

Cursu di Sicilianu

English

di Nino Russu



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The Sicilian Grammar

According to G. Piccitto the orthography of the Sicilian language should be determined by the pronunciation of the spoken language. This will all be well and good, but in any language we find dialects, or inflections and slang.

The Sicilian language is not immune of these problems, it has many, so called “parrati” that is dialects. Words, many times, are different from one town to another and pronunciation vary a lot in many parts of the island.

Although many call the Sicilian language a dialect, it is not so. Sicilian is a language and as such it has its own dialects. The only problem, and it is a big problem, is that we do not have written linguistic rules to assert the Sicilian language as the standard language of Sicily. We have to have rules of grammar and of syntax where orthography and phonetic are an integral part of the process.

We have attempts at grammar and orthography, but not a full fledged study. It is funny that foreigners have always taken an interest in our language, in our history, in our literature, in our traditions etc., while we Sicilians have always taken for granted what we have, to the point that our language is dying, and with it will die our past, our history. I am sorry to say that this is simply shameful.

Here, I am going to try to write a brief course of Sicilian language to expose it to the Sicilians of the United States and even of Sicily, hoping that some will take interest in learning our language, not only how to speak it but, above all how, to write it.

My attempt will be at establishing some rules on how to write a standard Sicilian, because Sicily is a country with its own language, its own government and its own laws, and while many other regions of Italy have already asserted their right to have their language considered the official language of their region, the Sicilians are still in a lethargic state, as usual, toward the mother land and what it represents.

The Vowels Phonetic

The vowels in the Sicilian language are five: **a, e, i, o, u**.

These vowels can have a short sound or a long one, according to the position they occupy in the word in which they are located.

When these vowels have an accent at the end of the word, they have a strong sound.

The sound of these vowels is as follows:

| | | | |
|----------|------------------------------|-------------|--------|
| a | is pronounced as in the word | palm | parma |
| e | is pronounced as in the word | echo | leccu |
| i | is pronounced as in the word | ring | aneddu |
| o | is pronounced as in the word | lost | persu |
| u | is pronounced as in the word | foot | pedi |

Consonants

b has a labial sound and is pronounced as in **bold** (arditu), **bag** (bag), **bacillus** (bacillu):

| | |
|---------------|-----------|
| bagnu | bath |
| beddu | beautiful |
| biàncu | white |

c has a guttural or hard sound with the vowels **a, o, u**, as in **cart, cold, cool**:

| | |
|--------------|--------|
| cani | dog |
| café` | coffee |
| cocu | cook |

c has also a guttural or hard sound with **e** and **i** if the vowel is preceded by the **h**, as is pronounced as in **kennel, kick**,:

| | |
|---------------|-----------|
| chiàvi | key |
| chiàru | clair |
| checcu | stutterer |

c has a palatal soft sound if is followed by **e** and **i** as in **change, chief**:

| | |
|--------------|-------|
| celu | sky |
| cira | wax |
| ciumi | river |

In some cases the sound of **c** acquires the sound of the **sh** as in **shift, shield**:

| | |
|-----------------|----------|
| Sciumi | river |
| Sciaràri | to smell |
| Sciuri | flower |

d has a dental sound as in **deal, dark** :

| | |
|---------------|-------|
| diàriu | diary |
| dinàri | money |
| denti | teeth |

f is pronounced as in **fear, far**:

| | |
|-------------|-------|
| fumu | smoke |
| fari | to do |
| finu | fine |

g , as **c**, has a guttural or hard sound if followed by **a, o, u**, as in **garage, goal, goose**:

| | |
|---------------|----------|
| gattu | cat |
| gòdiri | to enjoy |
| gula | throat |

g is also guttural or hard with **e** and **i** if it is followed by the **h**, as in **ghetto, gift**:

| | |
|------------------|---------------|
| ghiàcciu | ice |
| gherciu | cross-eyed |
| ghiòmmaru | ball of tread |

g can also be palatal if followed by **e** and **i**, as in **gentle, giant**:

| | |
|----------------|-------|
| giùvini | young |
| gèmitu | moan |
| giùgnu | June |

If **g** is followed by the **n**, it acquires a nasal sound, as in **canyon**:

| | |
|-----------------|------------|
| gnurànti | ignorant |
| gnissàri | to plaster |
| gnumìnia | ignominy |

h has no sound. It is used to make the hard sound preceded by the **c** and the **g**.

l is liquid as in the words **limp, law**:

| | |
|-------------|-------|
| linu | linen |
| luna | moon |
| lana | wool |

m is labial and is pronounced as in the words **market, minister**:

| | |
|----------------|---------|
| maìstru | teacher |
| miu | mine |
| mègghiu | better |

n is palatal and is pronounced as in **nail, neck, none**:

| | |
|-------------|-------|
| nasu | nose |
| nidu | nest |
| nanu | dwarf |

p is labial and is pronounced as in **paràde, pedal, pig**:

| | |
|---------------|--------|
| piàttu | plate |
| ponti | bridge |
| pumu | apple |

q is always followed by **u** as in **quake, quest, quick**:

| | |
|---------------|-------|
| quàli | which |
| quànnu | when |
| àcqua | water |

r is pronounced as in **radio, ready, ring**:

| | |
|---------------|--------|
| rama | branch |
| raggia | rage |
| riccu | rich |

s is pronounced as in **sack, second, sick** :

| | |
|---------------|-----------|
| saitta | arrow |
| siccu | thin, dry |
| suli | sun |

t is pronounced as in **table, tempest, tip**:

| | |
|---------------|---------------|
| tali | such |
| tempu | weather, time |
| timùni | rudder |

v is pronounced as in **value, vein, view**:

| | |
|----------------|--------|
| vinu | wine |
| vuluntà | will |
| volu | flight |

z is pronounced as in **zero, zipper zone**:

| | |
|-------------|-------|
| zona | zone |
| ziu | uncle |
| zeru | zero |

ORTHOGRAPHY

A treatise in Sicilian orthography does not exist. Because of the strong influence of other languages, the Sicilian language has been in evolution, maybe, more than any other language. As a matter of fact after quite sometime of the last linguistic imposition, which was the Italian language, we have, what we can call, the first serious, and maybe the last up to now, attempt at establishing the rules for a Sicilian orthography.

These were done by Giorgio Piccitto and published in 1947. This course will follow, in the majority of cases, G. Piccitto's orthography rules.

Double Consonants

Generally some consonants almost always have a strong sound, even if they are located at the beginning of the word; but if they double up in the pronunciation, they do not double up in the written language. Such consonants are: **b, c, d, g,, m, n, r, and z:**

| | |
|----------------------|------------|
| Bbabbu | stupid |
| Bbeddu | beautiful |
| Bbruttu | ugly |
| Dduppiu | double |
| Ddoppu | after |
| Dduttùri | doctor |
| Ggìgghiu | eye-lash |
| Ggià | already |
| Ggiàrnu | pale |
| Mmùrmuru | murmur |
| Mmerda | escrement |
| Nnimìcu | enemy |
| Nnomu | name |
| Rrizza | sea urchin |
| Rrota | wheel |
| Zzappùni | mattock |
| Zzappagghiùni | gnat |

While:

| | |
|--------------|--------------------|
| Ccà | here |
| Cci | to you, to them |
| Cchiù | more |
| Ddocu | there, next to you |
| Ddà | there |

are written with the same strong sound with which they are pronounced, that is with a double consonant.

The double consonant appears very often in the Sicilian written language as already seen in the above example and in the following:

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Abbeceddàriu | first grade book |
| Abbannunàri | to abandon |
| Famigghia | family |
| Stràzziu | torment |
| Allammicàtu | hungry, empty-stomach |
| Sunnu | they are |
| Nùmma ru | number |
| Libbru | book |

Digraph

By digraph is indicated the union of two letters forming one sound. Some of these groups are : **gn, ch, gh, dr, tr**

| | | |
|---|-------------------|-----------|
| gn has a nasal sound as in canyon: | ogni | every |
| | lignu | wood |
| ch has a guttural sound as in kill | cherubbìnu | cherub |
| | chiovu | nail |
| gh has a guttural sound as in ghetto | ghiàcciu | ice |
| | ghicàri | to arrive |
| dr has a palatal sound as in drift | droga | drug |
| | dragu | dracon |
| tr has a palatal sound as tree | trenu | train |
| | truccu | trick |

Some digraph have a cacuminal sound, which means that the sound is made by the tongue reaching the top of the palate. These digraphs are:

| | | |
|---|-------------------|----------------|
| dd has the palatal sound as the d in good, wood: | addumàri | to light |
| | iddu | he, him |
| dr as above | drittu | strait |
| ddr as a strong dr | addrizzàri | to make strait |
| tr as above | truvàri | to find |
| ttr as a strong tr | attrici | actress |

Contrasting Pairs

Some words in Sicilian change meaning by the addition of a consonant that they have in common, that is with a certain consonant they have one meaning and by doubling that same consonant the word has a different meaning:

| | | | |
|-----------------|--------------|------------------|------------------|
| nanu | dwarf | annu | grandfather |
| lana | wool | lanna | tin, can |
| scanàri | to knead | scannàri | to slaughter |
| pupa | doll | puppa | stern |
| mina | mine | minna | breast |
| pala | shovel | palla | ball |
| nudu | naked | nuddu | nobody |
| casàta | houseful | cassàta | Sicilian cake |
| copia | copy | coppia | couple |
| moda | fashion | modda | spring, soft |
| gridu | yell | griddu | cricket |
| una | one | unna | wave |
| stufàtu | stew | stuffàtu | bored, disgusted |
| abbilìri | to frustrate | abbillìri | to embellish |

