making a phone call

Learn with television

Make Italian Your Business: Programme One
Section 3: Telefonare

Get to grips with Italian telephone etiquette; learn to get through to the right person and to anticipate the phrases you may be asked when ringing a number in Italy.

Make Italian Your Business has two one-hour programmes, each divided into short focused sections. They’re repeated regularly on BBC Learning Zone (BBC Two). Check out the details on www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone and video the programmes to watch at your leisure.

Learning hint

Making a phone call to Italy can be quite daunting as you’re operating without the face-to-face support of gestures and facial expressions. It helps to prepare thoroughly what you want to say, to be ready to spell your name and give your own number in case someone suggests ringing you back, and to anticipate beforehand what questions you might be asked.

Key language

Pronto Hello
Chi parla? Who’s speaking?
Sono Anna It’s Anna
Parla Agnelli Agnelli speaking
Posso parlare con...? Can I speak to ...
Non la sento bene I can’t hear you very well
Può ripetere? Could you repeat that?
Ho sbagliato numero I’ve got the wrong number
Resti in linea Please hold

il telefono telephone
il numero di telefono phone number
interno sei tre due extension 632
il telefonino mobile phone
la segreteria telefonica answerphone
chiamare to call
richiamare to call back
lasciare un messaggio leave a message

Quiz

1. What information would you give if asked Qual è il suo numero di telefono?
2. Your extension number is 3972; what’s that in Italian?
3. In what situation would you hear the phrase Parlate dopo il segnale acustico?
4. You’re calling Italy, someone picks up the phone and says Pronto. How do you introduce yourself and ask to speak to Anna Mazzotti?
5. What will you do if asked Può richiamare domani?
6. Sbagliare, chiamare, parlare and lasciare all follow the same pattern. If ‘I’ve called’ is ho chiamato, how do you think you say ‘I’ve left a message’?

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

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