IT

ITALIAN LESSON

Basic Conversation 1 · Chapter 5 · Your Family

👨‍👩‍👧‍👦 Talking About Your Family — La famiglia

Family is a favourite subject in any language. This chapter gives you the words for relatives, teaches "my", "your" and "his / her", and explains when Italian leaves out "the". The people and families here are all invented.

① Brothers and Sisters — Hai fratelli?

A:

Hai fratelli o sorelle?

AI frah-TEHL-lee oh soh-REHL-leh?

Do you have any brothers or sisters?

B:

Sì, ho una sorella. E tu?

SEE, oh OO-nah soh-REHL-lah. eh TOO?

Yes, I have a sister. And you?

A:

No, sono figlio unico.

NOH, SOH-noh FEE-lyoh OO-nee-koh.

No, I'm an only child.

B:

Allora sei viziato!

ahl-LOH-rah SAY vee-TSYAH-toh!

Then you're spoilt!

② Looking at a Photo — Chi è questa?

A:

Chi è questa signora?

kee EH KWEH-stah see-NYOH-rah?

Who is this lady?

B:

È mia madre. Si chiama Rosa.

eh MEE-ah MAH-dreh. see KYAH-mah ROH-zah.

That's my mother. Her name is Rosa.

A:

E questi?

eh KWEH-stee?

And these?

B:

Sono i miei nonni.

SOH-noh ee MYEH-ee NOHN-nee.

They're my grandparents.

③ Married? — È sposato?

A:

Lei è sposato?

LAY eh spoh-ZAH-toh?

Are you married?

④ A Big Family — Una famiglia numerosa

A:

Com'è la tua famiglia?

koh-MEH lah TOO-ah fah-MEE-lyah?

What's your family like?

B:

Sì. Mia moglie si chiama Elena.

SEE. MEE-ah MOH-lyeh see KYAH-mah EH-leh-nah.

Yes. My wife is called Elena.

A:

Ha figli?

AH FEE-lyee?

Do you have children?

B:

Due: un maschio e una femmina.

DOO-eh: oon MAHS-kyoh eh OO-nah FEHM-mee-nah.

Two: a boy and a girl.

⑤ Calling Home — Telefono a mia madre

A:

Cosa fai stasera?

KOH-zah FAI stah-SEH-rah?

What are you doing tonight?

B:

Telefono a mia madre. È domenica.

teh-LEH-foh-noh ah MEE-ah MAH-dreh. eh doh-MEH-nee-kah.

I'm phoning my mum. It's Sunday.

A:

Ogni domenica?

OH-nyee doh-MEH-nee-kah?

Every Sunday?

B:

Certo, altrimenti si preoccupa.

CHEHR-toh, ahl-tree-MEHN-tee see preh-OHK-koo-pah.

Of course, otherwise she worries.

B:

Grande e rumorosa!

GRAHN-deh eh roo-moh-ROH-zah!

Big and noisy!

A:

Quanti cugini hai?

KWAHN-tee koo-JEE-nee AI?

How many cousins do you have?

B:

Dodici. Non conosco tutti i loro nomi!

DOH-dee-chee. nohn koh-NOHS-koh TOOT-tee ee LOH-roh NOH-mee!

Twelve. I don't know all their names!

⑥ The Little One — La mia sorellina

A:

Quanti anni ha tua sorella?

KWAHN-tee AHN-nee AH TOO-ah soh-REHL-lah?

How old is your sister?

B:

La mia sorellina ha sei anni.

lah MEE-ah soh-rehl-LEE-nah AH SAY AHN-nee.

My little sister is six.

A:

Le vuoi molto bene, vero?

leh VWOY MOHL-toh BEH-neh, VEH-roh?

You love her very much, don't you?

B:

Sì, anche se prende i miei libri.

SEE, AHN-keh seh PREHN-deh ee MYEH-ee LEE-bree.

Yes, even though she takes my books.

