
Unit 1 - Review #3

Present Tense (irregular)

In this lesson we review the conjugation of Italian irregular verbs in the **Present Tense**. The goal here is to get familiar with the most common irregular verbs so you can work towards maximizing your Italian fluency.

Unfortunately, when it comes to irregular verbs, exposure is the key to identifying them so you can then memorize and conjugate them.

The good news is, once you can identify irregular verbs, there is only a limited amount of ways they can be conjugated!

Let's begin reviewing these irregular verbs so you can officially become an Intermediate student of Italian!

Fast Review

Write down, or speak out loud, the irregular verbs you already know



Italian Irregular Verbs

Here is a list of irregular verbs you should know... they're kind of essential in the Italian language.

- ESSERE
- AVERE
- FARE
- STARE
- DARE
- VOLERE
- POTERE
- DOVERE
- SAPERE
- ANDARE
- VENIRE
- USCIRE

- irregular -IRE verbs
- PIACERE
- URRE / GERE VERBS
- TOGLIERE
- BERE

Now, write down the conjugations of the verbs **ESSERE and **AVERE****
Also, note anything unique or special about these verbs



ESSERE and AVERE CONJUGATED

ESSERE (to be)	AVERE (to have)
io sono tu sei lei/lui/Lei è noi siamo voi siete loro sono	io ho tu hai lei/lui/Lei ha noi abbiamo voi avete loro hanno

These are our 2 main verbs. They're important to know because we use them ALL THE TIME. Plus, they are both needed to speak in the Passato Prossimo!

Also remember that, at times, we use **TO BE** and **TO HAVE** differently in English than we do in Italian.

In English we say I am afraid

In Italian we say I have fear *Ho paura* (and not **Sono paura*)

Don't forget that when **AVERE** is conjugated, the "H" is *silent*!

Now Conjugate the following verbs

Conjugate **FARE, DARE, STARE** here



FARE, DARE, STARE Conjugated

FARE (to do)	DARE (to give)	STARE (to stay)
Io faccio Tu fai lui/lei/Lei fa Noi facciamo Voi fate Loro fanno	Io do Tu dai lui/lei/Lei dà Noi diamo Voi date Loro danno	Io sto Tu stai lui/lei/Lei sta Noi stiamo Voi state Loro stanno

Now Conjugate the following verbs

Conjugate **VOLERE, POTERE, DOVERE** here



VOLERE, POTERE, DOVERE Conjugated

The irregular verbs **VOLERE**, **POTERE**, **DOVERE** are tricky to use. Like the other irregular verbs, you have to just know how they are conjugated. No real patterns or ways to guess them!. These specific verbs are also Modal Verbs or, helping verbs, which means that they are followed by the infinitive of another verb.

Here they are conjugated;

VOLERE (to want)	POTERE (to be able)	DOVERE (must)
Io voglio Tu vuoi lui/lei/Lei vuole Noi vogliamo Voi volete Loro vogliono	Io posso Tu puoi lui/lei/Lei può Noi possiamo Voi potete Loro possono	Io devo Tu devi lui/lei/Lei deve Noi dobbiamo Voi dovete Loro devono

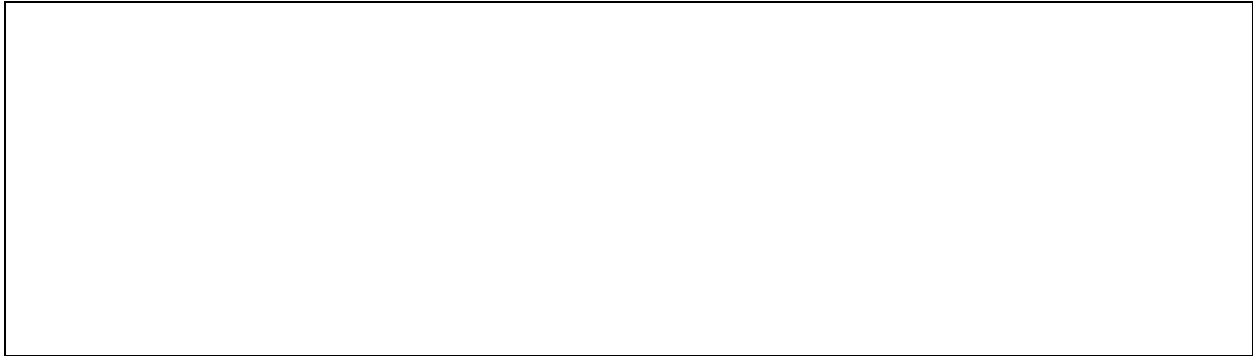
SAPERE

We are going to compare **SARERE** to both **POTERE** and **CONOSCERE**.

