell' olio d'oliva? <i>Do you need any olive oil?</i>
	Hai comprato dei libri inglesi? <i>Did you buy any English books?</i>

Omission of the partitive article

There is no partitive article in the following four cases:

Non hanno bambini <i>They don't have any children/They have no children</i> Non hai cugini? <i>Don't you have any cousins?</i>	In negative sentences, unlike in English, there is no partitive article.
Hai fratelli? <i>Have you got any brothers or sisters?</i> Hanno amici o no? <i>Have they got (any) friends or not?</i> Mi servono viti, non chiodi <i>I need (some) screws, not nails</i>	If the noun is emphasised or contrasted there is no partitive article, unlike in English.
Ho comprato pane, burro e marmellata <i>I bought bread, butter and jam</i>	In both Italian and English there are no partitive articles in lists.
Ho bisogno di scarpe nuove <i>I need (some) new shoes</i> Invece di soldi mi ha mandato un regalo <i>Instead of money he sent me a present</i>	To avoid repetition of di there are no partitive articles with some constructions taking di , such as aver bisogno di to need and invece di instead of .

For other ways of saying *some/any* and for other partitive expressions, see pp. 40–1.

Esercizi

- 1 In the second sentence, provide the correct form of the partitive article **di**.
 - (a) Ad Arezzo ho visto **degli** affreschi meravigliosi. Ho visto _____ meravigliosi affreschi del Cinquecento.
 - (b) A Firenze ho visto **dei** dipinti eccezionali. Ho visto _____ incredibili dipinti del Seicento.
 - (c) A Dresden ho visto **della** porcellana antica. Ho visto _____ antica porcellana settecentesca.
- 2 Use the correct partitive article to complete the following, leaving blank where necessary. Give the English equivalents.
 - (a) Mi dà _____ caffè macinato?
 - (b) Avete _____ pasta fresca?
 - (c) Devo comprare _____ camicie nuove.
 - (d) Ho comprato _____ pantaloni neri.
 - (e) Mi ha prestato _____ scarponi da sci.
 - (f) Mi serve _____ sciroppo per la tosse.
 - (g) Ho bisogno _____ aspirina.
 - (h) Non ho _____ fratelli.
 - (i) Devo comprare _____ olio, _____ aceto, _____ sale e _____ pepe.
 - (j) Volevo _____ mandarini, non _____ arance.

▲ 2.6 PARTITIVE EXPRESSIONS AND THEIR ALTERNATIVES

Partitive articles (see p. 38) are often replaced by other words and expressions, such as **un po' di** and **alcuni/e**. Here are some common alternatives to **del, della**, etc.

'Some' and 'any'

un po' di <i>a bit/ a little of/ some/a few</i>	Vorrei un po' di formaggio <i>I would like some/a bit of cheese</i> Or: Vorrei del formaggio È rimasta un po' di pasta? <i>Is there any/a bit of pasta left?</i> Or: È rimasta della pasta? Ho comprato un po' di formaggi francesi <i>I bought some/a few French cheeses</i> Or: Ho comprato dei formaggi francesi Mi sono portato un po' di pesche <i>I brought along some/a few peaches</i> Or: Mi sono portato delle pesche	un po' di is commonly used with uncountable nouns. When used with countable nouns (e.g. formaggi, pesche), un po' di is fairly colloquial.
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Negatives: 'not . . . any', 'no'

Partitive articles are not used in negative expressions. (See p. 39.) The following are common alternatives.

essere senza <i>(to be without)</i> not . . . any/ no . . .	Siamo senza pane <i>We haven't got any bread</i> Or: Non abbiamo pane Sono senza soldi <i>I've got no money</i> Or: Non ho soldi	Essere senza is commonly used in speech instead of non + the noun without the article.
mancare <i>(to be lacking)</i> <i>There isn't/aren't any . . .</i> <i>There is/are no . . .</i>	Manca il sapone <i>There isn't any soap/There is no soap</i> Or: Non c'è sapone/Il sapone non c'è Mancano gli asciugamani? <i>Aren't there any towels?</i> Or: Non ci sono asciugamani? Gli asciugamani non ci sono?	Note that with mancare a definite article is used. The expression implies that you expect the item to be there.
niente no, not any	Niente pane oggi? <i>Is there no/Isn't there any bread today?</i> Or: Non c'è pane oggi? Niente lezioni domani <i>There are no/There aren't any lessons tomorrow</i> Or: Non ci sono lezioni domani	Niente is colloquially used to mean <i>there is/there are no/not any</i> , and can be followed by countable or uncountable nouns.

Alcuni/e and qualche

These both mean *some* or *a few*, but unlike the previous expressions, they cannot be used with uncountable nouns such as **pane, benzina**, etc. They are only used with countable nouns, i.e. nouns referring to objects and people that can be counted.

