



Beginner Italian Course Pronunciation - Lesson 3

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

Ciao! Welcome to the third video of our series about the secrets of Italian pronunciation. If you missed the previous ones about the sounds C, G, and R, our advice is to check them out!

The Italian pronunciation system is quite consistent, you can tell how a word is pronounced just by the way it's written, and today you'll learn about consonants D and T.

Consonants D and T are not very difficult to pronounce, and they don't change depending on the vowels that follow as consonants C and G do - all you have to do is simply pay attention to some basic rules.

THE D SOUND

ARMADIO, MONDO, NIDO, CODA, RUGIADA, DENTRO, DRAGO, DRONE, DRITTO.

The Italian D is a hard sound, very similar to the English D as in dog, the only difference is that the tongue touches the back of the upper front teeth, and not the gum ridge, anyway this sound shouldn't be a problem for English speakers. DENTRO, DOMANI, CODA. Easy! In Spanish instead, when followed by a vowel or any consonant except L and N, D is pronounced very softly, so our Spanish friends should remember to always pronounce their Ds very clearly!

Another potential trap for English speakers is the consonant cluster DR. In English the D sound here tends to change into a /dʒ/ sound: DRAGON, DRAWING, DREAM, whereas in Italian the D stays... a D! If you find it difficult, you could try pronouncing the two sounds separately: D PAUSA R D PAUSA R D PAUSA R and then... together! DR DR DR DRIIINNNNN DRAGO, DRONE, DRITTO, MANDRIA, ADRIANO, ANDREMO.

If your problem is not the D, but the rolled R, then... we made a video about it! Check it out and you'll become the MASTERRRR OF RRRRR!

By the way, if you've ever wondered why your Italian friends say DRRIM instead of DREAM, well, now you know the reason! DRRRRRRR!

THE T SOUND

TRENO, TRE, TONDO, MATTINA, LONTANO, SPIRITO, FORTUNA, TRENTA

The Italian T is never aspirated, so if you put your hands in front of your mouth, you shouldn't feel any puff of air. TONDO, not THondo, MOLTO, not MOLTHO. TIME in Italian is... TEMPO! Feel the difference, put your hand in front your mouth: TIME. TEMPO. Try with me: TONO, MATTO, TANTO, TIPO.

Another cluster that can be difficult to pronounce is TR. English speakers tend to pronounce this group as /tʃ/ TRAIN, TRIAL, TRIANGLE, But the Italian T doesn't change, it stays.. a T! TRENO, TRONO, TRIANGOLO!

And now you know why your Italian friends tend to say TRREIN instead of TRAIN, TRRAI instead of TRY!

Now try to pronounce the following:

DANTE, MEDAGLIA, SEDIA
DRAGO, DRONE, CODA, DRITTO
TRIESTE, TRIANGOLO, TESTA, MATTONE
TEMPO, ANTICO, TRADIZIONE