

# L'alfabeto

## The Alphabet

Letter	Italian Spelling	How it Sounds
A	a	" <i>father</i> "
B	bi	" <i>beach</i> "
C	ci	" <i>chill</i> "
D	di	" <i>Dior</i> "
E	e	" <i>fair</i> " or " <i>air</i> " Make a little smile, mouth closed, when you pronounce. <b>E</b> in Italian means <b>AND</b> in English
È	è	" <i>eligible</i> " Bigger smile, mouth opened, when you pronounce. <b>È</b> in Italian means <b>is (verb)</b> in English
F	effe	
G	gi	
H	acca	
I	i	" <i>Year</i> "
L	elle	
M	emme	
N	enne	
O	o	
P	pi	
Q	qu	" <i>Quest</i> "
R	erre	
S	esse	
T	ti	" <i>Teeth</i> "
U	u	" <i>Pull</i> "
V	vi / vu	" <i>Vivian</i> " or " <i>vehicle</i> " / " <i>voodoo</i> "
Z	zeta	

**The following letters aren't in the Italian alphabet, but are used for proper nouns or loanwords:**

Letter	Italian Spelling	How it Sounds
J	i lunga	"jolly"
K	cappa	"koala"
W	doppia vi (or vu)	" <b>V</b> alter" is the pronunciation of the name "Walter"
X	ics	"wax"
Y	ipson	"yogurt"

## LETTER PRONUNCIATION NOTES:

### The 'H' is always silent.

Italian Words: Ho – hai – Hotel  
Read As : o – ai – otel

### CO – CA / GO – GA – GU

The sound is hard like: Call – Go - Guatemala  
Italian Words: Cosa – Casa / Lungo – Larga – Gusto

### GN

Sounds like the 'N' in 'Onion'  
Italian Words: Gnocchi – Signora

### CI – CE / GI – GE

The sound is soft like: Chill – Gesture  
Italian Words: Ciao – Cento / Gioco - Gentile

### GL

Sounds like the 'Ls' in 'Million'  
Italian Words: Figlio – Famiglia

### SC

Before 'I' or 'E' the sound is soft as in 'Shell'  
Italian Words: Sciare – Pesce

### CH - GH

'H' after 'C' or 'G' is always hard unless it is an English word used in Italian.  
Italian Words: Pochi – Perché / Laghi – Righe

### SCH

But, if you add that H, just like with 'CH' the sound becomes hard like 'Skiing'  
Italian Words: Schema - Mosche

# VOCALI & CONSONANTI

**On these words below the accent falls on the last vowel:**

Papà  
Città  
Caffè  
Perché

**You need to read every consonants and vowel, through the end. Yes, even the last one!**

Ex: io sto studiando italiano.

**Double Consonants:**

Make sure to take a little run-up before you jump into the double LL – MM – TT. Read my last name...

**Zane ---- LLe ---- TTi.    Whoa!**  
*Run-up      Run-up*

More Examples:

Farfalla  
Mamma  
Città

## ENGLISH NOUN ENDINGS IN ITALIAN

**There's a lot of similarity between the English words you know, and their Italian counterparts.**

English Ending	Italian Ending	Example Nouns (English - Italian)
GY	GIA	BIOLOGY - BIOLOGIA
PHY	FIA	PHILOSOPHY - FILOSOFIA
IC	ICA	MUSIC – MUSICA
TY	TÀ	CITY – CITTÀ
ANCE	ANZA	IMPORTANCE – IMPORTANZA
TION	ZIONE	INFORMATION – INFORMAZIONE
OR	ORE	ACTOR – ATTORE
ARY	ARIO / ARIA	SECRETARY – SEGRETARIO (or SEGRETARIA)
IST	ISTA	ARTIST – ARTISTA

## ENGLISH ADJECTIVE ENDINGS IN ITALIAN

Likewise, the same similarities exist between English and Italian adjectives.

English Ending	Italian Ending	Example Adjectives (English - Italian)
AL	ALE	SPECIAL – SPECIALE
ECT	ETTO	PERFECT – PERFETTO
ICAL	ICO / ICA	CLASSICAL – CLASSICO (or CLASSICA)
OUS	OSO	CURIOUS – CURIOSO

## ENGLISH VERB ENDINGS IN ITALIAN

Lastly, here are similar verb endings in English and Italian.

English Ending	Italian Ending	Example Verbs (English - Italian)
CATE	CARE	EDUCATE - EDUCARE
IZE	IZZARE	ORGANIZE – ORGANIZZARE
ISH	IRE	FINISH – FINIRE

*“Imparare italiano è come imparare ad andare in bicicletta. È innaturale e dura all'inizio ma una volta che hai iniziato non torni più indietro!”*

*“Learning Italian is just like learning to ride a bike. It’s unnatural and hard at first. But once you start to get it, there’s no going back!”*

-Sara Zanelletti

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