Articles

The Sicilian articles divide into two types, definite: lu, la, li, (the) and indefinite nu, na (a, an). These articles, as the nouns they describe, have a gender, they can be feminine: la (singular), li (plural), and masculine: lu (singular), li (plural). The indefinite nu, masculine, na, feminine, are always singular.

| | |
|-------------------|------------|
| Lu cavàddu | the horse |
| La casa | the house |
| Li cavàddi | the horses |
| Li casi | the houses |
| Un cavàddu | a horse |
| Na fimmina | a woman |

For nouns that start with a **z** or with an **s** followed by a consonant the form nu of the indefinite article should be used:

| | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Avi nu ziu bonu | He has a good uncle |
| C'era nu scalùni autu | There was a tall step |
| Avìa nu stipu vasciu | He had a low cabinet |
| Si nni purto nu zàinu chinu | He took a full knapsack with him |

These articles in the spoken language can contract to **â** for **la**, **î** for **li**, and **û** for **lu**:

| | |
|------------------|-----------|
| û cavàddu | the horse |
| â casa | the house |

î cavàddi the horses
î casi the houses

Prepositions

Prepositions are simple and compound. The simple prepositions are:

a (at), **di** (of), **cu** (with), **nni** (to, by, in), **mma** (to, by, in), **mno** (to, by, in) **pi** (for), **nta** (in), **supra** (over), **davanti** (in front), **sutta** (under), **doppu** (after) and more.

These prepositions can also be used with a definite article: **a la** (to the), **di lu** (of the), **cu la** (with the), **nni la**, etc.:

| | | |
|------------------------------|-----|-----------------------------|
| Vàiu a la casa | Igo | I go to the house |
| La casa è di lu frati | | The house is of the brother |
| Sugnu cu lu ziu | | I am with the uncle |
| Èranu nta la cresia | | They were in the church |

These prepositions, in the spoken language, are often contracted to: **â**, **dû** and **cû**:

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Vàiu â casa | I go to the house |
| La casa è dû frati | The house is (belongs)of the brother |
| Sugnu cû ziu | I am with the uncle |
| Èranu ntâ cresia | They were in the church |

The plural of these preposition changes somewhat in the contracted mode.

Regular:

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Iàmu a li casi | We go to the houses |
| Li casi sunnu di li frati | The houses are (belong) to the brothers |
| Èramu cu li zii | They were with the uncles |
| Ieru nni li cresii | They went in the churches |

Contracted

| | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Iàmu ê casi | We go to the houses |
| Li casi sunnu dî frati | The hoses are (belong)of the brothers |
| Èramu chî zii | We were with the uncles |
| Ièru ntê cresii | They went in the churches |

Same thing happens with the indefinite article.

Regular:

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Ci lu dugnu a un cani | I give it to a dog |
| La curpa era di un frati | The fault was of one brother |
| Lu pulizia c'un palìcu | He cleans it with a tooth-pick |
| Va sempri nni un cucìnu | He goes always to one cousin |

Contracted:

| | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| Ci lu dugnu ôn cani | I give it to a dog |
|----------------------------|--------------------|

La curpa era dūn frati
Lu pulizìa cūn palìcu
Va sempri nnōn cucìnu

The fault was of one brother
He cleans it with a tooth-pick
He goes always to one cousin

If a preposition is followed by an indefinite article and refers to a feminine noun, it does not make any contractions:

Appartinèva tuttu a na soru
Tutti li vesti èranu di na figghia
Si sciarriàvanu sulu cu na zia
Chi si pô fari pi na matri?

Everything belonged to a sister
All the dresses belonged to one daughter
They argued only with an aunt
What can one do for a mother?

Adverbs

In Sicilian we have adverbs of place:

sutta (under), **supra** (above,on), **ccà** (here), **ddà** (there), **unni** (where) etc.

Mi mèsiru **sutta** lu ponti
Iu **ddà** nun ci iava
Mi mannàru **unni** c'era pirìculu

They put me under the bridge
I was not going to go there
They sent me where it was dangerous

Of time:

doppu (after), **ora**, (now), **aeri** (yesterday) **oi** or **oggi** (today), **dumàni** (tomorrow), **quànnu** (when), **mai** (never)etc.

Iu cci ivi **doppu** d'iddu
Mê soru arriàva **dumàni**
Iddu vinni **ora** di la casa
La casa e` **già** pulìta

I went after to him
My sister will arrive tomorrow
He came now from the house
The house is already clean

Of quantity:

abbastànza (enough, plenty), **picca** (little, few), **assai** (a lot, many), **menu** (less) **cchiu`** (more), **tantu** (so much), etc.

Aiu **picca** sordi, nun mi ncuitàri
Nn'ài **abbastànza** manciàri?
Ài **tanti** cavàddi e nun li fai cùrriri

I have little money, don't bother me
Do you have enough food?
You have so many horses and you don't race them

Of manner:

comu (like, as), **beni** (well), **accussì** (so, this way), **nùtili** (uselessly), **ammucciùni** (secretly), etc.

Tu travagghiavi **ammucciùni**, picchi?
Fa **comu** fazzu iu
Vogghiu chilu fai **accussì**

You were working in secret, why?
Do as I do
I want you to do it this way

Other adverbs are: **ntunnu** (around), **siccomu** (since), **dintra** (in), **dunca** (then, so), **macàri** (even), **avànti** (ahead, in front), **mentri** (while), **vicinu** (near), **prìmissi** (first of all), **mmenzu** (by means of), **versu** (toward), **nveci** (instead) **allàtu** (near, beside), **nzinu** (until), etc.

| | |
|---|--|
| Ci firriàva ntunnu ma nu lu trovàva | He was going around it but could not find it |
| Era allàtu l'arbulu | He was besides the tree |
| T'accumpàgnu nzinu a la casa | I will accompany you until your house |
| Mentri sugnu ccà cci vegnu puru | as long as I am here I'll come too |

The compound prepositions are formed by an adverb and a preposition

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Ntunnu a | around the |
| Sutta di | under the |
| Ammucciùni di | in the secret of (without the knowledge) |
| Vicinu a | near the |
| Doppu di | after the |
| Supra di | over, above the |
| nzinu a | until |
| Diversamènti di | differently from |
| Pi mmenzu di | By means of |
| Allàtu a | near, beside the |
| Cchiù picca di | less than |
| Menu di | less than |
| A favùri di | in favor of |

| | |
|---|--|
| Avia cchiù picca sordi di sô patri | He had less money than his father |
| Era vicinu a sô nannu | He was near his grandfather |
| Iddu lu fici a favùri di sô matri | He did it in favor of his mother |
| Diversamènti di chistu nu si putèva fari | It could not be done differently from this |
| Pi mancànta di tempu mancu mancià | For lack of time I did not even eat |

Conjunctions

Conjunctions are those parts of speech that tie two sentences, two subjects, two parts of a sentence together:

| | |
|--|--|
| Iu e tu | You and I |
| Cci vai tu e ci vaiu puru iu | I will go too |
| Iddu vinni però idda no | He came but she did not |
| Si nun cci vai tu mancu cci vaiu iu | If you do not go, I will not go either |
| Cci ivi iu sparti d'iddu | I went too besides him |

The apostrophe

The apostrophe is a graphic sign that is used in the encounter of two vowels.

| | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| L'anèddu | the ring |
| L'azzàru | the steel |
| L'ebbrèu | the Jew |
| L'idìa | the idea |
| L'òcchiu | the eye |
| L'ugnu | the fingernail |

| | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| Chistu e` l'agnèddu di Pasqua | This is the Easter lamb |
| L'òcchiu dû patrùni ngrassa lu cavàddu | The owner's eye fattens the horse |
| Cci tagghià va l'ugna a sô figghiu | He was trimming his son's nails |

In the case of a natural elimination of a vowel at the beginning of a word, it is not necessary to use the apostrophe. In fact, according to G. Piccitto, it should never be used for that reason, as in the indefinite article:

| | |
|-----------|-------|
| na | a, an |
| nu | a, an |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Duna na manu a tô frati | Give a hand to your brother |
| Mê matri era cu nu ziu miu | My mother was with an uncle of mine |

and in the preposition **n** (in, to)

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Iddu si nn;iu n Sicilia | He went to Sicily |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|

And in the words that start with an **i**, where the word loses the **i** the apostrophe is not used anymore to show the loss of the vowel, so we have:

| | |
|------------------|-----------|
| Mputànti | important |
| Nnuccènti | innocent |
| Nzignànti | teacher |
| Nchinàri | to bow |
| Ncignùsu | ingenious |
| Nzivàtu | greased |
| Ntattu | whole |

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| Ntuppàri | to stop, to close |
| Ntisu | heard, obeyed |
| Mparàri | to learn |
| Mpiccàtu | glued, slow |

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Nun ncurpàri a mia | Do not give the fault to me |
| Sta canzùna mancu l'aiu ntisu | I never heard this song |
| Ra ncatinàtu all'arbulu | He was chained to the tree |
| Archimèdi fu n'omu ncignùsu | Archimedes was a genius |