🔑 Key Phrases — Frasi chiave

SITUATION	FORMAL (LEI)	INFORMAL (TU)
Do you have siblings?	**Ha fratelli o sorelle?** *AH frah-TEHL-lee oh soh-REHL-leh*	**Hai fratelli o sorelle?** *AI frah-TEHL-lee oh soh-REHL-leh*
Are you married?	**È sposato / sposata?** *eh spoh-ZAH-toh / -tah*	**Sei sposato / sposata?** *SAY spoh-ZAH-toh / -tah*
Do you have children?	**Ha figli?** *AH FEE-lyee*	**Hai figli?** *AI FEE-lyee*
How is your family?	**Come sta la Sua famiglia?** *KOH-meh STAH lah SOO-ah fah-MEE-lyah*	**Come sta la tua famiglia?** *KOH-meh STAH lah TOO-ah fah-MEE-lyah*
Say hello to your family	**Saluti la Sua famiglia.** *sah-LOO-tee lah SOO-ah fah-MEE-lyah*	**Saluta la tua famiglia.** *sah-LOO-tah lah TOO-ah fah-MEE-lyah*

🏠 Relatives — I parenti

MALE	FEMALE	TOGETHER
il padre (father)	**la madre** (mother)	**i genitori** (parents)
il figlio (son)	**la figlia** (daughter)	**i figli** (children)
il fratello (brother)	**la sorella** (sister)	**i fratelli** (brothers; siblings)
il nonno (grandfather)	**la nonna** (grandmother)	**i nonni** (grandparents)
lo zio (uncle)	**la zia** (aunt)	**gli zii** (uncles and aunts)
il cugino (cousin)	**la cugina** (cousin)	**i cugini** (cousins)

MALE	FEMALE	TOGETHER
il marito (husband)	**la moglie** (wife)	

One Word, Two Meanings

Nipote means grandchild and also niece or nephew: *il nipote* or *la nipote*. *I parenti* are your relatives, not your parents; parents are *i genitori*.

👉 My, Your, His, Her — I possessivi

*The possessive agrees with **the thing owned**, not with the owner. So sua madre can mean "his mother" or "her mother", and context tells you which.*

OWNER	MASCULINE	FEMININE	MASCULINE PLURAL	FEMININE PLURAL
my	**il mio**	**la mia**	**i miei**	**le mie**
your (tu)	**il tuo**	**la tua**	**i tuoi**	**le tue**
his, her, your (Lei)	**il suo**	**la sua**	**i suoi**	**le sue**
our	**il nostro**	**la nostra**	**i nostri**	**le nostre**
your (voi)	**il vostro**	**la vostra**	**i vostri**	**le vostre**
their	**il loro**	**la loro**	**i loro**	**le loro**

DROP "THE" FOR ONE RELATIVE

With **one** family member, leave out the article: *mia madre, tuo fratello, nostra zia*. Keep it:

· in the **plural**: *i miei nonni, le tue sorelle*

· with **loro**: *la loro madre*

· when the noun is **changed or described**: *la mia sorellina* (little sister), *la mia sorella maggiore* (older sister)

· for **non-family**: *il mio amico, la mia ragazza* (girlfriend), *il mio gatto*

> **Mamma and Papà**
>
> With the warm words *mamma* and *papà* you will see both *mia mamma* and *la mia mamma*. Learners can safely say *la mia mamma*, *il mio papà*, or simply *la mamma* when it is obvious whose.

🔤 Three Verbs for Family — Verbi

Conoscere *("to know" a person) is a regular -ere verb; listen to how sc changes sound with the next vowel.* ***Telefonare*** *("to phone") is regular -are and is followed by a: telefono a mia madre.* ***Volere bene*** *("to love", of family and friends) uses the irregular verb volere ("to want") plus bene.*

