

# THE ITALIAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM:



keep going, if you want to know more about how the italian school system works.



Education in Italy is compulsory from 6 to 16 years of age and is divided into five stages:

1. Infant school
2. Primary school
3. Lower secondary school\ Middle school
4. Upper secondary school
5. University.

Education is free and available to children of all nationalities who are residents in the country. Italy has both a private and public education system.

### 1) Infant school:

The attending of this school is not obligatory (parents can decide to register their children in accordance with the needs), and it's divided into:

- asilo nido (kindergarten): attended by 0-to-3 years old children
- scuola materna (preschool): attended by 3-to-6 years old children



## 2) primary or elementary school

This school is attended by 6 to 11 years old students: thus the attending lasts 5 years. During those years, boys and girls learn to write and read and they apprehend the first notions of History, Geography, Mathematics, Italian Grammar, Science, Music and Physical Education and, for a few years now, also English and Computer Science while Religion classes are optional.

## 3) Lower secondary school or middle school

Lower secondary school or middle school  
This step lasts 3 years and involves students from 11 to 13 years of age. During this period, the students deepen the various subjects studied in elementary school, and at the end of it, they must take the esame di terza media (middle school exam)



## 4) upper secondary school or high school

This step lasts 5 years and involves 14 to 19 years old students, but from the age of 16 boys and girls have the possibility to abandon their studies. The students can choose among 3 types of di high schools, depending on their goals:

Liceo: it offers a more theoretical education and more oriented to further education at the University and, depending on the subjects studied, they can be of different types:  
– classico (grammar Latin, Greek and Italian), scientifico (Mathematics, Physics and Science), linguistico (English and foreign languages), tecnologico (Computer Science), artistico (art), musicale (music).

**Professional Technical High School:** in this type of school in addition to common subjects, students can acquire practical-technical skills, suited to the entry into employment, in sectors like: economy, tourism, technology, agricultur, healthcare professions.

**ITF (Vocational education and training):** in this type of school, students acquire practical and professional skills. The studies in these schools focus on jobs like: plumber, electrician, hairdresser, beautician...

At the end of high school student must take another exam, the feared esame di maturità (graduation exam) which is composed by 3 written tests and 1 oral examination, and if you pass it, you'll receive a degree of maturity, that will allow you to have access to University.



## 5) University It's divided into:

**First cycle:** also known as “laurea triennale” and, as its name suggest, it lasts 3 years. There's a wide and diverse selection of Italian universities like: scientific departments (Mathematics, Physics, Astrophysics, Chemistry), humanities faculty (Literatures, Philosophy, Foreign Languages, technical faculties (Architecture, Engineering, Economy).

**Second cycle:** also known as “laurea magistrale” or “specialistica” (second level degree), it usually lasts 2 years and it's the continuation of the first cycle to ensure the students a higher level of specialization. However, there are some courses (Faculty of law, Faculty of Pharmacy, Construction Engineering, Architecture etc) that last 5 years (6 years as regards Med School) and take the name of “Corsi di Laurea a ciclo unico” (Single Cycle Degree Course)

**Third cycle:** it's devoted to the most ambitious students and it includes:

- master: they're usually short courses of study that offer the opportunity (to those who are interested) to deepen some specific aspects of the subject studied during the first two cycles.
- doctoral degrees: they're theoretical courses, that are perfect for those who desire a career in the academic field or in the field of research.

