

CHEAT SHEET>> Italian Imperfect Indicative Tense: L'IMPERFETTO

The imperfect indicative tense expresses...

- Past habitual actions and past actions or conditions lasting for an indefinite amount of time (**Habitual past actions, ongoing, incomplete past actions**).
 - Key phrases used to indicate ongoing, recurrent, incomplete actions:

a volte (at times)	sempre (always)
continuamente (continuously)	mai (never)
giorno dopo giorno (day after day)	spesso (often)
ogni tanto (once in a while)	tutti i giorni (every day)
	di solito (usually)
	mentre (while)
 - **Nell'estate, giocavo a calcio ogni pomeriggio.** | In the summer, I *played/would play/used to play* soccer every afternoon. (habitual)
 - **Di solito Luigi arrivava in orario, ma ogni tanto era in ritardo .** | Usually, Luigi *arrived/would arrive/used to arrive* on time, but once in a while he *was/would* be late.
 - **Da bambini non mangiavano mai le verdure.** | As kids, they *never ate/would never eat/never used to eat* vegetables.
 - **Allora studiavamo in Italia.** / At that time, *were studying* in Italy.
 - **Letizia e Piero abitavano a Boston per un periodo.** | Letizia and Piero *lived/used to live/were living* in Boston for a while.
 - **Andavi a casa tutti i giorni per pranzo.** | *You went/would go/used to go* home every day for lunch.
 - **Mentre voi dormivate, io preparavo la cena.** | While you were sleeping, I was preparing dinner.
- To describe past **time, weather, age, appearance, mood/state of mind, how things were**/state of affairs, and **matters of fact**.
 - Erano le due del pomeriggio. | It was two o'clock in the afternoon. (time)
 - Faceva bel tempo. | The weather was beautiful.
 - Il mare era bellissimo. | The sea was very beautiful. (appearance)
 - L'acqua era calda. | The water was warm. (matter of fact)
 - I gemelli avevano 5 anni. | The twins were five years old. (age)
 - Eravamo tutti felici. / We were all happy. (mood)

- The Imperfect is used together with the Passato Prossimo...

...to describe a past situation or activity interrupted by an action:

- Mentre *passeggiavo* in spiaggia *ho incontrato* Mario con il suo cane. | While I *was strolling* on the beach, I *met (ran into)* Mario with his dog.
- *Abbiamo trovato* questa vecchia foto quando *pulivamo* la mansarda. | We *found* this old photo while we *were cleaning* the attic.
- La notizia *e` arrivata* mentre i signori pranzavano. | The news *arrived* while the gentlemen *were lunching*.

Regular verbs:

	Stems→	Parlare: parla-	Vivere: vive-	Aprire: apri-
	Endings:			
io	-vo	ParlAvo	vivEvo	aprIvo
tu	-vi	ParlAvi	vivEvi	aprIvi
lui/lei, Lei	-va	ParlAva	vivEva	aprIva
Noi	-vamo	ParlavAmo	vivevAmo	aprivAmo
voi	-vate	ParlavAte	vivevAte	aprivAte
loro	-vano	parlavAno	vivevAno	aprivAno

CONJUGATION: The Imperfect is very easy to conjugate.

All endings for all regular *-are, -ere, -ire* verbs are the SAME. **Bonus:** Many verbs that are irregular or stem-changing in the present indicative are completely REGULAR in the imperfect (i.e., *capire-sapere-avere-andare-uscire-dare-venire*).

To form the stem you ‘snap off’ only the last two letters of the infinitive: **“re”**.

Note that the endings are the SAME as for Present Indicative *-ar* verbs except for the addition of the letter **“v”**.

Stress is on the syllable *before* the **“v”** except in *noi* and *voi* forms where the stress is *after* the **“v”**.

Irregular verbs:

	Essere	Fare	Bere	Dire
io	Ero	facEvo	bevEvo	dicEvo
tu	Eri	facEvi	bevEvi	dicEvi
lui/lei, Lei	Era	facEva	bevEva	dicEva
Noi	eravAmo	facevAmo	bevevAmo	dicevAmo
voi	eravAte	facevAte	bevevAte	dicevAte
loro	Erano	facevAno	bevevAno	dicevAno