But first

Conjugate SAPERE and then list some differences that you notice between the verbs SAPERE and POTERE, CONOSCERE and how they're used.





SAPERE goes like this:

SAPERE (to know)
Io so Tu sai lui/lei/Lei sa Noi sappiamo Voi sapete Loro sanno

SAPERE vs CONOSCERE

Both **SAPERE** and **CONOSCERE** translate the concept of **KNOWING** in English, as you already know! So, how do you know when to use which verb?

SAPERE is used when we are expressing or talking about **FACTS/NOTIONS** that you acquire.

A hint:

We use **SAPERE** before **SUBORDINATE SENTENCES** (introduced by **CHE, COME, QUANDO** ETC). In other words, when **KNOWING** is not immediately followed by a noun, but rather by a grammar bit, then we are not going to use **CONOSCERE**!



For example

I know that Rome is the capital of Italy

So che Roma è la capitale d'Italia

In English, you can easily say that same sentence without using the word *that*.

In Italian, you CANNOT do that! You MUST say the **CHE**...

Forgetting to use the **CHE** usually leads to problems as it is precisely that **CHE** that tells you you are dealing with a subordinate clause and therefore warning you that you should not be using **CONOSCERE!**

Another Example

Do you know when Maria gets here?

Sai quando arriva Maria?

We use **CONOSCERE** (which is not an irregular verb and follows the standard rules of conjugation) when we are talking about **KNOWING PEOPLE** and **THINGS WE ARE FAMILIAR WITH**.

For Example

I know Italian inside and out.

So, I can say

Conosco l'italiano *I know Italian*

This course is here to help you start thinking in Italian more and more. For now, you can just do your best to memorize and remember when you are supposed to use which verb. Soon, you won't even have to think about it!



SAPERE vs POTERE

Where does the Italian verb **POTERE** come in?

Confusingly enough, Italians use the verb **SAPERE** *to know* when in English you would use the verb *can*.

What I mean by this is:

In English, you could say something like:

I can play the guitar

In Italian, You would say

So suonare la chitarra

You have to remember to use the verb **SAPERE** when you are talking about a skill or knowing how to do something.

The Italian verb **POTERE** actually refers to possibility and permission.

If you said:

Posso suonare la chitarra

I would assume, as an Italian speaker, that you are telling me that you are allowed to play the guitar because your mom or someone else gave you permission to do so.

Another example

I bambini **possono** giocare *The children are allowed to play.*

In this sentence, we can safely assume that yes in fact, the children received permission to play from their teacher or their parents. We wouldn't say:

I bambini **sanno** giocare

Because of course the children know how to play. They play all the time!



You would use the verb **SAPERE** in this instance only if you are talking about a specific game that the children know and understand how to play.

ANDARE, VENIRE, USCIRE and Prepositions

Conjugate **ANDARE, VENIRE, USCIRE** and let's hear what you know about these verbs!



And here they come:

ANDARE (to go)	VENIRE (to come)	USCIRE (to exit/go out)
Io vado Tu vai lui/lei/Lei va Noi andiamo Voi andate Loro vanno	Io vengo Tu vieni lui/lei/Lei viene Noi veniamo Voi venite Loro vengono	Io esco Tu esci lui/lei/Lei esce Noi usciamo Voi uscite Loro escono

With any verb of movement we need to use a **Preposition**.

We have **3** possible **prepositions** we can use:

IN, A, DA

In English there is only 1 preposition that we use for movement, and that is the preposition **TO**.

We will go in more depth with these prepositions in the future, but for now to keep it simple, follow these guidelines:

Use the preposition **DA** when you are moving towards a person

Vado dal dentista *I am going to the dentist*

Use **A** when movement is towards a very specific place

Vado al corso di italiano *I am going to the Italian course*

Use **IN** when you are going into a building

Vado in banca *I am going to the bank*



Do you remember what the main problem with the verb **USCIRE** is? Write it here

Unlike in English, **USCIRE** does not work with a destination. You cannot use this verb to say that you are going to the store, or anywhere!

