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Elevate Your Passion for Italy and Italian

5 Things to Do Every Day

To

Learn Italian

No Matter Where you Live



5 Things to Do Every Day to Learn Italian

(1) Say Something in Italiano

Express yourself out loud in Italian! The best way to overcome conversation jitters is by chatting with an Italian language partner in person or via Skype or Facetime. You might also check to see if there is a local Italian Meet-up group in your area and connect with other Italian speakers. For help with pronunciation skills, try reading Italian dialogues out loud and record yourself speaking. You can then compare your pronunciation to native speakers on the [Forvo](#) site. If you still need a confidence booster, through the Matta website, I offer [“Chat Italiano” conversation sessions](#) to help you feel more relaxed and comfortable with the spoken word, regardless of your language level.

(2) Read Something in Italiano

Pick up an Italian book, magazine, and take the plunge by diving right in! If you are new to the Italian language, start with children’s books —That’s what I did! Then to challenge yourself, you can begin reading things you are familiar with in English — like Harry Potter or your favorite English mystery writer. I’d be thrilled, of course, if you [read one of my novels set in Italy](#). I write in English, but there are lots of Italian words thrown in. I have also translated one of my books into Italian — [Il risveglio di Isabella](#) — that involves a missing painting of Isabella de’ Medici and is set in the town of Arezzo, in Tuscany. Quick tip: Don’t stop to look up every unfamiliar word in a dictionary. It will only slow you down. Instead, read for meaning and try to determine the context by the words that you do know.

(3) Write Something in Italiano

Develop a daily writing practice in Italian. Keep an old-fashioned journal and jot down a couple of sentences about your day — it could be as simple as a short paragraph describing an activity or the weather, even a grocery list. In so doing, you work on new vocabulary and improve your grammar skills. Need another Idea? Jump on over to the [Matta Twitter Feed](#), [Matta Facebook Page](#), or the [Matta Blog](#) and write a comment in Italian. It’s time to get creative and let those words fly — digitally or on paper!

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(4) Listen to Something in Italiano

Turn up the volume and listen to some music or a podcast! Unwind your day by listening to an Italian radio station or Spotify Italian playlist. While you are relaxing, singing along, or dancing to a new Italofile beat, you are exposing yourself to catchy phrases, idioms and new words. Don't know where to start? Here is the [Matta Spotify Italian Playlist](#) to tune into and discover Italian singers that you like. Another option is to subscribe to the [Matta Youtube Channel](#) or [Matta Podcast](#). There are lots of other similarly entertaining podcasts out there that you can find by doing a google search. I also enjoy tuning into [la Repubblica TV online](#), where you can listen to and watch short videos about current events.

(5) Learn at Least Five New Words a Day

Choose 5 new words to learn each day. Be sure to pick vocabulary that is useful to you. If you are a cake baker, for instance, it is good to know “pasticcino” (pastry) or “mattarello” (rolling pin). These words are specifically useful to you, whereas the word “formichiere” (anteater) — although fun to say — might not have the same value to you in daily conversation, as it might for a zookeeper and as a result you more likely to forget it faster. Also, please don't struggle with memorizing long lists of vocab words. Remember, I said to focus on just FIVE words a day. Quick tip: To make new words “stick” in your brain, repeat them throughout the day and use them in sentences. Another useful memorization trick is to create a picture association — or mnemonic — to help retain the new word. The human brain is amazing in the way it works, and the wackier the associations you make, the more likely it is you will remember it. [Check out a post I wrote about mnemonics.](#)

[Get more tips on the Matta Site!](#)

