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Behind The Wheel - Italian 1



Synopsis

Behind the Wheel Italian Level 1 covers beginning to intermediate level Italian, providing a flexible, solid and universal foundation in speaking, understanding, and creatively expressing yourself in Italian. The program features an English speaking instructor to guide you through the lessons and a native Italian speaker to aid with your pronunciation. Includes a companion book to reinforce and enhance the audio experience.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

•...this series is a low-stress, high-impact tool with which to start learning a new language. •
•AudioFile• The audio-only lessons build upon one another, using a native speaker to help you learn useful words and actually construct sentences from the get-go. • •Minneapolis Star-Tribune• Unlike other audio language programs, this series encourages students to create their own sentences, making it more fun and conversational than other more expensive programs. • •The Cleveland Plain Dealer• Focuses on real-world conversation...Great value. • •Men's Health magazine

MARK FROBOSE is the founder of the Behind the Wheel series. A foreign language instructor for more than thirty years, he has built a career on "taking the foreign out of language." He is a nationally recognized foreign language speaker, teacher, and author.

I'm so happy with my new CD's that I have to share this! One of my New Year's resolutions was to learn a new language and there I was in the middle of the year with "no time" to do this. I was so ready to start that spent almost an hour reading all the reviews online for all the programs available and BEHIND THE WHEEL was the right choice for me. Even when the traffic is heavy and I have to drive long distances, I'm relaxed with my CD in a learning mode, not feeling that I'm wasting time. The best part is that in Italian doesn't matter what you are saying because anything sounds good and sexy, so this is really making me feel good!! I was searching for the best choice for the price. First I thought about Rosetta stone but the price did not convince me, what about if I never have the "time" to do this after spending all this money? And I know once I get in home I have so many better things to do than learn a new language, that's why the Behind the Wheel for US \$30 something for me sounds like a deal and the CDs are really good!! I just finished my second CD; there are 8 in the total. I think each CD takes around an hour. I'm listening two times each CD before moving to the next one and it's being a pleasure to learn Italian this way! I have to confess that I speak Spanish and Portuguese but I don't enjoy studying languages. I just learn English when I moved to US and I learned Spanish because I live in Miami (it sounds funny but is true). I tried to learn English in school back in home but I always felt that I was bad for languages because I hate grammar and I hate to read about grammar. But I love to learn in the "streets" probably that's why this CDs sounds fun! Even if you speak just one language this one it's really easy. It starts with an American saying the word in English then comes an Italian lady saying the same in Italian and you just have to repeat it. You will start with one word, then two words without even notice you will be saying and memorizing sentences. Even if you don't say it perfect you are alone in your car so you can go back as many times as you want and repeat in loud voice until you master. I loved it!!! Now my 9 years old son took my CD #1 to listen and practice in his room! I guess it is fun for all ages!

I believe this series is more for students (of all ages!) hoping to learn the Italian language. Having traveled to Italy six months ago, and having the great fortune to return next month, I have been looking for something that would provide more conversation experience in typical travel situations. I don't really need to know the word for blackboard, though possibly a student traveling to Italy would. Nonetheless, this was a good addition to my various approaches to learning Italian. What has been most helpful to me is the sentence building. By combining most often used verb conjugations and infinitives, you can quickly learn to construct a number of sentences. In the same vein, it's useful to know when to use "avere" (to have), for English expressions that use the verb "to be." However, for the casual traveler, it would be helpful to have more extensive or different vocabulary. The traveler

likely doesn't need to say "I want to work, or I have to write." But by using the sentence building, and a phrase book I purchased, I ended up building my own sentences and creating my own flash cards for things I now know I will want to be able to say. Another observation: The native speaker is extremely effective at pronouncing each syllable clearly and slowly and twice for each example. That's a great way to learn basic pronunciation. Unfortunately, this is not the way Italians speak -- they fly through sentences!! I think it would help new learners to get some cd's that have natives speaking more quickly. Possibly this could be done in "Behind the Wheel" when material is reviewed that was covered earlier, at least the second time the Italian is provided. So I also use two other methods I purchased (Pimsleur and Global Access), to listen to other native speakers and speak outloud myself at that faster pace. I'll continue to listen to Behind the Wheel for a few more weeks, but a week before the trip, I will switch over totally to the other methods, so I can practice listening and speaking at a faster speed. I don't think new learners should feel the need to use just one method. You spend a lot of money on airfare, hotels, and meals, so why not invest in a few language learning tools? For me, it was useful to start with Pimsleur, which was very good at basic pronunciation, and constant repetition and review. Then move to something like Global Access which helped with more every day examples for getting a taxi, arriving at the hotel, ordering food, shopping, etc., though some of their vocabulary is outdated ("I would like to borrow a typewriter.") Then I moved to Behind the Wheel, to extend my learning through the sentence building -- along with a phrase book. I used Rick Steves (and you have to realize that he is joking about some of his vocabulary and examples!!) because he adds a lot of practical information, along with the vocabulary a casual traveler will most likely use. And I *still* have a lot more to learn!

My husband and I are visiting Italy in September, so I picked up this CD set after reading the many other positive customer reviews. I commute 84 miles round trip each day to my job and have been practicing with the CDs during my ride. I've just finished the fourth CD in the series of eight. I highly recommend this product to other long distance commuters who don't have a lot of free time to study a foreign language. It's really a great way to learn. I progress at my own pace and don't feel any embarrassment when I make pronunciation mistakes. I generally listen to each CD at least twice and if I take a "break" I review previous CDs until I'm back up to speed. I do however, find myself wishing I could see the words I am saying so right now I am actually browsing the website for a beginning Italian printed book so I can make those visual connections as further reinforcement. All in all, \$30 is a fantastic bargain for the quality of the CD set. I look forward to finishing level 1 and moving on to level 2.

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