Then we can say that the articles **la, lu, li** and the pronouns **la, lu, li** can take the apostrophe and so can the demonstrative adjectives: **ddu, dda** (that one), **ddi** (those ones), **stu** (this one), **sti** (these ones), **ssa, ssu** (that one), **ssi** (those ones). The personal pronouns **ti** (to you), **nni** (to us), **vi** (to you plural), and the reflective **si** (self action) and **cci** (to, by him, to, by them) can also take the apostrophe:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Iu vitti l'ecclissi | I saw the eclipse |
| Iddu nun l'abbruciò | He did not burn it |
| Chiàma add'abbàti | Call that abbot |
| Pìgghiatu ss'abbitu | Take that suit |
| St'abbìsu è laidu | This notice is bad |
| T'aiu a dari na manu | I have to give you a hand |
| V'aiu a pulizzìari la casa | I want to clean your house |
| Nn'ati a dari li sordi | You have to give the money to us |
| S'innamurò di idda | He fell in love with her |
| Cc'era sô matri | His, her mother was there (with him, her, them) |
| Iddu l'avìa ma nun dissi nenti | He had it but did not say anything |

If **cci** meets **a, o, u** does not take the apostrophe:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Idda cci avìa iutu a scola | She had gone to school |
| Cci iuncìvi ògghiu nta lampa | I added oil to the lamp |

But they are pronounced very close, as if they had an apostrophe.
Other cases where the apostrophe can be used are in phrases like:

| | |
|--|---|
| C'avèm'a fari = chi avèmu a fari | What can we do? |
| C'avèm'a diri = chi avèmu a diri | what can we say? |
| C'avèm'a fari si nun voli vèniri | What can we do if he does not want to come |
| C'avem'a diri si la matri nun voli? | What can we say if the mother does not want |

In some cases where the word starts with an **i**, the apostrophe is not used:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Nun lu vògghiu fari ddu iocu | I do not want to do that play |
| Sta iena è laida | This hyena is ugly (or bad) |
| Ssa idia nun mi piaci | I don't like that idea |
| Ssu iardìnu è beddu ciurutu | That garden is really in blossom |
| Ddu iacìntu è veru beddu | That hyacinth is really beautiful |
| Ddu ièncu è grossu | That bull is big |

But the following can take the apostrophe;

| | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Si nn'iu = si nni iù | He, she went away |
| Cc'iu = cci iù | He, she went there |
| Sô fràti si nn'iu n cita` | His brother went to the city |
| A càsa cc'iu cu sô pàtri | He went home with his father |

unu (masculine) and **una** (feminine), are not used as indefinite articles, but they are used numerically: **one**.

| | |
|---|--|
| Quàntu cani c'eranu? Unu . | How many dogs were there? One (only one) |
| Quàntu fimmini arristàru? Sulu una . | How many women were arrested? Only one |

Gender

The words in the Sicilian language have a gender, that is words refer to objects as if they were feminine or masculine. It is not a gender in the anatomic sense of the word, but a grammatical gender. As a general rule the masculine nouns end in **u**, as in:

| | |
|--------------|-------|
| Trenu | train |
| Muru | wall |
| Ferru | iron |
| Santu | saint |

While the feminine nouns end in **a**, as in:

| | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| Lana | wool |
| accèta | hatchet |
| dàttula | date (fruit) |
| orìcchia | ear |

Lu saccu è di mê patri e **la cupèrta** è di mê matri.
The sac belongs to my father and the blanket to my mother.
La petra è dura ma **lu ferru** è cchiù duru.
The rock is hard but the steel is harder.

Some masculine nouns end in **a** and remain the same in the plural, as in:

| | |
|------------------|-------------|
| Duca | duke |
| Puèta | poet |
| Boia | executioner |
| Papa | pope |
| Paràcqua | umbrella |
| Diadèma | diadem |
| Domma | dogma |
| Fantàsima | ghost |
| Capubbàna | ring-leader |
| Puèma | poem |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Lu papa stà a Roma | The pope lives in Rome |
| Lu duca avi un beddu palàzzu | The duke has a beautiful building |
| Li puèta scrivinu puisi | The poets write poetry |
| Li domma li fa lu papa | The dogmas are made by the pope |

Some nouns that end in **ista** can be used in both masculine or feminine accordingly and also as singular or plural, as in:

| | |
|---------------------|-------------|
| Comunìsta | communist |
| Archivìsta | archivist |
| Machinìsta | machinist |
| Giurnalista | journalist |
| Prutagunìsta | protagonist |

| | |
|---|---|
| L'archivìsta sunnu màsculi e fimmini | The archivists are men and women |
| Dda(fem.) giurnalista scrissi l'artìculu | That journalist wrote the article |
| Li prutagunìsta eranu tri | The protagonists were three |
| C'eranu tri comunìsta e nu sicialista | there were three communists and one socialist |

The plural in Sicilian generally ends in **i**, for both masculine and feminine nouns, as in:

| | | |
|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| | Masculine | |
| Singular | plural | |
| Telèfunu | telèfuni | telephone(s) |
| Picciòttu | picciòtti | young-man(s) |
| Casu | casi | case(s) |
| Disidèriu | disidèri | wish(s) |
| Nannu | nanni | grand-father(s) |
| | Feminine | |
| Singular | plural | |
| Nanna | nanni | grand-mother(s) |

| | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Règula | règuli | rule(s) |
| Serra | serri | saw(s) |
| Palùmma | palùmmi | dove(s), pigeon(s) |
| Farfàlla | farfàlli | butterfly(ies) |

La règula è ca tutti **li règuli** sunnu mpurtànti The rule is that all the rules are important
Un picciòttu chiamò a tutti **li picciòtti** One young man called all the young men
La farfàlla fa **avutri farfàlli** The butterfly makes other butterflies

Some nouns end in **u** in the singular but they end in **a** in the plural, as in:

Masculine

| Singular | plural | |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Cutèddu | cutèdda | knife(ves) |
| Chiòvu | chiòva | nail(s) |
| Picuràru | picuràra | sheperd |
| Biscòttu | biscòtta | biscuit(s) |
| Pumu | puma | happle(s) |
| Firràru | firràra | blacksmith(s) |
| Anèddu | anèdda | ring(s) |
| Pignu | pigna | pine-tree(s) |
| Pilu | pila | hair(s) |
| Catùsu | catùsa | large pipe(s) |
| Ugnu | ugna | finger-nail(s) |
| Martèddu | martèdda | hammer(s) |
| Ovu | ova | egg(s) |
| Prunu | pruna | plum(s) |

Fici ammulàri **li cutèdda** I had the knives sharpened
 Iu àiu **un chiòvu** e iddu àvi **tri chiòva** I have one nail and has three nails
 Cu la parèdda si cocinu **l'ova** One cooks eggs with the skillet

Some nouns end in **i** in the singular but end in **a** in the plural, as in:

Masculine

| Singular | Plural | |
|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Limùni | limùna | lemon(s) |
| Marùni | marùna | tile(s) |
| Attùri | attùra | actor(s) |
| Ballùni | ballùna | balloon(s) |
| Vastùni | vastùna | stick(s) |
| Buffùni | buffùna | buffoon(s) |
| Muccatùri | muccatùra | handkerchief(s) |
| Buttùni | buttùna | button(s) |

| | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Cacchiatùri | cacchiatùra | hunter(s) |
| Cafùni | cafùna | uncouth(s) |
| Campiùni | campiùna | champion(s) |
| Muratùri | muratùra | mason(s) |
| Cannùni | cannùna | cannon(s) |
| Duttùri | duttùra | physician(s) |
| Capùni | capùna | capon(s) |
| Barùni | barùna | baron(s) |
| Cirnitùri | cirnitùra | sifter(s) |
| Passiatùri | passiatùra | pathway(s) |
| Piccatùri | piccatùra | sinner(s) |
| Scanatùri | scanatùra | kneading-board(s) |
| Casciùni | casciùna | drawer(s) |
| Lapùni | lapùna | hornet(s) |
| Zappùni | zappùna | mattock(s) |
| Nzitùni | nzitùna | pimple(s) |
| Cartùni | cartùna | carton(s) |

| | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Iu avia un buttùni | I had one button |
| La parùta è di li campiùna | The game is of the champions |
| Mê soru avia deci buttùna | My sister had ten buttons |
| La parùta la vincìu lu campiùni | The game was won by the champion |

Si mi duni **un limùni** ti dugnu **tri buttùna** If you give me a lemon I will give you three buttons

Many nouns that end in **i**, remain with the same ending in the plural and they can be masculine or feminine, as in:

| Singular | plural | |
|-------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Sali (masc.) | Sali | salt(s) |
| Ciriàli (“) | ciriàli | cereal(s) |
| Chiàvi (fem.) | chiàvi | key(s) |
| Diamànti (masc.) | diamànti | diamond(s) |
| Vutti (fem.) | vutti | barrel(s), cask(s) |
| Vurpi (“) | vurpi | fox(es) |
| Ucchiàli (masc.) | ucchiàli | eye- glasses |
| Onùri (“) | onùri | honor(s) |
| Sorti (fem .) | sorti | luck |
| Riazzioni (“) | riazzioni | reaction(s) |
| Lìmiti (masc.) | lìmiti | limit(s) |

| | | | |
|----------------|-----------|----------------|-------------|
| Liti | (fem.) | liti | argument(s) |
| Missàli | (masc.) | missàli | missal(s) |
| Ponti | (“ ”) | ponti | bridge(s) |

| | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| S'arriparàru sutta lu ponti | They repaired under the bridge |
| Nta li stratùna ci sunnu assai ponti | There many bridges on the highways |
| Dammi la chiàvi di la casa | Give me the key for the house |
| Pìgghiatu li chiàvi di li porti | Take the keys for all the doors |
| Misi lu vinu nta la utti | He put the wine in the barrel |
| Inchù li utti di vinu | He filled the barrels with wine |

