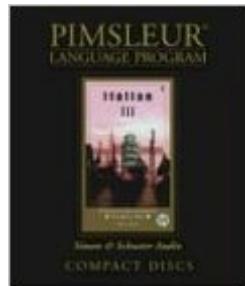


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# Italian III



## Synopsis

With Pimsleur Language Programs you don't just study a language, you learn it -- the same way you mastered English! And because the technique relies on interactive spoken language training, the Pimsleur Language Programs are totally audio -- no book is needed! The Pimsleur programs provide a method of self-practice with an expert teacher and native speakers in lessons specially designed to work with the way the mind naturally acquires language information. The various components of language -- vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar -- are all learned together without rote memorization and drills. Using a unique method of memory recall developed by renowned linguist, Dr. Paul Pimsleur, the programs teach listeners to combine words and phrases to express themselves the way native speakers do. By listening and responding to thirty minute recorded lessons, students easily and effectively achieve spoken proficiency. No other language program or school is as quick, convenient, and effective as the Pimsleur Language Programs. The Comprehensive Program is the ultimate in spoken language learning. For those who want to become proficient in the language of their choice, the Comprehensive programs go beyond the Basic Programs to offer spoken-language fluency. Using the same simple method of interactive self-practice with native speakers, these comprehensive programs provide a complete language learning course. The Comprehensive Program is available in a wide variety of languages and runs through three levels (thirty lessons each) in French, German, Italian, Japanese, Russian and Spanish. At the end of a full Comprehensive Program listeners will be conducting complete conversations and be well on their way to mastering the language. The Comprehensive Programs are all available on cassettes and are also on CD in the six languages in which we offer the Basic Program on CD.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Pimsleur III is the last of the Pimsleur comprehensive levels. This level stretches your Italian well beyond that of Level II. Although you will not be speaking fluent Italian after having spent up to \$1000 on the three levels, you will be well on your way to mastery of Italian- certainly you will have achieved an Intermediate level which is more than most "advanced" programs will provide you with. As with all the Pimsleur comprehensive levels, this one contains 30 lessons, approximately 30 minutes in length, plus a reading exercise CD. The lessons are both entertaining and substantive. You will not memorize but **AQUIRE** Italian- just as you acquired English, or your own mother tongue. This program is truly fantastic! Your learning will seem almost magical as you assimilate Italian into your **THINKING!** This is the key that other programs don't offer! I found that repeating these lessons, sometimes up to 3-4 times each, helped me really grasp the information and acquire the language well. I also discovered throughout the 3 levels that listening to a lesson, and repeating it the **NEXT** day often helped my comprehension greatly. There are times when you will want to repeat the lessons immediately- the key to this, I found, is to do the lessons, and repeat them, when you are relaxed. Here is an example of what you might expect to be able to say (English equivalent) after having completed Pimsleur's level 3 - keep in mind this is a sample 2 minute conversation and you can expect to say (and understand) quite a bit more than this: "Good morning, John! We would like to invite you and your wife to come to our hotel tonight for some coffee. Our colleague from the United States is arriving tonight. He also speaks Italian- you can talk with him.

Having just completed listening to Italian Level Three in the Pimsleur learning system (following completion of Levels 1 and 2), I feel compelled to complain. For [money] (for the CD edition), I think we're all entitled to a few concessions from the publisher. Accordingly, while I have no doubt that I continue to learn the Italian language and improve my grammar, vocabulary, and accent using this approach, here are my issues: The CD version has just two tracks on each disc. In the frequent event that you don't quite catch something the first time through, you have no choice but to listen to the whole 30 minute track over again (at least on my car's CD player.) Advice: get tapes instead so you can rewind as necessary. Take my word for it, it's boring. The Pimsleur teaching method of graduated repetition with frequent questions in English is a terrific system for learning a foreign

language. But in Levels 2 and 3 there is no foreplay whatsoever. You just dive into repetition with nothing other than your own motivation to sustain you. Yes, there is much satisfaction to be gained when you correctly nail a sentence in Italian that the moderator asks you to come up with in English. But I found myself screaming imprecations in my car on those occasions when I got totally bored, especially during repeat listening. At least they could teach you to swear in Italian to relieve the frustration. Why are they asking me to say, "Yes, thank you" in Lesson 26? Of all the things you could be learning in what should be considered at minimum an advanced beginner course, how can they waste my time by asking me to remember how to say "yes, thank you" and repeat it at this late point in the program? Is it poor quality control? Do they think I forgot?

Well, I give Pimsleur Italian (I, II, III) five stars because, for what it does, there is nothing else out there even close. The major pluses of the Pimsleur system: you can rather painlessly learn to speak and understand basic Italian with an absolute minimum of grammatical explanation and without ever so much as opening a book. Furthermore, you'll learn to speak with a good accent. (I actually had a native speaker compliment me on my accent; in fact, he expressed amazement at how good my accent and intonation were. Certainly gratifying to me, but Pimsleur deserves all the credit.) That is remarkable enough in itself, considering you're dealing with a set of tapes (or CD's), where you don't get to see the Italian speaker's lips move, ask questions about pronunciation (or anything else), or get coaching if you mispronounce. Of course, the series has its faults. Other reviewers have mentioned many of them. I would add the following. The pace can sometimes be erratic; some lessons tediously grind away with incessant repetition on the same topic, same words, same phrases, while others bombard you with a bunch of new words and expressions without a lot of practice. Overall, introduction of new grammar is too slow, especially for verbs. And then, of course, the essential contradiction of the entire method: you are always being given a phrase or sentence in English and asked to render it into Italian. What you really want to strive for is to be thinking (as well as speaking) in Italian, not translating English. You need to get the English out of your head and just have Italian in there. The part of each tape I enjoyed the most was all too brief: the introductory conversation in Italian at a brisk pace. These should be longer and more frequent in each lesson.

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