



VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

La porta o il porto? La menta o il mento? Il velo o la vela?

In Italian, the gender of nouns makes a real difference! Keep watching and you'll learn about this very important feature of Italian grammar! And please take a moment to subscribe to our channel if you haven't yet ;)

IL GENERE DEI SOSTANTIVI

Italian nouns can be masculine or feminine. There is no neuter, no "it": even inanimate objects, concepts and animals are either masculine or feminine.

HOW CAN I FIGURE OUT THE GENDER OF A WORD IN ITALIAN?

My advice is to learn the gender of nouns as you learn new words.
But there are also some basic rules that you can keep in mind:

Nouns ending in -O are usually masculine and form the plural with -I.

Nouns ending in -A are usually feminine and form the plural with -E.

Nouns ending in -E can be masculine or feminine and form the plural with -I.

MASCHILE

IL LETTO

IL FORNO

IL DIVANO

IL GIORNALE

FEMMINILE

LA FINESTRA

LA LAMPADA

LA TENDA

LA CHIAVE

When nouns refer to **people**, grammatical gender usually corresponds to natural gender:

MASCHILE

IL CUOCO

IL BAMBINO

IL FORNAIO

FEMMINILE

LA CUOCA

LA BAMBINA

LA FORNAIA

In some cases, there is only **one form for both masculine and feminine, and in these cases the article indicates the gender:**

Articles in Italian can look tricky at a first glance, but some basic concepts will help you through; For now, just remember that the definite article THE is IL or LO for masculine nouns and LA for feminine nouns. We will talk more about Italian articles in another video.

MASCHILE

IL COLLEGA
IL CANTANTE
IL PIANISTA

FEMMINILE

LA COLLEGA
LA CANTANTE
LA PIANISTA

Some masculine nouns ending in **-E** form the feminine with **-ESSA**, while masculine nouns ending in **-TORE** form the feminine with **-TRICE**.

MASCHILE

LO STUDENTE
L'ATTORE
IL TRADUTTORE

FEMMINILE

LA STUDENTESSA
L'ATTRICE
LA TRADUTTRICE

LA MOTO O IL MOTO?

Looks can be deceiving, and sometimes nouns ending in **-O** are feminine and nouns ending in **-A** are masculine!

This is the case with nouns that are actually abbreviations of longer nouns:

LA FOTO	short for	LA FOTOGRAFIA
LA BICI		LA BICICLETTA
LA MOTO		LA MOTOCICLETTA
IL CINEMA		IL CINEMATOGRAFO

We use these short forms a lot, and the good news is that they do not change in the plural.

LA FOTO LE FOTO

Let's see some other rules.

Several words ending in **-A** that come from Greek are masculine:

IL POETA
IL PROGRAMMA
IL DRAMMA
IL PROBLEMA — è un bel problema!

Nouns ending in -ISTA can be either masculine or feminine, and you can tell by the article or according to the context.

IL DENTISTA LA DENTISTA

Usually, nouns ending with a consonant (usually loan words) are masculine:

IL BAR LO SPORT

Most nouns ending in -à, -sione, -zione and -tù are feminine:

AZIONE, MOTIVAZIONE, GIOVENTÙ, SCHIAVITÙ, LIBERTÀ

Note that the names of languages are always masculine, regardless of whether they end in – E or –O.

STUDIAMO L'ITALIANO
IL RUSSO È UNA LINGUA BELLISSIMA
IL CINESE È MOLTO INTERESSANTE

And now the funny part! Several nouns change their meaning by changing their gender!

Let's see a few examples:

LA MENTA mint	IL MENTO chin
LA MELA apple	IL MELO apple tree
LA PERA pear	IL PERO pear tree
LA MOSTRA exhibition	IL MOSTRO monster
LA PASTA pasta	IL PASTO meal
LA POSTA mail	IL POSTO place
LA PORTA door	IL PORTO port
LA TESTA head	IL TESTO text

Let's summarise:

Remember:

- In Italian, all nouns are either masculine or feminine.
- This affects the words you use with them, like articles and adjectives.
- In most cases it is possible to figure out the gender of a noun from its ending.

Now you're ready for the next grammar point:

THE PLURAL OF NOUNS

To make nouns plural in Italian, in most cases you just have to change their ending. In a few cases the same form as the singular is used, and there are also a few irregular plurals. Let's see what this means!

Masculine nouns ending in -O, -A, and all nouns ending in -E end in -I in the plural:

IL LIBRO	I LIBRI
IL POETA	I POETI
LA NOTTE	LE NOTTI

Feminine nouns ending in -A end in -E in the plural:

LA CASA	LE CASE
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Nouns ending in -IO form the plural by dropping the O:

IL NEGOZIO	I NEGOZI
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BUT if the I in -IO is stressed, then an -I is added in the plural form:

LO ZIO	GLI ZII
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Foreign nouns, nouns that have the accent on the last vowel, and abbreviations DO NOT change in the plural:

IL BAR	I BAR
IL FILM	I FILM
LA CITTÀ	LE CITTÀ
LA CIVILTÀ	LE CIVILTÀ

There are also some spelling rules that you should keep in mind. As I mentioned before, you can either learn the rule or simply memorise each noun together with the corresponding article, in its singular and plural form!

Nouns ending in -CA or -GA add an -H in the plural to retain the hard sound of C and G:

LA BARCA	LE BARCHE
LA MERINGA	LE MERINGHE

Nouns ending in -CIA or -GIA drop the I:

L'ARANCIA	LE ARANCE
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BUT if the I is stressed or the syllable -CIA/-GIA follows a vowel, the I is not dropped:

LA CILIEGIA	LE CILIEGIE
LA FARMACIA	LE FARMACIE

Sometimes even Italians make mistakes when they write these words, so don't worry! Just do your best to remember the correct form.

IRREGULAR NOUNS

Some nouns are masculine when they are singular, but feminine when they are plural:

L'UOVO	LE UOVA
IL LENZUOLO	LE LENZUOLA
IL DITO	LE DITA
IL BRACCIO	LE BRACCIA
IL LABBRO	LE LABBRA

Other nouns change a lot in their plural form; try to remember them:

L'UOMO	GLI UOMINI
IL DIO	GLI DEI

Lastly, some words are singular in English but plural in Italian, for example:

i capelli	hair
gli affari	business
le notizie	news
i consigli	advice
i mobili	furniture

Today you learned about the gender of nouns and the plural form of nouns. Make sure to review these concepts multiple times!