Some nouns make the plural by adding **ra** to the singular, as in:

| Singular | plural | |
|--------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Bordu | bòrdura | fringe(s) |
| Corpu | còrpura | body(s) |
| Cozzu | còzzura | nape(s) |
| Cuntu | cùntura | tale(s) |
| Focu | fòcura | fire(s) |
| Iocu | lòcura | play(s) |
| Marmu | màrmura | marble(s) |
| Mercu | mèrcura | mark(s), slash(s) |
| Munnu | mùnnura | world(s) |
| Nnomu | nnòmura | name(s) |
| Sangu | sàngura | Blood(s) |
| Sonnu | sònnuma | dream(s) |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Lu mē nomu è Siciliànu | My name is sicilian |
| Li sò nnòmura sunnu Francìsi | Their names are French |
| Mi sunnài un sonnu làidu | I had a bad dream |
| Si sunnàru sònnuma boni | They had good dreams |

Some masculine nouns form the feminine in different ways than what we have previously said, they add **issa** or **trici** to the feminine, as in:

| Masculine | feminine | |
|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Duttùri | dutturìssa | doctor |
| Abàti | abbatìssa | abbot, abbess |
| Barùni | barunìssa | baron, baroness |
| Puèta | puitìssa | poet |
| Attùri | attrìci | actor, actress |
| Cunti | cuntìssa | count, countess |
| Campiùni | campiunìssa | champion |

| | | |
|------------------|-------------------|---------|
| Piccatùri | piccatrìci | sinner |
| Traditùri | traditrìci | traitor |

| | |
|--|---|
| Lu barùni chiamò la barunìssa | The baron called the baroness |
| Lu duttùri travagghiò cu la dutturìssa | The doctor worked with the (she) doctor |
| L' attùri e l' attrìci eranu nzèmmula | The actor and the actress were together |
| Tu si piccatùri e idda è piccatrìci | You are sinner and she is sinner |

The words that end in **cu**, form the plural in **ci** in the masculine, but in **chi** in the feminine, as in:

| | | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Masculine | masculine | feminine | feminine | |
| Singular | plural | singular | plural | |
| Amìcu | amìci | amìca | amìchi | friend(s) |
| Antipàticu | antipàtici | antipàtica | antipàtichi | unpleasant |
| Sarcàsticu | sarcàstici | sarcàstica | sarcàstichi | sarcastic |
| Bisbèticu | bisbètici | bisbètica | bisbètichi | extravagant |
| Catòlicu | catòlici | catòlica | catòlichì | catholic |
| Mònacu | mònaci | mònaca | mònachi | monc(s), nun(s) |
| Lìricu | lìrici | lìrica | lìrichi | lyric |
| Prufèticu | prufètici | prufètica | prufètichi | prophetic |

| | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Lu mònacu sta cu li mònaci | The monk lives with the monks |
| La mònaca sta cu li mònachi | He nun lives with the nuns |
| Dda fimmina è antipàtica | That lady is unpleasant |
| Ddi fimmini sunnu antipàtichi | Those ladies are unpleasant |
| Lu mê amìcu avi li sô amìci | My friend has his friends |
| La sô amìca avi li sô amìchi | Her friend has her friends |

Some exeptions are:

| | | |
|---------------|----------------|--------------|
| Nicu | nichi | small, young |
| Riccu | ricchi | rich |
| Biàncu | biànchi | white |
| Friscu | frischi | fresh |

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Mê figghiu è nicu | My son is little |
| Li cunìghia sunnu tutti nichi | The rabbits were all little |
| Tô ziu era riccu | Your uncle was rich |
| Li re sunnu tutti ricchi | The kings are all rich |
| Lu cavàddu è biàncu | The horse is white |
| Li casi sunnu biànchi | The hoses are white |

Some nouns that end in **cu** do not have a feminine:

| | | |
|-----------------|------------------|------------|
| Beccu | becchi | he-goat(s) |
| Sucu | suchi | juce(s) |
| Sceccu | scecchi | donkey(s) |
| Làstracu | làstrachi | terrace(s) |
| Cocu | cochi | cook(s) |
| Saccu | sacchi | sac(s) |
| Sbarcu | sbarchi | landing(s) |
| Scaccu | scacchi | chess |
| Zuccu | zucchi | trunk(s) |

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Attàcca lu sceccu a lu zuccu | Tie the donkey to the tree |
| Metti li sacchi nta l'àstracu | Put the sacs on the terrace |
| Ioca a li scacchi cu lu cocu | Play chess with the cook |

Some nouns that end in **gu** or **ga** make the plural in **ghi**:

| | | |
|----------------|-----------------|------------|
| Largu | larghi | wide |
| Longu | longhi | long |
| Rangu | ranghi | rank(s) |
| Lagu | lagghi | lake(s) |
| Anga | anghi | molar(s) |
| Sirìnga | siringhi | siringe(s) |
| Albèrgu | alberghi | hotel(s) |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Lu ciumi era longu | The river was long |
| Li strati eranu larghi | He streets were wide |
| Mi fici scippàri na anga | I had un molar pulled |
| Avìa dui anghi malati | I had two bad molars |
| Lu duttùri usa li sirìnghi | The doctor uses syringes |
| Ddà c'eranu tanti laghi | Over there were many lakes |
| L'albèrgi eranu chini | The hotels were full |

Then we have the nouns with the accented final vowel. These nouns remain as they are, mostly they are feminine and do not change in the plural, as in:

Carità
Tribù
Ginirusità
Cità

Pruprità
Stirilità
Umanità
Puvirtà

| | |
|---|--|
| Nta li cità nun ci sunnu li tribù | There are any tribes in the cities |
| La ginirusità è di lu pòpulu Siciliànu | The generosity is of the Sicilian people |
| La tribù è na cumunità di genti | The tribe is a community of people |

Adjectives

Adjective is a modifier, that is it modifies the noun and it agrees with the noun in number and gender. Generally, for the masculine and feminine, they follow the same rules as the nouns. The adjective in Sicilian usually follows the noun, as in:

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| La casa bedda | The beautiful house |
| Lu muru autu | The tall wall |
| La vucca china | The full mouth |
| L'àrvulu nicu | The small tree |

| | |
|---|----------------------------|
| Avèmu un cavàddu beddu | We have a beautiful horse |
| Acchianò la scala auta | He climbed a tall ladder |
| Mê frati avia un cani nicu | My brother had a small dog |
| A iddu ci dèttiru na palla russa | They gave him a red ball |

Sometimes the adjective precedes the noun it modifies to give a greater emphasis to the quality of the noun. The most common adjectives that follow this rule are:

Beddu beautiful

| | |
|---------------|------------|
| Bravu | good |
| Caru | dear |
| Gran | big, great |
| Bruttu | bad |
| Bon | good |

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Chidda è na bedda picciòtta | That one is (really) a beautiful young lady |
| Iddu avi nu gran cavàddu | He (really) has a great horse |
| Lu patri avi n' àvutru cani | The father has an other (different) dog |
| La iena è un bruttu armàlu | The hyena is (truly) an ugly (bad) animal |
| Iddu è un caru picciòttu | He is a dear young man |

Here too we have exceptions in the endings. Some **adjectives** end in **i**, and they can follow a masculine or feminine noun and have the same ending in the plural form, as in:

| | |
|-----------|----------|
| Masculine | Feminine |
|-----------|----------|

| | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Lu bordu diagunàli | La lînia diagunàli | The diagonal line, edge |
| Lu sulì lucènti | La stidda lucènti | The shining star, sun |
| Lu violu cumùni | La strata cumùni | The common street, pathway |

| | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Assìra vitti na stidda lucènti | Last night I saw a brilliant star |
| Iu nni vitti quàttru stiddi lucènti | I saw four brilliant stars |
| Mi trovà va nta la trazzèra cumùni | I was in the common pathway |
| Ddu omu è gnurànti | That man is ignorant |

Some adjectives form adverbs by adding **menti** to the ending:

| Adjective | Adverb | |
|---------------|--------------------|-----------|
| Umànu | umanamènti | humanly |
| Veru | veramènti | truly |
| Sicuru | sicuramènti | certainly |
| Stanu | stranamènti | strangely |

Un èssiri **umànu** l'ài a trattàri cchiù **umanamènti** pussìbili.
 You have to treat a human being as humanly as possible
 Quànnu parrà va cu mia **sicuramènti** dicè va fissarì.
 When he was talking to me he was lying (saying nonsense)
 Anchi si lu fattu era **veru** un signìfica ca era **veramènti** bonu.
 Even if what happened was true it does not mean that it was truly good

Diminutive, Augmentative

In Sicilian we find two ways of altering the quality or quantity of a noun or an adjective: **a diminutive to denote quantity or quality, someone or something small or to denote endearment**, in the noun or adjective, as in:

| | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Sèggia | siggitàdda | chair, little chair, cute chair |
| Màsculu | masculiddu | lad, little lad, cute lad |
| Soru | surùzza | sister, little sister, cute sister |
| Mischìnu | mischinèddu | poor thing, poorest thing (someone) |
| Porta | purticèdda | door, little door, cute door |
| Piru | pirìddu | pear, little pear, cute pear |
| Surdàtu | surdatèddu | soldier, small, cute soldier |

| | |
|---|---|
| Avìa un màsculu e ci fici na surùzza | I had a boy and I made him a little sister |
| Mê ziu avi un masculiddu | My uncle has a little boy |
| Dda casa avi na bedda purticèdda | that house has a pretty little door |
| Ddu surdatèddu , mischìnu , e` firùtu | That little soldier, poor thing, is wounded |

