IT

ITALIAN LESSON

Basic Conversation 1 · Chapter 4 · Where You're From

🌍 Where You're From — Da dove vieni?

*"Where are you from?" is one of the first questions you are likely to hear as a visitor. This chapter gives you countries, nationalities and languages, and sorts out the small words **di**, **da**, **a** and **in**. The people in the dialogs are invented, apart from Philip, who is borrowed for practice.*

① Where Are You From? — Di dove sei?

A:

Di dove sei?

dee DOH-veh SAY?

Where are you from?

B:

Sono di Edimburgo. E tu?

SOH-noh dee eh-deem-BOOR-goh. eh TOO?

I'm from Edinburgh. And you?

A:

Sono di Napoli.

SOH-noh dee NAH-poh-lee.

I'm from Naples.

B:

Che bella città!

keh BEHL-lah cheet-TAH!

What a beautiful city!

② English? No, Scottish! — Inglese? No!

A:

Lei è inglese?

LAY eh een-GLEH-seh?

Are you English?

B:

No, sono scozzese.

NOH, SOH-noh skoht-TSEH-seh.

No, I'm Scottish.

A:

Ah, mi scusi!

ah, mee SKOO-zee!

Oh, excuse me!

B:

Non si preoccupi.

nohn see preh-OHK-koo-pee.

Don't worry.

③ Where Do You Live? — Dove abiti?

A:

Dove abiti?

DOH-veh AH-bee-tee?

Where do you live?

④ Languages — Parli italiano?

A:

Parli italiano?

PAR-lee ee-tah-LYAH-noh?

Do you speak Italian?

B:

Abito a Glasgow, in Scozia.

AH-bee-toh ah GLAHZ-goh, een SKOH-tsyah.

I live in Glasgow, in Scotland.

A:

Ti piace?

tee PYAH-cheh?

Do you like it?

B:

Sì, ma piove spesso.

SEE, mah PYOH-veh SPEHS-soh.

Yes, but it often rains.

B:

Un po'. Parlo inglese.

oon POH. PAR-loh een-GLEH-seh.

A little. I speak English.

A:

Capisci quando parlo?

kah-PEE-shee KWAHN-doh PAR-loh?

Do you understand when I talk?

B:

Sì, se parli piano.

SEE, seh PAR-lee PYAH-noh.

Yes, if you speak slowly.

⑤ A Group of Visitors — Da dove venite?

A:

Da dove venite?

dah DOH-veh veh-NEE-teh?

Where do you (all) come from?

B:

Veniamo dal Regno Unito.

veh-NYAH-moh dahl REH-nyoh oo-NEE-toh.

We come from the United Kingdom.

A:

Siete qui in vacanza?

SYEH-teh KWEE een vah-KAHN-tsah?

Are you here on holiday?

B:

Sì, per una settimana.

SEE, pehr OO-nah seht-tee-MAH-nah.

Yes, for a week.

⑥ Not Understanding — Non capisco

A:

Scusi, non capisco.

SKOO-zee, nohn kah-PEES-koh.

Sorry, I don't understand.

B:

È straniero?

eh strah-NYEH-roh?

Are you from abroad?

A:

Sì. Come si dice "map" in italiano?

SEE. KOH-meh see DEE-cheh MAHP een ee-tah-LYAH-noh?

Yes. How do you say "map" in Italian?

B:

Si dice "cartina".

see DEE-cheh kar-TEE-nah.

You say "cartina".

🔑 Key Phrases — Frasi chiave

SITUATION	FORMAL (LEI)	INFORMAL (TU)
Where are you from?	**Di dov'è?** *dee doh-VEH*	**Di dove sei?** *dee DOH-veh SAY*
Where do you come from?	**Da dove viene?** *dah DOH-veh VYEH-neh*	**Da dove vieni?** *dah DOH-veh VYEH-nee*
Where do you live?	**Dove abita?** *DOH-veh AH-bee-tah*	**Dove abiti?** *DOH-veh AH-bee-tee*
Do you speak English?	**Parla inglese?** *PAR-lah een-GLEH-seh*	**Parli inglese?** *PAR-lee een-GLEH-seh*
Do you understand?	**Capisce?** *kah-PEE-sheh*	**Capisci?** *kah-PEE-shee*
Don't worry	**Non si preoccupi.** *nohn see preh-OHK-koo-pee*	**Non ti preoccupare.** *nohn tee preh-ohk-koo-PAH-reh*

🧭 The Small Words — Di, da, a, in

USE	PATTERN	EXAMPLE
Your home town	**essere di** + town	**Sono di Napoli.**
Coming from a town	**venire da** + town	**Vengo da Firenze.**
Coming from a country	**venire da** + article	**Vengo dalla Scozia.**
In (or to) a town	**a** + town	**Abito a Edimburgo.**
In (or to) a country	**in** + country	**Abito in Scozia.**

DA + ARTICLE

Da and the article merge: *da* + *il* = **dal** (*dal Galles*), *da* + *la* = **dalla** (*dalla Francia*), *da* + *l'* = **dall'** (*dall'Italia*), *da* + *gli* = **dagli** (*dagli Stati Uniti*). Similarly, *in* turns into **nel** or **negli** with some of these: *nel Regno Unito, negli Stati Uniti*. Learn those two as set phrases.

