



Piacere

The verb *piacere* is intransitive and can have an impersonal or personal form.

Impersonal form

This is the most commonly used form of *piacere*, which is used to express the fact that someone likes something. What makes it funny, though, is that in Italian we don't say that someone likes something but that something is pleasing to someone. Therefore, the **object of liking is the subject of the phrase**. It can be placed at the beginning or at the end of the sentence and the verb agrees with it:

A Maria piacciono i fiori = Maria likes flowers

I fiori piacciono a Maria = Maria likes flowers

The Italian verb *piacere* means 'to like', but it is formed in a different way than in English: what in English is the subject in Italian is the **indirect object**, while the object of our liking is the subject of the phrase and agrees with the verb.

John likes flowers = *I fiori piacciono a John*

If the subject is singular, the verb is singular, if it is plural, the verb is plural.

A Francesca piace il caffè = Francesca likes coffee

-> *caffè* is singular, so the verb is singular

Alla maestra piacciono gli studenti = The teacher likes her students

-> *studenti* is plural, so the verb is plural

Unlike in English, the thing that one likes is always preceded by the **definite article**.

A Carla piace LA cucina giapponese = Carla likes Japanese food

Mi piace IL tennis = I like tennis



When the **subject** is not a noun but **an action expressed by an infinite verb or by an expression**, *piacere* is in the third person singular:

A mio padre piace sciare = My father likes skiing
-> *sciare* is the subject, so the verb is singular

A papà piace che tu studi all'università = Dad likes that you study at the university
-> *che tu studi all'università* is the subject, so the verb is singular

Some examples:

A me piace guidare – *A me piacciono le auto sportive*
A te piace leggere libri – *A te piacciono le librerie*
A lui piace fare sport – *A lui piacciono le palestre*
A lei piace cucinare i dolci – *A lei piacciono i libri di cucina*
A noi piace andare al mare – *A noi piacciono le spiagge bianche*
A voi piace stare a casa – *A voi piacciono le cene in famiglia*
A loro piace la Tv – *A loro piacciono i programmi televisivi*



When the indirect object is a pronoun, it can be **tonic** (*a me, a te, etc.*) or **atonic** (*mi, ti, etc.*):

A me piace il calcio / Mi piace il calcio = I like soccer
A lui piacciono le canzoni americane / Gli piacciono le canzoni americane = He likes American songs

Here is the full conjugation:

A me piace/piacciono – *Mi piace/piacciono*
A te piace/piacciono – *Ti piace/piacciono*
A lui piace/piacciono – *Gli piace/piacciono*
A lei piace/piacciono – *Le piace/piacciono*
A noi piace/piacciono – *Ci piace/piacciono*
A voi piace/piacciono – *Vi piace/piacciono*
A loro piace/piacciono - *Gli piace/piacciono*



To make a negative phrase, you only need to add **NON before the pronoun**, if you use an atonic pronoun (*mi, ti, etc.*), or **before the verb**, if you use a tonic pronoun (*a me, a te, etc.*).

Non mi piace il dolce = I don't like sweets

A Barbara non piace leggere libri di filosofia = Barbara doesn't like reading philosophy books



In compound verbs, **piacere** always has the auxiliary **essere**. The past participle *piaciuto* agrees in gender and number with the subject:

Ti è piaciuto quel libro? Ti sono piaciuti quei libri? = Did you like that book? / those books?

Mi è piaciuta la partita / Mi sono piaciute le partite = I liked the game / the games



Personal form

This form is used to express the fact that someone is pleasing for somebody else. **The subject is the person that is pleasing**: *io, tu, lui, lei, noi, voi, loro*, etc. The verb agrees with the subject and it is fully conjugated and the **indirect object is the person that likes**: *a me, a Mario, a qualcuno, a tutti* etc.

Io piaccio a Carla

Tu piaci a tutti

Lui piace a mia sorella

Lei piace a Massimo

Noi piacciamo alla gente

Voi piacete a mia nonna

Loro piacciono alla maestra



Piacere can also be **reflexive** (*piacersi*). Here it is:

io mi piaccio = I like myself

tu ti piaci = you like yourself

lui/lei si piace = he likes himself/she likes herself

noi ci piacciamo = we like ourselves

voi vi piacete = you like yourselves

loro si piacciono = they like themselves



In Italian, **many other verbs work like piacere**. Some of those verbs are *occorrere, bastare, mancare, servire, interessare, sembrare, restare, rimanere, dispiacere*.

occorrere: to need, to require

Mi occorrono due minuti per finire il lavoro = I need two minutes to finish my work

bastare: to suffice, to be enough

Vi basta poco per vivere = You don't need much to live

mancare: to miss

Le manchi tanto = she misses you a lot

servire: to need

Gli servono due pomodori = he needs two tomatoes

interessare: to be interested

Ti interessa la storia = you are interested in history

sembrare: to seem

Ci sembra molto bello = it seems really beautiful to us

restare/rimanere: to be left, to remain

Mi restano/rimangono solo dieci euro = I only have ten euros back

dispiacere: to be sorry

Mi dispiace di non essere arrivata prima = I am sorry I didn't arrive earlier