An **augmentative**, to denote **quantity**; to make an augmentative, the ending **uni** is added to the noun or adjective, as in:

| | | |
|----------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Casa | casùni | house, big house |
| Vecchiu | vicchiùni | old man, very old man |
| Manu | manùni | hand, big hand |
| Fossu | fussùni | ditch, big ditch |
| Paredda | pariddùni | skillet, big skillet |
| Gaddina | gaddinùni | chicken, big chicken |

A **pejorative**, to denote quality. To make a pejorative the suffix **azzu** (mascul.) or **azza** (femin.) is added to the noun or adjective:

| | | |
|----------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Casa | casàzza | house, ugly big house |
| Vèchciu | vicchiàzzu | old, ugly, bad old man |
| Manu | manàzza | hand, ugly big hand |
| Fossu | fussàzzu | ditch, ugly big ditch |
| Parèdda | pariddàzza | skillet, ugly big skillet |
| Gaddina | gaddinàzza | chicken, ugly big chicken |

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Iddu stava nta na casàzza | He lived in an ugly house |
| Chista nun è casa, chista è casùni | This is not a house, it is a big house |
| Lu piccirìddu avia dui manùna | The baby had two big hands |
| Frièva l'ovu nta nu pariddùni | She was frying the egg in a big skillet |
| Era un fussàzzu chinu di fangu | It was an ugly ditch full of mud |

Comparative and Absolute

The comparative in Sicilian is made in two ways. Comparison by equality by adding the adverbs, **comu**, **tantu e quàntu** (as), as in:

| | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Ddu libbru è comu lu miu | That book is like mine |
| Iu àiu tantu pani quàntu nn'ài tu | I have as much bread as you |
| La mê casa è bedda comu la tua | My house is as beautiful as yours |

And comparison by inequality, by adding the adverb **cchiù** (more), or **menu**, (less)

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Mê frati è cchiù granni d'iddu | My brother is older than he |
| Sô soru è cchiù bedda di mia | His sister is more beautiful than I |
| Iu sordi nn'aiu menu d'iddu | I have less money than he |

Certain comparatives, made up by **mègghiu** (better), **pèggiu** (worse), do not take the adverb **cchiù** (more), as in:

| | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Mègghiu di chiddu | Better than that |
| Pèggiu di l'avutru | Worse than the other |

Lu sàcciu fari **mègghiu** d'iddu
Pi travagghiàri è **pègghiu** di mia

I know how to do it better than he does
In order of work he is worse than I am

The relative superlative is formed by adding the article **lu, la, li**, as in:

Li cchiù nichì the youngest
Lu cchiù forti the strongest
Li cchiù chini the fullest
Lu cchiù autu the tallest

Mê figghia è **la cchiù bedda** di tutti
Ddu muru è **lu cchiù ghiàvutu** di chidd' à vutri
Sta corda è **la cchiù forti** di l' à vutri dui
Ddi ciràsi sunnu **li cchiù duci** di tutti

My daughter is the most beautiful of all
That wall is the highest of those others
This rope is the strongest of the others
Those cherries are the sweetest of all

The **superlative absolute** is made by adding the suffix **issimu, issima**, for the singular, and **issimi** for the plural. It also can be formed with the adverbs **assai, veru** or the suffix **uni**, as in:

Benìssimu very well
Carìssimu dearest
Veru laidu truly ugly (ugliest)
Assai lentu truly slow (slowest)
Veru duci truly sweet (sweetest)
Riccùni very rich
Veru longu truly long (longest)

Lu conti è **riccùni** The count is very rich
Dda fimmina è **veru laida** That woman is truly ugly
Carìssimu amicu, vui siti **assai lentu** My dearest friend, you are very slow
Sta strata è **veru longa** This road is very long

Possessive adjectives

The adjectives of possession are;

| Masculine | Singular | Feminine | |
|---------------|----------|---------------|-----------|
| Miu | | mia | mine |
| Tou | | tua | yours |
| Sou | | sua | his, hers |
| | Plural | | |
| Nosrtu | | nostru | ours |
| Vostru | | vostru | yours |
| Soi | | soi | theirs |

These adjectives, in the singular, applied to a noun contract to **mê, tô, sô**, and the plural **soi** also contract to **sô**, as in:

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Mê frati | my brother |
| Tô soru | your sister |
| Sô patri | his, her father |
| Sô figghiu | their son |

| | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Mê ziu vinni cu sô nannu | My uncle came with his grandfather |
| Tô figghiu ? u a sô casa | Your son went to his house |
| Ci detturu li sordi a sô figghiu | They gave money to their son |

These adjectives are also used with a simple or compound preposition, as in:

| | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Stu gattu lu truvà i vicinu la mê casa | I found this cat near my house |
| Iddu ioca cu la tô palla | He plays with your ball |
| Dda casa é di sô matri | That house belongs to his mother |
| Ssu cani nun é di mê cucinu | That dog is not my cousin's |
| L'àrbuli sunnu di tô patri | The trees belong to your father |
| Lu cavàddu lu dugnu a sô nipùti | I will give the horse to his nephew |
| Luntànu di la mê casa | Far from my house |
| allàtu a mê patri | Besides my father |

The preposition **di** denotes possession:

| | |
|----------------------------|---------------|
| La casa di Maria | Mary's house |
| Lu cani di Petru | Peter's dog |
| Lu cavàddu di Marcù | Marc's horse |
| Di cui? Di Marcù. | Whose? Marc's |

Quantitative Adjective

The adjective quantitative indicates quantity, as in:

| | |
|--|--|
| Quàntu sunnu? | How many are there? |
| Quàntu acchiàni tantu scinni | As much you go up so much you will come down |
| Quàntu surdàti c'eranu? | How many soldiers were there? |

The numerals, sometimes indicate an approximate quantity, as in:

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| Na dicina | about ten |
| Na cinchina | about five |
| Un cintinàru | about a hundred |

Na **cinquantina** about fifty

C'eranu **na cinquantina** d'armàli There were about fifty animals
Quàsi na **vintina** About twenty
Dammi **na chilata** di pasta Give me about a kilo of pasta
Dammìnni **dû** fila di spaghètti Give me a couple (a few strands) of spaghetti

Demonstrative Adjectives

The demonstrative adjectives are those that indicate of which object we are talking about. They are:

| Masculine | Feminine | |
|---------------|---------------|------|
| Chistu | chista | this |
| Chissu | chissa | that |
| Chiddu | chidda | that |

| | |
|--|---|
| Chistu è mè patri | This is my father |
| Chissu e chissa sunnu li mè zii | That one and that one are my aunt and uncle |

For clarification the adverbs here, there, further often are used, as in:

| | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Chistu ccà | chista ccà | This one here (near me) |
| Chissu ddocu | chissa ddocu | That one there (near you) |
| Chiddu ddà | chidda ddà | That one there (away from both of us) |

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Chistu ccà mi piaci mègghiu | I like better this one here |
| Chissu ddocu e cchiu` sapurìtu | That one (near you) is prettier |
| Chiddu ddà nun e miu | That one there is not mine |

These adjectives are often used in a contracted way, as in:

| | | |
|------------|------------|------|
| Stu | sta | this |
| Ssu | ssa | that |
| Ddu | dda | that |

| | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Stu ballùni è rüssu | This balloon is red |
| Ssu àrvulu è ghiàvutu | That tree is tall |
| Ddu gaddu canta ogni matina | That rooster crows every morning |

Demonstrative Pronouns

The demonstrative pronouns are:

| | | |
|---------------|---------------|---------------------|
| Chistu | chista | this (near me) |
| Chissu | chissa | that (near you) |
| Chiddu | chidda | that (away from us) |

| | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Chistu nun mi piàci vògghiu chiddu | I do not like this, I want that |
| Prefirìsciu chistu a chiddu | I prefer this one to that one |
| Chissa nun mi piàci | I do not like that one |

Personal Pronouns

The personal pronouns are as follows:

Singular

| | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| Iu, mi | I, me |
| Tu, ti | you |
| Iddu | he, him, she, her |

Plural

| | |
|-------------------------|------------|
| Nui, nuàtri, nni | we, us |
| Vui, vuiàtri, vi | you |
| Iddi | they, them |

| | |
|---|------------------------------|
| Iu vaiu a Catània | I go to Catania |
| Iddi lavànu li robbi | They are washing the clothes |
| Vuiàtri nun c'èravu a la cresia | You were not at church |
| Tu ci isti puru | You went too. |
| Iddi ièru a chiamàri a iddu | They went to call him |

The following pronouns are also used with a preposition, as in:

| | |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| Di mia | of me |
| A tia | to you |
| Nni iddu, a idda | by him, to her |
| Di nui, cu nuiàtri | of us, with us |
| nni vui, a vuiàtri | by you, to you |
| Cu iddi | with them |

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Lu cani si scanta di mia | The dog fears me (is fearful of me) |
| Stu libbru lu dugnu a tia | I give this book to you |
| Mê soru si nni iu cu iddi | My sister went with them |
| Dda gatta vinni nni nuiàtri | That cat came by us |

Possessivi Pronouns.

