



Conoscere or sapere?

You use the verb **conoscere** when:

1. you refer to knowing a person or meeting a person for the first time

Conosci la mia amica Emilia? No, non la conosco (Do you know my friend Emilia? No, I don't know her)

Ieri ho conosciuto tua mamma. È molto simpatica! (I have met your mom for the first time yesterday. She's really nice!)

Non conosco molte persone in questa nuova città e mi sento un po' sola (I don't know many people in this new city and I feel a little alone)

Io e Francesco ci siamo conosciuti a Roma (Francesco and I met in Rome for the first time)

2. you refer to something you have actively learned or got to know after studying or learning or because you have experienced it

Mia sorella conosce a memoria tutte le poesie di Shakespeare perché le ha studiate a scuola (My sister knows all Shakespeare's poems because she has learned them in school)

Paolo conosce a fondo tutte le regole del tennis, è un grande appassionato (Paolo knows all the rules of tennis, he's a great fan)

Io conosco molto bene la storia romana perché ho letto tutti i libri sull'argomento (I know Roman history very well because I have read all the books about the topic)

Conosco bene Roma perché ci ho vissuto vent'anni (I know Rome very well because I have lived there for twenty years)

You use the verb **sapere** when:

1. when it refers to your skills or abilities, when you know how to do something. In this case, it works as a modal verb and is followed by the infinitive

Io conosco tutte le regole del calcio, ma non so giocare (I know all the rules of soccer but I don't know how to play)

Le mie figlie sanno parlare benissimo lo spagnolo e anche un po' di francese (My daughters can speak Spanish very well and know a bit of French too)

Mia mamma non sa cucinare, tutte le cose che prepara fanno schifo (My mom doesn't know how to cook, everything she cooks is terrible)

Sai andare in bicicletta? Certo, ho imparato da bambino! (Do you know how to ride a bike? Sure, I learned when I was a kid!)

2. when you got to know something passively, when you refer to a piece of information you learned by chance, without actively trying to learn it. In this case, it is usually followed by a subordinate clause.

Non sapevo che fossi ritornato a vivere in Italia (I didn't know you moved back to Italy)

Sai a che ora parte il treno per Milano? Mi dispiace, non lo so (Do you know what time the train to Milan leaves? I am sorry, I don't know)

Sono arrivata in ritardo perché c'era sciopero dei treni e io non lo sapevo (I have arrived late because there was a train strike and I didn't know about it)

Sai come arrivare alla stazione? Non ne ho idea, mi spiace (Do you know how to get to the station? I have no idea, I am sorry)

