IT

ITALIAN LESSON

Basic Conversation 1 · Chapter 6 · Your Job

💼 Talking About Your Job — Il lavoro

*"What do you do?" follows hard on the heels of names and home towns. This chapter covers jobs and workplaces, two ways of saying what you do, and the regular **-are** verbs, the biggest family in Italian. The people in the dialogs are invented, apart from Philip, who is borrowed for practice.*

① What Do You Do? — Che lavoro fai?

A:

Che lavoro fai?

keh lah-VOH-roh FAI?

What do you do?

B:

Faccio il tecnico informatico. E tu?

FAHT-choh eel TEHK-nee-koh een-for-MAH-tee-koh. eh TOO?

I'm an IT technician. And you?

A:

Sono insegnante.

SOH-noh een-seh-NYAHN-teh.

I'm a teacher.

B:

Che bel lavoro!

keh BEHL lah-VOH-roh!

What a lovely job!

② Where Do You Work? — Dove lavora?

A:

Lei che lavoro fa?

LAY keh lah-VOH-roh FAH?

What do you do?

B:

Sono farmacista.

SOH-noh far-mah-CHEE-stah.

I'm a pharmacist.

A:

E dove lavora?

eh DOH-veh lah-VOH-rah?

And where do you work?

B:

Lavoro in una farmacia in centro.

lah-VOH-roh een OO-nah far-mah-CHEE-ah een CHEHN-troh.

I work in a pharmacy in the town centre.

③ Fixing Things — Mi aiuti?

A:

Tu lavori con i computer, vero?

TOO lah-VOH-ree kohn ee kohm-PYOO-tehr, VEH-roh?

④ Students — Studi o lavori?

A:

Studi o lavori?

STOO-dee oh lah-VOH-ree?

Do you study or work?

You work with computers, don't you?

B:

Sì, lavoro nell'assistenza tecnica.

SEE, lah-VOH-roh nehl-lahs-sees-TEHN-tsah TEHK-nee-kah.

Yes, I work in technical support.

A:

La mia stampante non funziona...

lah MEE-ah stahm-PAHN-teh nohn foon-TSYOH-nah...

My printer isn't working...

B:

Hai provato a spegnerla e riaccenderla?

AI proh-VAH-toh ah SPEH-nyehr-lah eh ree-aht-CHEHN-dehr-lah?

Have you tried turning it off and on again?

B:

Tutt'e due! Studio e lavoro.

toot-teh DOO-eh! STOO-dyoh eh lah-VOH-roh.

Both! I study and I work.

A:

Che cosa studi?

keh KOH-zah STOO-dee?

What do you study?

B:

Informatica. La sera lavoro in un bar.

een-for-MAH-tee-kah. lah SEH-rah lah-VOH-roh een oon BAR.

Computing. In the evening I work in a bar.

⑤ Do You Like It? — Ti piace?

A:

Ti piace il tuo lavoro?

tee PYAH-cheh eel TOO-oh lah-VOH-roh?

Do you like your job?

B:

Abbastanza. I colleghi sono simpatici.

ahb-bahs-TAHN-tsah. ee kohl-LEH-gee SOH-noh seem-PAH-tee-chee.

Quite. My colleagues are nice.

A:

E il capo?

eh eel KAH-poh?

And the boss?

B:

⑥ Retired — In pensione

A:

Signor Bruno, Lei lavora ancora?

see-NYOHR BROO-noh, LAY lah-VOH-rah ahn-KOH-rah?

Mr Bruno, are you still working?

B:

No, sono in pensione.

NOH, SOH-noh een pehn-SYOH-neh.

No, I'm retired.

A:

Beato Lei!

beh-AH-toh LAY!

Lucky you!

B:

Preferisco non parlare del capo.

preh-feh-REES-koh nohn par-LAH-reh dehl KAH-poh.

I'd rather not talk about the boss.

Ma adesso faccio il nonno. È più faticoso!

mah ah-DEHS-soh FAHT-choh eel NOHN-noh. eh PYOO fah-tee-KOH-zoh!

But now I'm a full-time grandad. It's more tiring!

🔑 Key Phrases — Frasi chiave

SITUATION	FORMAL (LEI)	INFORMAL (TU)
What do you do?	**Che lavoro fa?** *keh lah-VOH-roh FAH*	**Che lavoro fai?** *keh lah-VOH-roh FAI*
Where do you work?	**Dove lavora?** *DOH-veh lah-VOH-rah*	**Dove lavori?** *DOH-veh lah-VOH-ree*
Do you like your job?	**Le piace il Suo lavoro?** *leh PYAH-cheh eel SOO-oh lah-VOH-roh*	**Ti piace il tuo lavoro?** *tee PYAH-cheh eel TOO-oh lah-VOH-roh*
What do you study?	**Che cosa studia?** *keh KOH-zah STOO-dyah*	**Che cosa studi?** *keh KOH-zah STOO-dee*

👷 Jobs — I mestieri

MAN	WOMAN	ENGLISH
il tecnico	**la tecnica** (*il tecnico* is also used)	technician
l'insegnante	**l'insegnante**	teacher
l'impiegato	**l'impiegata**	office worker
il cameriere	**la cameriera**	waiter / waitress
il cuoco	**la cuoca**	cook

MAN	WOMAN	ENGLISH
il commesso	la commessa	shop assistant
l'infermiere	l'infermiera	nurse
il medico	il medico / la dottoressa	doctor
il farmacista	la farmacista	pharmacist

> **Feminine Titles Are Changing**
>
> For some professions Italians do not all agree on the feminine form: you may hear the masculine used for a woman, or a newer feminine form. Follow what the person says about themselves. Words ending in *-ista* keep one form and only the article changes: *il dentista, la dentista*.