| | | |
|-------------------|----------|-----------|
| | Singular | |
| Lu miu | | mine |
| Lu tou, t  | | yours |
| Lu sou, s  | | his, hers |
| | Plural | |
| Lu nostru | | ours |
| Lu vostru | | yours |
| Lu sou, s  | | theirs |

| | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Li nostri pussidim nti sunnu granni | Our possession are big |
| Sta casa   la mia | This is my house |
| Li nostri par nti annu a v niri tutti cc  | Our relatives will all come here |
| Li s  par nti nun ci vanno | Their relatives will not go |

The possessive adjective precedes always the noun to which it refers, the possessive pronoun can stay by itself, as in:

| | |
|---|---|
| Vaiu   m  (a la mia) casa | I go to my house |
| Lu t  bicch ri e la s  but gghia | Your glass and his, her bottle |
| Tu parti cu la t  machina , e iu cu la mia | You leave with your car and I with mine |
| Iu m nciu lu m  pani e tu lu t  | I eat my bread and you yours |

Relative Pronouns

The relative pronouns can refer to person, animal or thing, they are:

| | |
|----------------|------------------------|
| Chi | which, that, who, whom |
| Ca | which, that, who, whom |
| Cui, c  | which, whom |
| Quali | which. Who |

Chi e **ca** are never used with a preposition:

| | |
|----------------------------|---------------------|
| La manu chi aiuta | The hand that helps |
| L'omu ca trav gghia | The man who works |

Cui is always used with a preposition:

| | |
|--|--|
| Chista   la casa di cui ti parr i | This is the house of which I talked to you |
|--|--|

In some Sicilian sayings, **cui** is used as **who**:

Cui cu cani si curca cu pucci si leva.

Who goes to bed with the dog will rise with flees.

Cui duna pani a lu cani perdi lu pani e lu cani.

Who gives bread to the dog loses the bread and the dog.

Quàli is always preceded by the definite article:

Quànnu vitti l'avvucàtu di Vicè nzu, **lu quàli** addifinnìu a Petru, nun lu vosi taliàri.
When I saw Vince's attorney, **who** defended Peter, I did not even wanted to look at him.

Ncuntrài la soru di Rusulia cu **la quàli** iu iava a scola.
I met Roalie's sister with whom I used to go to school

Uses expressive of **chi, comu, quàntu**:

Comu è bedda dda piccirìdda!

How beautiful is that little girl!

Quàntu è làidu ddu cani!

How ugly is that dog!

Chi furtùna!

What luck!

Chi beddi rosi!

What beautiful roses

Verbs Auxiliary

The auxiliary verbs are two:

Avìri To have

Èssiri To be

They are called auxiliary because they help the main verb:

Aiu manciàtu I have eaten

Sugnu sudàtu I am sweating

In Sicilian this form, which is called present perfect, is not much used, instead the preterite is used in most cases.

The verbs are organized in conjugation and the conjugations are organized in modes and tenses. The most commonly used are the Indicative Mode, the Imperative Mode, the Subjunctive, the Gerundive, the Participle, and the Infinite. The Conditional is also used but not as much.

In Sicilian it is not necessary to have the personal pronoun before the verb, because the ending of the verb, or the context of the sentence, determines the number of the person, singular or plural, to which it is referred.

As an auxiliary the verb **avìri** (to have) is mostly used.

Indicative Mode of the Verbs to Have and to Be

Tenses

Present

| | | | | |
|--------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|----------------|
| (Iu) | Aiu | I have | sugnu | I am |
| (tu) | Ài | you have | s? | you are |
| (iddu, idda) | Àvi | he, she, it has | è | he, she, it is |
| (nui) | Avèmu | we have | semu | we are |
| (vui) | Avìti | you have | siti | you are |
| (iddi) | Ànnu | they have | sunnu | they are |

Iu aiu na soru I have a sister

Iddu è malàtu He is sick

Imperfect

| | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| avia | I had | era | I was |
| avèvi | you had | eri | you were |
| avia | he, she, it had | era | he, she. It was |
| avìamu | we had | èramu | we were |
| avìavu | you had | èravu | you were |
| avìanu | they had | èranu | they were |
| tu avèvi tanti cucìni | | iddi èranu assittàti | |
| You had many cousins | | They were sitting | |

Present Perfect

Aiu avùtu I have had

aiu statu I have been

Vui avìti avùtu dui cani
You have had two dogs

Iu aiu statu â casa
I have been at the house

Preterite

Iddu appi li sordi He had the money

Nui fomu a mmari We were at the sea

| | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|--|
| Appi | I had | fui | |
| Avìsti | you had | fusti | |
| Appi | he, she, it had | fu | |
| Àpimu | we had | fomu | |
| Avìstivu | you had | fùstivu | |
| Àppiru | they had | foru | |

Past Perfect

Avia avùtu I had had **avia statu** I had been

Iu avia avùtu na biciclètta **Iu avia statu** fora
I had had a bicycle I had been outside

Subjunctive Mode

Tenses

present

| | | | |
|--------------|-----------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Aiu | I (may) have | sia | I (may) be |
| Ài | you (may) have | si' | you (may) be |
| Àvi | he, she, it (may) has | sia | he (may) be |
| Avèmu | we (may) have | siamu | we (may) be |
| Avìti | you (may) have | siati | you (may) be |
| Ànnu | they (may) have | sianu | they (may) be |

The Sicilian uses the present subjunctive as the present indicative.

Iddu cridi **ca iu aiu** na gatta
He believes tha I have a cat

Iddi pènsanu **ca iu sugnu** stùpitu
They think that I am (may be) a fool

Imperfect

| | | | |
|-----------------|----------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Avìssi | I had, might have | fussi | I was, might be |
| Avìssi | you had, might have | fussi | you were, might be |
| Avìssi | he,she, it had, might have | fussi | he, she, it was, might be |
| Avìssimu | we had, might have | fùssimu | we were, might be |
| Avìssivu | you had, might have | fùssivu | you were, might be |
| avìssiru | they hadmight have | fùssiru | they were, might be |

Iu pinsàva **chi iddu avìssi** un frati
I thouht that he had a brother

Iddu cridèva **ca fùssimu** nsèmmula
He believed that we were together

Past Perfect

Avìssi avùtu I had had, might have had **avìssi statu** I had been, might have been

Iddi vulèvanu **chi avìssi avùtu** na casa Iu spiràva **ca iddu avìssi statu** n Sicilia
The wanted that I might have had a house I hoped that he might have been in Sicily

Conditional Mode

Present

Avirrià I would have **sarrià** (fòra) I would be

Avirrissi you
Avirrissi he, she, it
Avirriamu we
Avirriavu you
Avirrianu they

sarissi you
sarria (fòra) he, she, it
sarriamu (fòramu) we
sarriavu (fòravu) you
sarrianu (fòranu) they

Avirria a travagghiari
 I would have to work

Chisti **sarrianu** boni
 These would be good

Avirria parràtu cu Ciccio, ma avia già partùtu.
 I would have spoken to Frank, but he had already left.
Sarria arrivàto doppu ma vinni a cùrriri.
 I would have arrived later but a came running.

Past

Avirria avùtu I would have had

avirria statu I would have been

A st'ura **avirria avùtu** tri cani
 By now I would have had three dogs

Ci **avirria statu** dumàni â sô casa
 I would have been at his house tomorrow

Imperative Mode

With this mode the Sicilian uses the subjunctive:

Ài a manciàri
Avìti a partiri

You have to eat
 You have to leave

Stai bonu Be good
Stati cueti Be quiet

The negative imperative in Sicilian of the second singular person is formed by the infinitive:
Un avìri prèscia Do not be in a hurry **Un èssiri** testa dura Do not be a hard head

Infinitive

Avìri to have

Èssiri to be

Avìri figghi
 To have children

Èssiri pòviri
 To be poor

Passatu

Avìri avùtu To have had

Èssiri statu To have been

Avìri avùtu furtùna To have had luck

Èssiri statu malàtu To have been sick

Participle

Past

Avùtu had **statu** been

L'aiu **avùtu** sempri I have had it always Iddu à **statu** carzaràtu He has been in jail

Gerund Present

Avènnu having **essènnu** being

Avènnu sordi si campa mègghiu
By having money one can live better

Essènnu sulu spennu picca
By being alone I spend less

Past

Avènnu avùtu having had **essènnu statu** having
been

Avènnu avùtu sempri la matri ora mi sentu sulu
Having always had a mother, now I felt lonely

Essènnu statu malàtu, sugnu siccu
Having been sick, I am thin

Sicilian expressions with the verb **avìri** (to have)

Aiu pitìttu

I am hungry

ài siti

You are thirsty

avìti sonnu

You are sleepy

ànnu prèscia

They are in a hurry

avèmu deci anni l'unu

We are ten years old each

Iddu àvi pitìttu e iu aiu siti

He is hungry and I am thirsty

Iddi ànnu sonnu e nui avèmu prèscia
hurry

They are sleepy and we are in a
hurry

Mê frati avi cinc'anni e iu nn'aiu novi

My brother is five years old and I am nine

Sicilian verbs have three conjugations the first with ending in **ari**:

Parràri to speak

Manciàri to eat

Fumàri to smoke

The second with the ending in **iri** short:

Riciviri to receive

| | |
|-------------------|-----------|
| Scrìviri | to write |
| Rispùnniri | to answer |
| Finìri | to finish |
| Sippillìri | to bury |
| Durmìri | to sleep |