<p>alcuni <i>some/a few</i></p>	<p>Mi ha dato alcuni suggerimenti <i>He has given me some/ a few suggestions</i> Or: Mi ha dato dei suggerimenti Ho comprato alcune riviste <i>I have bought some/a few magazines</i> Or: Ho comprato delle riviste</p>	<p>Note that alcuni/e is not generally used in questions and cannot be expressed by <i>any</i>.</p> <p>Qualche usually has a plural meaning but is followed by the singular form of a countable noun only (i.e. you cannot say ‘Hai comprato qualche pane?’) It is used in negative questions, but not in negative statements, where nessuno/a is used. See next table.</p>
<p>qualche <i>some/a few/any</i> + singular noun only</p>	<p>Mi ha dato qualche suggerimento <i>He has given me a few suggestions/the odd suggestion</i> Or: Mi ha dato dei suggerimenti Hai comprato qualche rivista? <i>Have you bought any magazines?</i> Or: Hai comprato delle riviste? Non c’è qualche altra soluzione? <i>Aren’t there any other solutions?/Is there no other solution?</i> Or: Non ci sono altre soluzioni?</p>	

Emphatic negatives: nessuno/a and alcuno/a

Like **alcuni/e** and **qualche** these are only used with countable nouns.

<p>nessuno/a <i>not any, no (at all)</i></p>	<p>Non ho fatto nessuno sbaglio <i>I didn’t make a single mistake/any mistakes (at all)</i> Non c’è nessun’(altra) alternativa? <i>Is there absolutely no alternative?</i> <i>Are there absolutely no (other) alternatives?</i> Or: Non ci sono (altre) alternative?</p>	<p>In negative statements and questions nessuno/a, used with <u>singular</u> nouns only, is an emphatic alternative to omitting the partitive.</p> <p>Alcuno/a is used instead of nessuno/a for emphasis.</p>
<p>alcuno/a <i>not any, no . . . whatsoever/at all</i></p>	<p>Non c’è alcun’alternativa <i>There is no alternative whatsoever</i> Non c’è alcun dubbio? <i>Is there is no doubt whatsoever/at all?</i></p>	

For more on **qualche**, see p. 205 and for **alcuni/e** see pp. 199 and 208. For more on **nessuno**, see pp. 199, 206 and pp. 226–7.

▲ Esercizi

- Find an alternative way in Italian of expressing each sentence below.

<p>(a) Mi dà dello zucchero?</p> <p>(b) Mi porti dell’acqua frizzante?</p> <p>(c) Mi dà dei fagiolini?</p>	<p>(d) Non abbiamo burro.</p> <p>(e) Non ho soldi.</p> <p>(f) Non ci sono lenzuola.</p>
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- Find alternatives for these sentences with approximately the same meaning. There is sometimes more than one possibility.

<p>(a) Ho delle lettere da scrivere.</p> <p>(b) Ho dei dubbi da chiarire.</p>	<p>(c) Avete degli impegni per domani?</p> <p>(d) Hai degli articoli da leggere?</p>
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- 3 Now rewrite each sentence to retain the original meaning. There may be more than one possibility.
- (a) Non ha nessun valore.
 - (b) Non ho alcuna voglia di farlo.
 - (c) Non ci sono altre possibilità?
 - (d) Non c'è nessun problema.
 - (e) Non ci sono alternative.
 - (f) Lo ha fatto senza nessuna ragione apparente.
- 4 Read the short magazine article on drinking amongst minors and answer the questions.

In Italia un ragazzino su cinque inizia a bere già **tra gli 11 e i 15 anni** (1). Lo afferma la Consulta nazionale **sull'alcol** (2). **Il 19,5% dei minori** (3) di questa fascia di età* dichiara di aver bevuto birra, vino o superalcolici nonostante il divieto di somministrazione* di bevande alcoliche **ai minori** (4) di 16 anni. Anche **tra i ragazzi** (5) di 16–17 anni il consumo di alcolici è diffuso: uno su due beve e **l'8% dei maschi** (6) lo fa tutti i giorni. Non solo, **l'Italia** (7) presenta l'età più bassa in Europa per quanto riguarda* il primo contatto **con le bevande alcoliche** (8): la media è 12, 2 anni, **contro i 14,6 dell'Europa** (9). Subito dopo vengono **l'Irlanda e l'Austria** (10) con 12,7 anni.

(Di Tutto, 31 ottobre 2008)

VOCABULARY

di questa fascia di età *in this age group*
 il divieto di somministrazione *the ban on supplying*
 per quanto riguarda *as far as (the first contact) is concerned*

QUESTIONS

- (a) Give the English equivalent of the nouns and phrases in bold.
 - (b) Give the Italian equivalent of the following: *In Italy about 12 per cent of children between the ages of 11 and 15 drink alcohol.*
- 5 Now read the following from the same magazine about guidelines for treating flu.

L'influenza? Poche cure,* arriva e se ne va da sola.* È una delle regole contenute nelle linee guida diffuse* dall'Istituto superiore di sanità. **Niente** omeopatia, antibiotici o terapie alternative, spiegano i medici. Non servono. Le persone sane si rimettono in piedi nel giro di* **qualche** giorno. Per bimbi e anziani invece, è sempre consigliabile il vaccino (che è gratuito).