USCIRE more concretely means, *I'm out of here*

If I'm talking to you and I suddenly get up, you can say:

Manu, what's going on, what are you doing?

Manu, che fai?

And I can say

I'm leaving/getting out of here

Esco

In this scenario, there is no destination. I'm simply leaving.



If you want to say

I'm going out to the park

You can say

Esco e vado al parco

This is why **USCIRE** is an interesting verb. You can use it to say you're leaving or going somewhere, but then you need to follow it up with another verb, in this case, **ANDARE**.

Irregular -IRE Verbs

How are -IRE verbs usually irregular?



Most **-IRE** verbs that you will need to use are actually **-ISC** verbs, remember?

FINIRE (to finish)
Io fin <u>isco</u> Tu fin <u>isci</u> lui/lei/Lei fin <u>isce</u> Noi finiamo Voi finite Loro fin <u>iscono</u>

There is no way to know whether or not a verb is going to be an **-ISC** verb just by looking at it. You will have to open up a dictionary to check. Once you know it is an **-ISC** verb, you will know how to conjugate it because the conjugations don't change.

More -ISC verbs

If you are someone who listens to gut feelings and your intuition often, then you can apply that same thing to figuring out which **-IRE** verbs are **-ISC** verbs. After you have had enough exposure to Italian, you'll start to notice when things sound funny or just don't sound right. Irregular **-IRE** verbs are one of those things in Italian that you'll learn to just know.

Now write down the **-ISC** conjugations to these verbs

CAPIRE (to understand)	PULIRE (to clean)	ARROSSIRE (to blush)



SPEDIRE <i>(to send/ship)</i>	PERCEPIRE <i>(to perceive)</i>	AMBIRE <i>(to aspire to something)</i>
ADDOLCIRE <i>(to sweeten)</i>		



Irregular -IRE verbs conjugated

CAPIRE (to understand)	PULIRE (to clean)	ARROSSIRE (to blush)
Io capisco Tu capisci lui/lei/Lei capisce Noi capiamo Voi capite Loro capiscono	Io pulisco Tu pulisci lui/lei/Lei pulisce Noi puliamo Voi pulite Loro puliscono	Io arrossisco Tu arrossisci lui/lei/Lei arrossisce Noi arrossiamo Voi arrossite Loro arrossiscono
SPEDIRE (to send/ship)	PERCEPIRE (to perceive)	AMBIRE (to aspire to something)
Io spedisco Tu spedischi lui/lei/Lei spedisce Noi spediamo Voi spedite Loro spediscono	Io percepisco Tu percepisci lui/lei/Lei percepisce Noi percepiamo Voi percepite Loro percepiscono	Io ambisco Tu ambisci lui/lei/Lei ambisce Noi ambiamo Voi ambite Loro ambiscono
ADDOLCIRE (to sweeten)		
Io addolcisco Tu addolcisci lui/lei/Lei addolcisce Noi addolciamo Voi addolcite Loro addolciscono		



PIACERE, again

What do you remember about the verb **PIACERE**?

We usually use 2 forms of the verb **PIACERE**:

PIACE, when what is liked is singular, a verb or a sentence

PIACCIONO when what is liked is plural

Now you already know that instead of using the **Subject Pronouns IO, TU, LUI, LEI, NOI, VOI, LORO**, you will use the **Direct Object Pronouns MI, TI, GLI, LE, CI, VI, GLI** to match the person who finds “the thing” pleasing.

If I like something that is singular, I will say:

MI PIACE la pizza *I like pizza*



But, if you like something thing that is plural, I will say

TI PIACCIONO i dolci *You like sweets*

Sounds familiar, right?

Now, something that may confuse you a little bit is knowing that the verb **PIACERE** can have any subject. Meaning, there is a way to speak Italian and use **IO** with the verb **PIACERE**.

Don't overthink this or let it overpower what you already know!

Your English speaking mind will want to say:

***IO PIACE** *I LIKE*

But remember, that is **INCORRECT** in Italian.

The instance where you can use **IO** and **PIACERE** together, is when someone likes **ME**.