Some of these verbs can be interchanged from short to long and viceversa:

Durmìri, dòrmiri (to sleep); **suffrìri, sòffriri** (to suffer); **murìri, mòriri** (to die); **gudìri, gòdiri** (to enjoy)

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Iu parru Siciliànu | I speak Sicilian |
| Tu finisci di parràri | You finish talking |
| iddu dormi ora | He sleeps now |
| nuiàtri manciàmu ancora | We are still eating |
| vuiàtri parràti cu idda | You talk to her |
| iddi finiscinu di travagghiàri | They finish working |

Indicative Mode

Present

| | | | |
|----------------|--------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Parru | I speak | dormu | I sleep |
| parrì | you speak | dormi | you sleep |
| parra | he, she, it speaks | dormi | he, she, it sleeps |
| parràmu | we speak | durmèmu | we sleep |
| parràti | you speak | durmìti | you sleep |
| pàrranu | they speak | dòrminu | they sleep |

Imperfect

| | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Parràvu | I spoke | durmìvi | I slept |
| parràvi | you spoke | durmìvi | you slept |
| parràva | he, she, it spoke | durmìva | he, she, it slept |
| parràvamu | we spoke | durmèvamu | we slept |
| parràvavu | you spoke | durmèvavu | you slept |
| parràvanu | they spoke | durmìanu | they slept |

The future in Sicilian is never or very seldom used, in its place the Sicilian uses the present indicative:

Si Diu voli e **campàmu** dumàni nni **vidèmu**

If God wants and we **will live** we **will see** each other tomorrow

Present Perfect

Aiu parràtu I have spoken **aiu durmùtu** I have slept

Preterite

| | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Parrài | I spoke | durmì | I slept |
| parràsti | you spoke | durmìsti | you slept |
| parro` | he, she, it spoke | durmìu | he, she, it slept |
| parràmu | we spoke | durmèmu | we slept |
| parràstivu | you spoke | durmìstivu | you slept |
| parràru | they spoke | durmèru | they slept |

Past Perfect

Avia parràtu I had spoken **avia durmùtu** I had slept

Subjunctive Present

See indicative present

Imperfect

| | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Parràssi | I spoke, might speak | durmìssi, | I slept, might sleep |
| parràssi | | durmìssi | |
| parràssi | | durmìssi | |
| parràssimu | | durmìssimu | |
| parràssivu | | durmìssivu | |
| parràssiru | | durmìssiru | |

Past Perfect

Avìssi parràtu I might have spoken **avìssi durmùtu** I might have slept

Conditinal Present

| | | | |
|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Parrirìa | I would speak | durmirìa | I would sleep |
| Parrirìssi | | durmirìssi | |
| Parrirìa | | durmirìa | |
| Parrirìamu | | durmirìamu | |
| Parrirìavu | | durmirìavu | |

Parrìanu**durmirianu****Avirrià parràtu** I would have spoken**Past**
avirrià durmùtu I would have slept**Parra** (tu) speak (sing.)
parràti (vui) speak (plur.)**Imperative**
dormi sleep
durmiti sleep**Parràri** to speak**Infinitive**
Present
durmìri to sleep**Avìri parràtu** to have spoken**Past**
avìri durmùtu to have slept**Parràtu** spoken**Participle**
Past
durmùtu slept**Parrànnu** speaking**Gerund**
Present
durmènnu sleeping**Avènnu parràtu** having spoken**Past**
Avènnu durmùtu having sleptThese are some of the verbs that are conjugated like **parràri**:**Manciàri** to eat**amàri**

to love

truvàri

to find

sunàri

to play (an instrument)

ciatiàri

to breath

fumàri

to smoke

ammazzàri

to kill

travagghiàri

to work

These are some of the verbs that are conjugated like dormire or durmiri:

| | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| Rìdiri | to laugh |
| finìri | to finish |
| gudìri | to enjoy |
| murìri | to die |
| esìstiri | to exist |
| cògghiri | to harvest |
| prèmiri | to press |
| sèntiri | to hear, to feel |

In Sicilian, as in any other language, we find irregular verbs. These verbs change the endings many times during the conjugation. The only way to know them is to memorize them. We will list only a few here and conjugate a couple to give you the sense of their behavior during conjugation: **Diri** (to say), **vèniri or vinìri** (to come), **sapìri** (to know), **vulìri** (to want), **putìri** (to be able), **didùciri** (to deduce), **iri** (to go), **dari** (to do, make), **vidìri** (to see)etc.

Conjugation of **vèniri or vinìri** and **vulìri**:

Indicative Present

| | | | |
|---------------|-----------|----------------|-------------------|
| Vegnu | I come | vogghiu | I want |
| veni | you come | voi | you want |
| veni | he comes | voli | he, she, it wants |
| vinèmu | we come | vulèmu | we want |
| vinìti | you come | vulìti | you want |
| vennu | they come | vonnu | they want |

Imperfect

| | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| vinìa | I came | vulia | I wanted |
| vinèvi | you came | vulèvi | you wanted |
| vinìa | he, she it came | vulia | he, she, it wanted |
| vinèvamu | we came | vulèvamu | we wanted |
| vinèvavu | you came | vulèvavu | you wanted |
| vinèvanu | hey came | vulèvanu | they wanted |

Present Perfect

| | | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| Aiu vinùtu | I have come | aiu vulùtu | I have wanted |
| ài vinùtu | you have come | ài volùtu | you have wanted |
| avi vinùtu | he, she, it has come | avi vulùtu | he, she, it has wanted |
| avèmu vinùtu | we have come | avèmu volùtu | we have wanted |
| avìti vinùtu | you have come | avìti volùtu | you have wanted |
| ànnu vinùtu | they have come | ànnu vulùtu | they have wanted |

Vinni I came
vinìsti you came
vinni he, she, it came
vinnimu we came
vinìstivu you came
vinniru they came

Preterite

vosi I wanted
vulìsti you wanted
vosi he, she, it wanted
vòsimu we wanted
vulìstivu you wanted
vòsiru they wanted

Avìa vinùtu I had come

Past perfect

avìa volùtu I had wanted

Subjunctive Imperfect

Vinìssi I might come
vinìssi you
vinìssi he, she it
vinìssimu we
vinìssivu you
vinìssiru they

vulìssi I might want
vulìssi you
vulìssi he, she, iti
vulìssimu we
vulìssivu you
vulìssiru they

Avìssi vinùtu I might have come

Past perfect

avìssi volùtu I might have wanted

Conditional Present

Vinirrà I would come
vinirrissi you
vinirrà he, she, it
vinirràmu we
vinirràvu you
vinirrànu they

vurrà I would want
vurrissi you
vurrà he, she, it
vurràmu we
vurràvu you
vurrànu they

Avirrà vinùtu I would have come

Past

avirrà volùtu I would have wanted

Imperative

Veni come (you)
Vegna come (he)
Vinèmu come (we)

voi want (you)
vògghia want (he)
vulèmu want (we)

Vinìti come (you)
Vègnanu come (they)

vulìti want (you)
vòghianu want (they)

Infinitive Present

Vèniri to come **vuliri** to want
Avìri vinùtu to have come **avìri vulùtu** to have wanted

Participle Past

Vinùtu come **vulùtu** wanted

Gerund Present

Vinènnu coming **vulènnu** wanting

Past

Avènnu vinùtu having come **avènnu vulùtu** having wanted

Interrogative Forms

The interrogative forms, most of the time, place the subject at the end of the sentence:

Ci ? u a scola **Maria**?

Did Mary go to school?

Unni sta **Rosa**?

Where does Rose live?

M'ascùti **figghiu**?

Are you listening to me, son?

Interrogative forms **chi** (what), **cui, cu** (who, whom):

Cu vinni a tô casa?

Who came to your house?

Chi fai ddocu?

What are you doing there?

Cu ti lu dissi accussì?

Who told you so?

A chi servi chistu?

What' is the purpose of this?

A cui la dugnu la l'acqua?

To whom should I give the water?

Interrogative **c'è** (there is) and **ci sunnu** (there are):

C'è la televisiòni a sô casa?

Is there a television at his house?

Ci sunnu li lampi nta scala?

Are there lights in the stairway?

C'è lu telèfunu nni tô soru?
Ci sunnu li utti pi lu vinu?

Is there a telephone at you sister's?
Are there barrels for the wine?

The Sicilian language uses two forms of addressing people, the familiar, with peers friends and family members, and the polite with strangers, older people or people to whom one wants to show respect. In the first case is used the second person singular of the verb, in the second case is used the second person plural of the verb.

Familiar:

Pigghiami ssu pani
Attacca sta corda.
Chiàma lu cani

Get me that bread
Tie this rope
Call the dog

Polite:

Vossìa chiàma a me frati
Ci parràssi vossìa cu iddu
Vossìa mi fa n favùri

Call my brother
You talk to him
Do me a favor

A sentence is made negative by adding **nun** or the contracted **un** before the verb:

Un sacciu nenti
Nun capìsciu chiddu chi dici
Un parru bonu lu Siciliànu

I do not know anything
I do not understand what you are saying
I do not speak Sicilian well

Alteration of the Participle

The Sicilian language alters the past participle in the same way alters the nouns with the diminutive, augmentative and pejorative forms:

| | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Dispiràtu | desperate |
| dispiratèddu | a little desperate |
| dispiratùni | very desperate |
| dispiratàzzu | badly desperate |

Com' è lu tempu? **Canciatèddu.**

How is the weather? A little changed.

