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AMADIO, INC.

BOLLETTINO

INFORMATION AND TIPS ABOUT THE ITALIAN LANGUAGE



Bilingual Dictionaries Part 1: General Purpose

*Many agencies have reference libraries of bilingual dictionaries they can use to quickly check the meaning or spelling of foreign words or to find an answer to a question. These agencies often ask for recommendations regarding dictionaries and/or other reference tools they plan to acquire. This and the next issue of *Il Bollettino* review bilingual English-Italian dictionaries.*

Overview

Dictionaries come in a variety of sizes and for a variety of purposes. For the professional translator, the only dictionaries to consider are unabridged, full-size dictionaries. Pocket, concise, college, and other similar dictionaries are of little practical use at the professional level and need not be considered for inclusion in an agency library.

English-Italian dictionaries are available in Italy and in the United States. Even when available in the United States, these dictionaries are often originally published in Italy and imported or distributed in the USA by an American publisher. Italian dictionaries, and other reference tools available in Italy, often come with a CD-ROM that can be accessed by computer. The same dictionary published or distributed by an American publisher may not include the CD-ROM.

Through the Internet it is now very easy to purchase dictionaries published both in Italy and in the USA. Besides local bookstores, dictionaries

published in the USA can easily be ordered through online booksellers such as Amazon.com and BarnesandNoble.com. Although, Amazon.com and BarnesandNoble.com carry some imported dictionaries their price is much higher than ordering the book directly from Italy (even when taking shipping costs into account).

Fortunately, there is a reliable Italian online bookseller very similar to these in the USA: Internet Bookshop Italia (www.ibs.it). Although other Italian sites now exist as well, none are as well equipped as Internet Bookshop Italia in dealing with foreign customers.

Internet Bookshop Italia ships FedEx standard (generally a two-day delivery) and shipping charges are based on order amount, not weight. They work business days only and sometimes it may take several days to prepare an order for shipping.








There is one drawback, however; the site is entirely in Italian, and currently there is no English

interface. The search and ordering processes are similar to other e-commerce sites so that even people with a limited knowledge of Italian should be able to find their way around. In addition, there is usually someone at the agency that understands enough English—or you can always ask you friendly translators for help.

One word of caution on CD-ROMs. Italians love to bundle CD-ROMs with their dictionaries but they aren't necessarily convenient to use. Most CD-ROMs that come with Italian dictionaries are copy protected, cannot be installed in a workgroup environment and cannot be installed on a hard disk even for a single user (they need to be in the drive when you want to utilize them).

Generally speaking, if all you need is a good general purpose dictionary, and do not want CD-ROM capabilities, you may be better off buying a dictionary published or distributed in the USA.

Continued on reverse side.

	Pages/ Entries	www.ibs.it Book only Book + CD CD only	amazon.com/barnesandnoble.com Book only Book + CD CD only	<i>Listed prices subject to change. Check your online bookseller at the time of ordering for current prices and availability.</i>
Garzanti Hazon 2003 	2,276 350,000	€ 64.00 € 75.50 € 30.50	— — —	Not to be confused with paperback dictionaries available through local bookstores, this is a full-size, hardback bilingual dictionary available from Italy. It comes with a CD-ROM that can be installed on the hard disk. The printed version includes a section with illustrations and bilingual captions and sections on names, acronyms, and Internet and computer terms. The CD-ROM version includes an interactive table for conjugating English verbs (this feature is not available for Italian verbs).
Ragazzini 2003 	2,528 400,000	€ 64.80 € 76.60 € 52.00	— \$ 175.00 —	This is probably the most popular bilingual English-Italian dictionary in Italy. The publisher, Zanichelli, specializes in dictionaries, reference materials, and school books. This is but one of many general purpose and specialized dictionaries available from this publisher. It is updated frequently and generally reprinted once a year. This is a full-size, hardback bilingual dictionary with CD-ROM. The book also contains several color illustrations with bilingual captions and a section with English and Italian acronyms. The CD-ROM cannot be installed on the hard disk; it must be in the CD-ROM reader to be used.
Grande Dizionario Picchi 	3,328 675,000	— € 64.56 —	— — —	This is a relatively new entry and it is now in its second printing. It is a full-size, hardback dictionary with CD-ROM. Although there is an appendix on conversion of measurements, this is strictly an entry-driven dictionary without illustrations and/or special appendices. The CD-ROM cannot be installed on the hard disk; it must be in the CD-ROM reader to be used. The search engine is the same used by Ragazzini 2003.
Harpers Collins Italian College Dictionary  	1,481 390,000	— — —	\$ 25.00 — —	Although it is a “college” dictionary this is almost a full-size, hardback bilingual dictionary. It does not include a CD-ROM. There is an “unabridged” version, but it is somewhat dated and not readily available.
Oxford Paravia Italian Dictionary or Dizionario inglese-italiano/italiano-inglese  	2,651 350,000	€ 61.00 € 71.30 —	\$ 60.00 — —	This is a full-size, hardback dictionary available in both in Italy and in the USA. The Italian version is available with and without CD-ROM. The American version is available only as a book. Although Oxford University Press also lists a computer-based “Pop-up Oxford Italian Dictionary” it does not, however, seem to be available anywhere, and so may be obsolete or not yet released.
Dizionario Larousse grande english-italian, italiano-inglese		€ 63.80 € 75.60 —	— — —	This is the most recent entry in the field of general purpose dictionaries. It is a full-size, hardback dictionary published in 2003 by Rizzoli.

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