When I am *the object doing the pleasing*.

iO PIACCIO (a qualcuno)

TU PIACI (a qualcuno)

LEI / LUI PIACE (a qualcuno)

NOI PIACCIAMO (a qualcuno)

VOI PIACETE (a qualcuno)

LORO PIACCIONO (a qualcuno)

For example

If I ask you: **ti piaccio?**

I am asking you: *Do you like me?*

Vi piaccio? *Do you guys like me?*

Le piaccio? *Does she like me?*

Gli piaccio? *Does he like me? Or Do they like me?*



The subject of the verb **PIACERE** is the thing that is being pleasing to someone else:

Mi piaci (tu) *I like you* You are doing the pleasing onto me

Ci piaci (tu) *We like you* You are doing the pleasing onto us

More examples

Ti Piacciamo (noi)? *Do you like us?*

Mi Piacete *I like you guys*

Gli Piacete *He likes you all*

URRE / GERE Verbs

What do you know about the verbs that end in -URRE and -GERE?



-URRE verbs

PRODURRE (to produce)	RIDURRE (to reduce)
Io produ <u>co</u> Tu produ <u>ci</u> lui/lei/Lei produ <u>ce</u> Noi produ <u>ciamo</u> Voi produ <u>cete</u> Loro produ <u>cono</u>	Io ridu <u>co</u> Tu ridu <u>ci</u> lui/lei/Lei ridu <u>ce</u> Noi ridu <u>ciamo</u> Voi ridu <u>cete</u> Loro ridu <u>cono</u>

-URRE verbs are irregular because they pre-prend something to the usual endings. This something is **-UC**.

It is handy to know that, in the **Past Participle**, these **-URRE** verbs end in **-OTTO**

Produced prodotto

Reduced ridotto

You need to know this ending to speak in the **Passato Prossimo**

I produced **ho prodotto**

I reduced **ho ridotto**

-GERE verbs

These verbs are not really irregular. As you can see below, they use all the right endings for **-ERE** verbs. The one thing to be mindful about is how we pronounce them!

We will have a **/G/** sound (as in **GET**) before **O**:

Piango, friggo, piangono, friggono

And a **/DJ/** sound (as in **JET**) before the other endings:

Piangi, piange, piangiamo, piangete, friggi, frigge, friggiamo, friggete



PIANGERE (<i>to cry</i>)	FRIGGERE (<i>to fry</i>)
Io piango Tu piangi lui/lei/Lei piange Noi piangiamo Voi piangete Loro piangono	Io friggo Tu friggi lui/lei/Lei frigge Noi friggiamo Voi friggete Loro friggono

-GERE verbs tend to be irregular in the **Past Participle**.

They often take the ending **-TO**

Examples

PIANGERE *Cried* **PIANTO**
FRIGGERE *Fried* **FRITTO**
VOLGERE **Turned* **VOLTO**

BUT

SPARGERE *Sprinkled* **SPARSO**

This is not a strict rule, but it's better than nothing!

TOGLIERE

What do you remember about the verb **TOGLIERE** and other **-GLIERE** verbs?



Verbs that end **-GLIERE** have another strangeness in the conjugation. I've underlined it below:

TOGLIERE (to remove)	SCIOGLIERE (to melt)
Io tol <u>g</u> o Tu togli lui/lei/Lei toglie Noi togliamo Voi togliete Loro tol <u>g</u> ono	Io sciol <u>g</u> o Tu sciogli lui/lei/Lei scioglie Noi sciogliamo Voi sciogliete Loro sciol <u>g</u> ono

The only way to learn the in's and out's of these irregular verbs is to use them and do your best to memorize them. I know it's challenging, but you can do it! It doesn't have to happen overnight. It won't happen overnight. That's why we're all here! To take the necessary steps to learn how to be fluent in Italian!

You will make certain mistakes when you are learning how to speak Italian, and that's okay! It means that you are processing the language. If you use the wrong ending for a verb, it can sometimes be a good mistake, if your mistakes was 'logical', that is, if it followed the main rule!

BERE

The verb **BERE** is another one of those Italian words you just have to remember. If you think of the English word *beverage*, you will always remember how to begin conjugating the verb **BERE** because they both have a **V** in it.

BERE (to drink)
Io bevo Tu bevi lui/lei/Lei beve Noi beviamo Voi bevete Loro bevono



Conclusion

Thank you for being patient and motivated enough to get to the end! I know this is an incredibly long lesson, but it's also a very important one.

Without taking time to use these verbs and use them in actual sentences, you will be missing very essential components of the language. So, instead of a typical rote drill, I challenge you to practice these irregular verbs on your own, by making up full sentences.

Share them in the forum!

Your Notes