Sì nn'iu tô soru? Sì era **mprisciatàzza.**

Is your sister gone? Yes, she was in a kind of a hurry

Mê cucìnu vinni **vistutùni.**

My cousin came very dressed up.

Qunnu parrò era **mpacciatèddu**

When he spoke he was a little imbarassed.

Expressions with the Verb "Fari"

Oggi fa càvuru

Today it is hot

Ddà fa bon tempu

Over there the weather is nice

Ccà fa un friddu di mòriri

Here it is so cold one can die

I picciuttèddi facèvanu vuccirìa

The little ones were making noise

Vidiri a mê patri accusi mi fa pena

To see my father in those conditions it pained me

Facci na dummanna a tô soru

Ask a question to your sister

Faciti finta di durmìri

Make believe that you are asleep

Reflexive forms

In the reflexive forms the verb describes what the subject is doing:

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Mi divèrtu | I enjoy myself |
| T'addummisci | You fall asleep (you put yourself to sleep) |
| Si lava | He is washing himself |
| Nni susèmu | We get ourselves up |
| Vi cùrcati | You go to bed (put yourself to bed) |
| Si taliànu | They look at themselves |

| | |
|--|---|
| Quànnu vaiu a mari mi divèrtu | When I go to the beach, I enjoy myself |
| Arristàru a taliàrisi a lu spècchiu | They stayed to watch themselves in the mirror |
| Eranu stanchi e si curcàru | They were tired and went to bed |
| Doppu dui uri di stari assittàti vi susistivu | After two hours of sitting you got up |

Li misi di l'annu:

| | |
|-------------------|-----------|
| Innàru | January |
| Frivàru | February |
| Màrzu | March |
| Aprìli | April |
| Màiu | May |
| Giùgnu | June |
| Lùgliu | July |
| Aùstu | August |
| Sittèmmiru | September |
| Ottùviru | October |
| Nuvèmmiru | November |
| Dicèmmiru | December |

The days of the week:

| | |
|-----------------|-----------|
| Lùnniri | Monday |
| Màrtiri | Tuesday |
| Mèrcuri | Wednesday |
| Iòviri | Thursday |
| Vènniri | Friday |
| Sàbatu | Saturday |
| Dumìnica | Sunday |

The seasons of the year:

| | | | |
|-------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| Primavèra, | stati, | atùnnu, | mmernu |
| Spring, | summer, | autumn, | winter |

Primavèra and **stati** are feminine. **atùnnu** e **mmernu** are masculine.

La primavèra è china di ciuri
 Nna **la stati** fa cavuru
 Nna **l'atùnnu** c'è la vinnigna
 Nna **lu mmernu** c'è friddu

Springtime is full of flowers
 In summer it is hot
 In the fall the grapes are harvested
 In winter it is cold

Cardinal Numbers

| | | | | | |
|------------------|-------|-----------------------|-----------|----------------------------|------------------|
| 1 unu | one | 11 ùnnici | eleven | 21 vintùnu | twentyone |
| 2 dui | two | 12 dùdici | twelve | 22 vintidùì | twentytwo |
| 3 tri | three | 13 trìdici | thirteen | 23 vintitrì etc. | twentythree etc. |
| 4 quàttru | four | 14 quattòrdici | fourteen | 30 trenta | thirty |
| 5 cincu | five | 15 quìnnici | fifteen | 31 trentùnu | thirtyone |
| 6 sei | six | 16 sìdici | sixteen | 32 trentadùì | thirtytwo |
| 7 setti | sevn | 17 dicissètti | seventeen | 33 trentatrì etc.t | hirtythree etc. |
| 8 ottu | eight | 18 diciòttu | eghteen | 40 quaranta | forty |
| 9 novi | nine | 19 dicinnòvi | nineteen | 41 qurantùnu | fortyone |
| 10 deci | ten | 20 vinti | twenty | 42 quarantadùì etc. | fortytwo etc. |

| | | | |
|---------------------|---------|-------------------|-------------|
| 50 cinquànta | fifty | 80 ottànta | eighty |
| 60 sissànta | sixty | 90 novànta | ninety |
| 70 sittànta | seventy | 100 centu | one hundred |

The number **vinti**, **trenta**, **quaranta**, **cinquanta**, **sissanta** **sittanta**, **ottanta** e **novanta** lose the final vowel before the **unu** (one) and the **ottu** (eight)

Vintòttu, **trentòttu**, **cinquantòttu** etc.

To **centu** are added the above numbers, and the same method is used after 1000. the numerals above one hundred are written as one word

| | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| 101 centuùnu etc. | one hundred and one etc. | 2000 duimìla | Two thousand |
| 111 centuùnnici etc. | one hundred eleven etc. | 2500 duimilacincucèntu | Twentyfive hundred |
| 121 centuvintùnu etc. | one hundred and twentione | 3000 trimìla | three thousand |
| 200 duicèntu | two hundred | 100.000 centumìla | one hundred thousand |
| 300 triccèntu | three hundred | 1000.000 un miliùni | one million |
| 400 quattrucèntu | four hundred | 1000.000.000 un miliàrdu | one billion |
| 500 cincucèntu | five hundred | | |
| 600 seicèntu | six hundred | | |
| 700 setticèntu | seven hundred | | |
| 800 ottucèntu | eight hundred | | |
| 900 novicèntu | nine hundred | | |

| | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 1000 milli | one thousand |
| 1001 millieùnu | one thousand and one |

The numerals from **1100** on are not read **eleven hundred** etc. in Sicilian, but **Milliecèntu** etc

| | |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1300 milliettricèntu | thirteen hundred |
| 1700 milliesetticèntu | seventeen hundred |
| 1900 millienovicèntu | nineteen hundred |
| 2300 duimilatriccèntu | twenty three hundred |

In Sicilian the date uses the day first and then the month and the year. The day uses always a cardinal number preceded by the determinative article, but on the first day of the month it uses the ordinal number:

| | |
|---|--|
| Lu primu di giùgnu | The first of June |
| Lu 7 di maiu | The seventh of May |
| Quàntu nn'avè mu oggi? | What is today? |
| Oggi nn'avèmu 6. | Today is the sixth |
| Iddu partù lu 5 di austu. | He left on the fifth of august |
| Mê matri veni lu 15 di sittè mmiru | my mother will come on the fifteenth of September. |

Ordinal Numbers

| | | | |
|-------------------|----------|------------------------|----------------|
| Primu | First | dudicèsimu | twelfth |
| Secùnnu | second | tridicèsimu | thirteenth |
| Terzu | third | quattordicèsimu | fourteenth |
| Quàrtu | fourth | vintitrièsimu | twentieth |
| Quìntu | fifth | vinticinchèsimu | twentyfifth |
| Sestu | sixth | trentottèsimu | thirtyeighth |
| Sèttimu | seventh | quarantèsimu | fortieth |
| Ottàvu | eighth | centèsimu | one hundredth |
| Nonu | ninth | cincucentèsimu | five hundredth |
| Dècimu | tenth | millèsimu | one thousandth |
| Unnicèsimu | eleventh | miliunèsimu | one millionth |

In the ordinal numbers, after the **dècimu**, it is enough to drop the final vowel of the number and adding **esimu**. Only in those numbers ending with an **i** the vowel stays:

| | |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Vintitrièsimu | 23 rd |
| Cinquantatrièsimu etc. | 53 rd |

and those number ending with the **u**, they drop the final vowel and add the **h**:

| | |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Vinticinchèsimu | 25 th |
| Quarantacinchèsimu etc. | 45 th |

The ordinal numbers behave as adjectives and follow the gender and the number of the noun they describe:

| | |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| Lu primu viaggiu | the first travel |
| Li primi acqui | the first rains |
| La prima missa | the first mass |
| Li primi casi | the first huses |
| La quarta vota | the fourth time |

If the ordinal number refers to title, it follows the name:

| | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Fidiricu II | Frederick the II |
| Erricu VI | Henry the VI |
| Luigi IX | Louis the IX |

The ordinal numbers are written with special capital letters:

| | | |
|-------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| I | primu | 1st |
| II | secùnnu | 2nd |
| III | terzu | 3rd |
| IV | quàrtu | 4th |
| V | quintu | 5th |
| VI | sestu | 6th |
| VII | sèttimu | 7th |
| VIII | ottàvu | 8th |
| IX | nonu | 9th |
| X | dècimu | 10th |
| XI | unnicèsimu | 11th |
| XIX | dicinnuvèsimu | 19th |
| XX | vintèsimu | 20th |
| XXX | trentèsimu | 31st |
| XL | quarantèsimu | 40th |
| L | cinquantèsimu | 50th |
| LX | sissantèsimu | 60th |
| XC | novantèsimu | 90th |
| C | centèsimu | 100th |
| D | cincucentèsimu | 500th |
| M | millèsimu | 1000th |

The Romans did not know the cardinal numbers and they used the ordinal numbers for every need. for this reason they used to write even the dates with ordinal numbers. here are some examples of how the years are written with ordinal numbers:

| | | |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| 1282 | (Sicilian Vespers) | MCCLXXXII |
| 1492 | (The Discovery of America) | MCDXCII |

| | | |
|-------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1861 | (Unification of Italy) | MDCCCLXI |
| 1929 | (Italian-Vatican Treaty) | MCMXXIX |
| 1945 | (End of World War II) | MCMXLV |

The Sicilian

Ringraziamu a:

- Ninu Russu

Ajutatini a traduciri u
cursu na vostra lingua matri!!