

time

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Italian Steps: Stage 5

Buying a train ticket: The 24-hour clock is widely used in spoken as well as official Italian, which makes telling the time very straightforward. Follow Giovanna in Vicenza station as she finds out the time of the Intercity train to Venice, with a stop-over at Padova. Then revise the numbers 1-60 and develop your listening skills with the practice activities.

Museums and events: Giovanna and her friend Leonardo find out about opening hours in Verona. Visit the *Build sentences* section for detailed information on time.

Italianissimo: Incontri

Watch and listen to people in Bari talking about opening hours and planning to get together.

Key language

Quando? When?

A che ora... At what time...

...parte? ...does it leave?

...arriva? ...does it arrive?

...comincia? ...does it start?

...finisce? ...does it finish?

...apre? ...does it open?

...chiude? ...does it close?

Ci vediamo alle due See you at two o'clock

a mezzogiorno at mid-day

a mezzanotte at midnight

all'una at one o'clock

alle due/ tre/ quattro at two/ three/ four o'clock

dalle nove alle tredici from 9am until 1pm

prima delle otto before eight o'clock

dopo le otto after eight o'clock

verso l'una e mezzo about half past one

Learning hint

To get some practice at saying the time in Italian, get your alarm clock, set different times at random and say what time it is. Then have a look in your diary and say aloud what time your appointments are for the next week or so.

Once you're comfortable with the format, get used to thinking of the time in Italian whenever you plan to do something – even routine activities such as going to work, eating your lunch or going to bed.

Quiz

1. You're told that breakfast in the hotel is served **dalle sei e trenta alle nove**. When is that?
2. If the answer is **L'ufficio apre alle otto**, what was the question?
3. A friend says **No, prima delle dieci** when you suggests meeting at ten o'clock to go out for the day. Does he feel ten is too early or too late?
4. How much time is there between **le nove della mattina** and **le ventuno e trenta**?
5. The hotel receptionist tells you **La banca non chiude a mezzogiorno, chiude alle quattordici**. What time does the bank close?
6. How would you tell a visitor from Italy to your town that the bank opens at 9.30 and closes at 15.30?

Answers on www.bbc.co.uk/languages/italian/answers.shtml