

How to express LOVE in Italian

It depends on what you are loving...

▷ **FOR PEOPLE** (and pets):

AMARE

VOLERE BENE

▷ **FOR THINGS:**

PIACERE

ADORARE

AMARE

▷ **Let's start with people!**

Between **LOVERS** we use the verb **AMARE** (literally "to love").

Sara ti amo! Mi vuoi sposare?

Sara, I love you! Will you marry me?

Non ti amo più... voglio il divorzio!

I don't love you anymore... I want a divorce!

Between **family and friends** we use the (**odd** sounding) expression: **VOLERE BENE** (literally, "**to want well/good**").

PLEASE NOTE: **VOLERE BENE** is used with an **Indirect Object Pronoun**.

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Ti voglio bene

I love you

Le vogliamo bene

We love her

Gli vuoi bene

You love him

We are basically saying "to you, I want good", "to her, we want good", "to him you want good". I can only assume this means "**I wish you good**" etc.

Mamma, ti voglio bene!

Mum, I love you!

Io voglio bene a tutti i miei amici

I love all of my friends.

Mi vuoi bene?

Do you love me? (as in "**do care for me?**")

▷ How about when you "love" things?

Mainly three options:

▷ **PIACERE**

▷ **ADORARE**

▷ **AMARE**

In most cases, you should be using the verb **PIACERE** ("to like") (**highly irregular verb** - see note below for a quick explanation) followed by some sort of modifier that would amplify your "liking".

For examples:

▷ **MOLTO** = a lot

▷ **MOLTISSIMO** = really a lot

▷ **TANTO** = a lot

▷ **TANTISSIMO** = really a lot

▷ **UN CASINO** = a ton (slang)

To say "I love to dance" we might say:

Mi piace **molto** ballare

Mi piace **moltissimo** ballare

Mi piace **un casino** ballare (slang)

I know this might not satisfy you ("I'm trying to say LOVE, not LIKE") but that's how a native Italian would express that concept most of the time!

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A mia figlia piace moltissimo Justin Bieber

My daughter loves Justin Bieber (literally "my daughter likes JB a lot") (or more literally "to my daughter JB is very pleasing")

AMARE can be used, but please, **DO NOT USE IT A LOT**, as it often **sounds weird in Italian!**

If you LOVE WALKING IN THE PARK, just say:

Mi piace molto camminare nel parco.

If it's really important that you stress how much you love it, then try:

Adoro camminare nel parco.

If walking in the park is your life's passion, the only thing you enjoy doing etc, then, OK, I'll let you use AMARE!

Amo camminare nel parco.

If you love music classical music:

Mi piace moltissimo la musica

Or

Adoro la musica classica

Or... if classical music is your life then sure... use AMARE if you must!

Amo la musica classica

▷ The odd verb PIACERE ("*to like*")

PIACERE is a tricky verb, as it doesn't work like in English. And it doesn't work like other Italian verbs either (**SVO - Subject - Verb - Object**).

To say that we like something in Italian, we actually say that that something **is pleasing to us**.

Basically, the thing we like is the subject of the verb PIACERE, not us!

If we like something singular, then we use **PIACE**.

If we like something plural, then we use **PIACCIAMO**.

Before the verb we have to use an **indirect object pronoun**, to mean "*to me, to you, to him, to her, to us, to you guys, to them*" (remember, we are saying "*X is pleasing to me*").

These are the possible pronouns:

Mi / A me (to me)

Ti / A te (to you)

Gli / A lui (to him)

Le / A lei (to her)

Ci / A noi (to us)

Vi / A voi (to you guys)

Gli / A loro (to them)

So, let's say we want to say:

I like pizza

We would basically have to change the sentence to "***pizza is pleasing to me***", right? Here goes:

Mi piace la pizza

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If we want to say:

I like tomatoes

We'd say:

Mi piacciono i pomodori

Ci piacciono i pomodori

We like tomatoes

Ti piace la pizza?

Do you like pizza?

I know, it's weird. And this was just a quick introduction to the verb PIACERE!

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▷ EXERCISE

Translate the first group of sentences into Italian and the second group into English.

1. I love going out with my friends.

2. My brother loves his wife.

3. Do you love Italian food?

4. I love my sister.

5. Voi ci volete molto bene.

6. I miei figli adorano lo sport.

7. Ti amo e ti voglio sposare.

8. Mi piace tantissimo cantare sotto la doccia!

▷ ANSWERS

Here are some possible translations for the exercises.

1. Mi piace molto uscire con gli amici
2. Mio fratello ama sua moglie
3. Ti piace il cibo italiano?
4. Voglio molto bene a mia sorella
5. You love us very much
6. My kids love sports
7. I love you and I want to marry you
8. I absolutely love singing in the shower

▷ YOUR NOTES