🏳️ Countries, Nationalities & Languages — Paesi, nazionalità e lingue

*Nationalities and languages take a **small letter**. Countries take a capital.*

COUNTRY	NATIONALITY (MAN / WOMAN)	LANGUAGE
l'Italia *lee-TAH-lyah*	italiano / italiana	l'italiano
la Scozia *lah SKOH-tsyah*	scozzese	l'inglese
l'Inghilterra *leen-gheel-TEHR-rah*	inglese	l'inglese
l'Irlanda *leer-LAHN-dah*	irlandese	l'inglese, l'irlandese
la Francia *lah FRAHN-chah*	francese	il francese
la Germania *lah jehr-MAH-nyah*	tedesco / tedesca	il tedesco
la Spagna *lah SPAH-nyah*	spagnolo / spagnola	lo spagnolo
gli Stati Uniti *lyee STAH-tee oo-NEE-tee*	americano / americana	l'inglese

TWO KINDS OF ENDING

-o adjectives have four forms: *italiano, italiana* (one person), *italiani, italiane* (more than one). **-e** adjectives have two: *scozzese* (one person), *scozzesi* (more than one). A mixed group takes the *-i* form.

Italians and Their Towns

Many Italians feel a strong tie to their town or region, so *Di dove sei?* can start a long and happy conversation. In everyday speech, people from Britain may all be called *inglesi*; a cheerful *No, sono scozzese!* sets the record straight.

Three Verbs — Verbi

Venire *("to come") is irregular.* ***Abitare*** *("to live, to reside") is a regular -are verb, close in meaning to vivere from Chapter 2.* ***Capire*** *("to understand") is one of the -ire verbs that add* ***-isc-****, as promised in Chapter 3. Note that noi and voi do not take it.*

	VENIRE (TO COME)	ABITARE (TO LIVE)	CAPIRE (TO UNDERSTAND)
io (I)	vengo *VEHN-goh*	abito *AH-bee-toh*	capisco *kah-PEES-koh*
tu (you)	vieni *VYEH-nee*	abiti *AH-bee-tee*	capisci *kah-PEE-shee*
lui, lei, Lei (he, she; you, formal)	viene *VYEH-neh*	abita *AH-bee-tah*	capisce *kah-PEE-sheh*
noi (we)	veniamo *veh-NYAH-moh*	abitiamo *ah-bee-TYAH-moh*	capiamo *kah-PYAH-moh*
voi (you, plural)	venite *veh-NEE-teh*	abitate *ah-bee-TAH-teh*	capite *kah-PEE-teh*
loro (they)	vengono *VEHN-goh-noh*	abitano *AH-bee-tah-noh*	capiscono *kah-PEES-koh-noh*

📖 Vocabulary — Vocabolario

20 key words. Read the Italian first, then check the respelling (CAPITALS = the stressed syllable).

#	ITALIAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH	TYPE
1	**venire**	*veh-NEE-reh*	to come	verb
2	**abitare**	*ah-bee-TAH-reh*	to live, to reside	verb
3	**capire**	*kah-PEE-reh*	to understand	verb
4	**piovere**	*PYOH-veh-reh*	to rain	verb
5	**il paese**	*eel pah-EH-zeh*	country; village	noun
6	**la città**	*lah cheet-TAH*	city, town	noun
7	**la lingua**	*lah LEEN-gwah*	language; tongue	noun
8	**la vacanza**	*lah vah-KAHN-tsah*	holiday	noun
9	**la settimana**	*lah seht-tee-MAH-nah*	week	noun
10	**la cartina**	*lah kar-TEE-nah*	map	noun
11	**la Scozia**	*lah SKOH-tsyah*	Scotland	noun
12	**il Regno Unito**	*eel REH-nyoh oo-NEE-toh*	the United Kingdom	noun
13	**straniero / straniera**	*strah-NYEH-roh / -rah*	foreign; from abroad	adj
14	**inglese**	*een-GLEH-seh*	English	adj
15	**bello / bella**	*BEHL-loh / BEHL-lah*	beautiful, nice	adj
16	**un po'**	*oon POH*	a little	adv
17	**spesso**	*SPEHS-soh*	often	adv
18	**qui**	*KWEE*	here	adv

#	ITALIAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH	TYPE
19	**ma**	*MAH*	but	phrase
20	**Come si dice...?**	*KOH-meh see DEE-cheh*	How do you say...?	phrase

✍️ Try It Yourself — Prova tu

Say each answer aloud, then click to check.

1. Say that you are from Edinburgh and live in Scotland.

▼ Show answer

Sono di Edimburgo. Abito in Scozia.

2. Fill in with *a* or *in*: *Abito ____ Roma, ____ Italia.*

▼ Show answer

Abito a Roma, in Italia.

3. A woman is German. What does she say?

▼ Show answer

Sono tedesca.

4. Say that you speak English and a little Italian.

▼ Show answer

Parlo inglese e un po' di italiano.

5. Fill in with *capire*: *Io non ____. Voi ____?*

▼ Show answer

Io non capisco. Voi capite?

6. Politely ask someone where they come from.

▼ Show answer

Da dove viene? / Di dov'è?

Not Yet Verified

Checked (one web search on 2026-11-26, search summary only, pages not read): *di* with a town, *da* with towns, regions and countries, *in* for countries and *a* for cities (a rule of thumb), the *-o* and *-ese* nationality patterns and their small letters.

Not checked (general knowledge): the dialogs, the verb tables, the country list and its articles, *scozzese*, *nel* / *negli*, the cultural tip, vocabulary and all respellings. No native speaker has reviewed the Italian.

Please review: dialog 6 and the tip about Italians and their towns.

Sources: Berlitz (where are you from) · Berlitz (countries and nationalities) · Transparent Language (Di dove sei?)

Coming Up in Chapter 5

Next: **talking about your family**: family words, "my" and "your", and why a single relative drops the article.