🗣️ Three Ways to Say It — Come si dice

PATTERN	EXAMPLE	MEANING
essere + job (article optional)	**Sono cuoco. / Sono un cuoco.**	I'm a cook.
fare + *il / la* + job	**Faccio la cuoca.**	I work as a cook.
lavorare come + job (no article)	**Lavoro come cuoco.**	I work as a cook.

🏢 Workplaces — Dove lavori?

SAY	SAY IT	ENGLISH
in un ufficio	*een oon oof-FEE-choh*	in an office
in una scuola	*een OO-nah SKWOH-lah*	in a school
in un ospedale	*een oon oh-speh-DAH-leh*	in a hospital
in un negozio	*een oon neh-GOH-tsyoh*	in a shop

SAY	SAY IT	ENGLISH
in un ristorante	*een oon ree-stoh-RAHN-teh*	in a restaurant
da casa	*dah KAH-zah*	from home

🔤 Three Verbs for Work — Verbi

__Fare__ ("to do, to make") is irregular and used constantly. __Lavorare__ ("to work") is a model -are verb. __Studiare__ ("to study") is regular too, with one wrinkle: because its stem already ends in i, you do not double it (tu studi, noi studiamo).

	FARE (TO DO)	LAVORARE (TO WORK)	STUDIARE (TO STUDY)
io (I)	faccio *FAHT-choh*	lavor**o** *lah-VOH-roh*	studi**o** *STOO-dyoh*
tu (you)	fai *FAI*	lavor**i** *lah-VOH-ree*	studi**i** *STOO-dee*
lui, lei, Lei (he, she; you, formal)	fa *FAH*	lavor**a** *lah-VOH-rah*	studi**a** *STOO-dyah*
noi (we)	facciamo *faht-CHAH-moh*	lavor**iamo** *lah-voh-RYAH-moh*	studi**amo** *stoo-DYAH-moh*
voi (you, plural)	fate *FAH-teh*	lavor**ate** *lah-voh-RAH-teh*	studi**ate** *stoo-DYAH-teh*
loro (they)	fanno *FAHN-noh*	lavor**ano** *lah-VOH-rah-noh*	studi**ano** *STOO-dyah-noh*

> **Do You Like It?**
>
> *Mi piace il mio lavoro* means "I like my job", literally "my job is pleasing to me". For now, learn *mi piace* (I like) and *ti piace?* (do you like?) as set phrases.

📖 Vocabulary — Vocabolario

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

#	ITALIAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH	TYPE
1	**il lavoro**	*eel lah-VOH-roh*	work; job	noun
2	**fare**	*FAH-reh*	to do, to make	verb
3	**lavorare**	*lah-voh-RAH-reh*	to work	verb
4	**studiare**	*stoo-DYAH-reh*	to study	verb
5	**funzionare**	*foon-tsyoh-NAH-reh*	to work (of a machine)	verb
6	**il capo**	*eel KAH-poh*	boss	noun
7	**l'ufficio**	*loof-FEE-choh*	office	noun
8	**la scuola**	*lah SKWOH-lah*	school	noun
9	**l'ospedale**	*loh-speh-DAH-leh*	hospital	noun
10	**il negozio**	*eel neh-GOH-tsyoh*	shop	noun
11	**la farmacia**	*lah far-mah-CHEE-ah*	pharmacy	noun
12	**il centro**	*eel CHEHN-troh*	centre; town centre	noun
13	**la stampante**	*lah stahm-PAHN-teh*	printer	noun
14	**l'assistenza tecnica**	*lahs-sees-TEHN-tsah TEHK-nee-kah*	technical support	noun
15	**in pensione**	*een pehn-SYOH-neh*	retired	phrase
16	**abbastanza**	*ahb-bahs-TAHN-tsah*	quite; enough	adv
17	**ancora**	*ahn-KOH-rah*	still; again	adv

#	ITALIAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH	TYPE
18	**adesso**	*ah-DEHS-soh*	now	adv
19	**faticoso**	*fah-tee-KOH-zoh*	tiring	adj
20	**tutt'e due**	*toot-teh DOO-eh*	both	phrase

✍️ Try It Yourself — Prova tu

Say each answer aloud, then click to check.

1. Say that you work as a technician, using *fare*.

▼ Show answer

Faccio il tecnico.

2. Politely ask someone what their job is.

▼ Show answer

Che lavoro fa?

3. Fill in with *lavorare*: *Noi ___ in un ufficio. Loro ___ da casa.*

▼ Show answer

Noi lavoriamo in un ufficio. Loro lavorano da casa.

4. Ask a friend whether they study or work.

▼ Show answer

Studi o lavori?

5. Say that your father is retired.

▼ Show answer

Mio padre è in pensione.

6. Say that you work in a shop and that you like your job.

▼ Show answer

Lavoro in un negozio. Mi piace il mio lavoro.

Not Yet Verified

Checked (one web search on 2026-11-26, search summary only, pages not read): *Che lavoro fai / fa?*, *sono* with or without an article (sources disagreed), *faccio il / la*, *lavoro come*, *lavoro in*, the *-ista* pattern.

Not checked (general knowledge): the dialogs, job list and feminine forms, workplaces, verb tables, *mi piace*, vocabulary and all respellings. No native speaker has reviewed the Italian.

Please review: the feminine forms for *technician* and *doctor*, and dialog 3.

Sources: Joy of Languages (jobs) · Le professioni (open textbook) · Italiano Bello (professions)

Coming Up in Chapter 7

Next: **days, dates and telling the time**, in three parts.