	CONOSCERE (TO KNOW)	TELEFONARE (TO PHONE)	VOLERE BENE (TO LOVE)
io (I)	conosco *koh-NOHS-koh*	telefono *teh-LEH-foh-noh*	voglio bene *VOH-lyoh BEH-neh*
tu (you)	conosci *koh-NOH-shee*	telefoni *teh-LEH-foh-nee*	vuoi bene *VWOY BEH-neh*
lui, lei, Lei (he, she; you, formal)	conosce *koh-NOH-sheh*	telefona *teh-LEH-foh-nah*	vuole bene *VWOH-leh BEH-neh*
noi (we)	conosciamo *koh-noh-SHAH-moh*	telefoniamo *teh-leh-foh-NYAH-moh*	vogliamo bene *voh-LYAH-moh BEH-neh*
voi (you, plural)	conoscete *koh-noh-SHEH-teh*	telefonate *teh-leh-foh-NAH-teh*	volete bene *voh-LEH-teh BEH-neh*
loro (they)	conoscono *koh-NOHS-koh-noh*	telefonano *teh-LEH-foh-nah-noh*	vogliono bene *VOH-lyoh-noh BEH-neh*

📖 Vocabulary — Vocabolario

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

#	ITALIAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH	TYPE
1	**la famiglia**	*lah fah-MEE-lyah*	family	noun
2	**i genitori**	*ee jeh-nee-TOH-ree*	parents	noun
3	**la madre**	*lah MAH-dreh*	mother	noun
4	**il padre**	*eel PAH-dreh*	father	noun
5	**il fratello**	*eel frah-TEHL-loh*	brother	noun
6	**la sorella**	*lah soh-REHL-lah*	sister	noun
7	**il figlio**	*eel FEE-lyoh*	son	noun
8	**la figlia**	*lah FEE-lyah*	daughter	noun
9	**i nonni**	*ee NOHN-nee*	grandparents	noun
10	**il marito**	*eel mah-REE-toh*	husband	noun
11	**la moglie**	*lah MOH-lyeh*	wife	noun
12	**il cugino**	*eel koo-JEE-noh*	cousin	noun
13	**il gatto**	*eel GAHT-toh*	cat	noun
14	**conoscere**	*koh-NOH-sheh-reh*	to know (a person)	verb
15	**telefonare**	*teh-leh-foh-NAH-reh*	to phone	verb
16	**volere bene**	*voh-LEH-reh BEH-neh*	to love, be fond of	verb
17	**grande**	*GRAHN-deh*	big	adj
18	**piccolo / piccola**	*PEEK-koh-loh / -lah*	small, little	adj
19	**maggiore / minore**	*mahd-JOH-reh / mee-NOH-reh*	older / younger	adj
20	**ogni**	*OH-nyee*	every, each	phrase

✍️ Try It Yourself — Prova tu

Say each answer aloud, then click to check.

1. Say "my father" and "my parents".

▼ Show answer

mio padre, i miei genitori

2. Article or no article? ____ *loro figlia;* ____ *tua sorella;* ____ *nostri cugini*

▼ Show answer

la loro figlia; tua sorella; i nostri cugini

3. Say that you have a brother and two sisters.

▼ Show answer

Ho un fratello e due sorelle.

4. Say that you are an only child (as a woman).

▼ Show answer

Sono figlia unica.

5. Fill in with *conoscere*: *Io* ____ *Marco. Tu* ____ *sua moglie?*

▼ Show answer

Io conosco Marco. Tu conosci sua moglie?

6. Politely ask someone whether they have children.

▼ Show answer

Ha figli?

Not Yet Verified

Checked (one web search on 2026-11-26, search summary only, pages not read): no article with a single relative; the article with plurals, *loro*, changed or described nouns and non-family nouns; *mamma* and *papà*, where the sources disagreed.

Not checked (general knowledge): the dialogs, family words, the possessive table, verb tables, *nipote*, vocabulary and all respellings. No native speaker has reviewed the Italian.

Please review: dialogs 1 and 6.

Sources: Possessives and family (open textbook) · Duolingo (possessives) · University of Vermont (possessives)

Coming Up in Chapter 6

Next: **talking about your job**: jobs and workplaces, more *-are* verbs, and *Che lavoro fa?*