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**Lazzarino, Graziana, Andrea Dini, and  
Maria Cristina Peccianti. *Prego! An Invitation  
to Italian.* 7th edition.**

**New York: McGraw-Hill, 2008. ISBN: 978-0-07-326672-5. Includes a Workbook, Laboratory Manual, Audio CD Program, Online Workbook, Online Laboratory Manual, ActivityPak, DVD, Instructor's Edition, Instructor's Resource Guide and Testing Program with Testing Audio CD, and Website at [www.mhhe.com/prego7](http://www.mhhe.com/prego7).**

The 7th edition of *Prego! An Invitation to Italian* is a compact and more manageable version of the very useful and much respected 6th edition. The text still includes many functional and helpful components, such as the In Ascolto Listening Comprehension CD, the Audio Program and its corresponding Laboratory Manual, as well as new features: the online Workbook and Laboratory Manual developed in collaboration with Quia, the online ActivityPak, which replaces the interactive CD-ROM (6th edition), the video on CD available as part of the ActivityPak or as a separate DVD component, and the Online Learning Center replete with additional exercises and learning materials that foster the students' mastery of the language. The Instructor's Edition has been updated with more annotations and suggestions for presenting the material, sample questions related to the various cultural readings, and ideas for conversational activities. Furthermore, there are an Instructor's Resource Guide and Testing Program, which comes with its own testing audio CD, and the instructor's section of the Online Learning Center, available via a password provided upon request by the editors.

The layout of the 7th edition is even more organized and user friendly than that of the previous edition. The table of contents presents the eighteen chapters in a crisp, easy-to-follow outline that highlights the main components of each chapter in eye-catching color. Thumbnail pictures have also been added to ensure this new version's visual appeal from the outset. Each chapter is divided into five main sections: *Vocabolario preliminare*, *Grammatica*, *Invito alla lettura*, *Videoteca*, and *Parole da ricordare*. Each *Grammatica* section adds an interesting cultural reading that is related to the theme of the chapter (in English through chapter 5; in Italian only beginning with Chapter 6) and that serves as a much appreciated pause between grammatical topics. More cultural tidbits are included in *Curiosità*, a part of the *Invito alla lettura* section. The reading component of the 7th edition is further enhanced by the *Flash culturale* that appears after every fourth chapter.

The new edition of *Prego!* emphasizes the four skills approach to language teaching in a manner that is precise and complete without ever burdening the user, whether student or instructor, with excessive material. Each chapter is organized around a theme whose vocabulary is presented at the beginning with a list of words and expressions that are used in a short, but densely packed dialogue, *Dialogo lampo*. These are then repeated in exercises and readings throughout the chapter with a recapping of the entire list as well as the inclusion of additional words and expressions related to the topic at the end of the chapter. The *Dialogo lampo* always includes some questions that encourage students to immediately incorporate the chapter vocabulary in their answers. This reinforcement continues with short answer exercises, conversation-provoking questions, and innovative ideas to promote class discussion. With regard to chapter themes and vocabulary, the authors have put together a number of interesting and timely topics, ranging from the general greetings and introductory phrases of the preliminary chapter to words and expressions useful when discussing Italian cities, family, education in Italy, sports and hobbies, cafés and cuisine, mass media, health, traveling, shopping, apartment hunting, the environment, music, literature, and politics. Here students are given the opportunity to learn not only words and expressions, but also something about the country whose language they are studying.

The grammar sections of *Prego!* reflect the excellent revision techniques of the authors. In many instances the explanations have been rewritten so that they are clear and concise without compromising content. The order of grammar topics has been changed or moved from one chapter to another, allowing for a better assimilation of the material by students. Charts are frequent and well organized, giving the student only as much material as is needed to understand a given topic, and examples related to the specific grammar topic are always to the point. Textbook exercises have also been pared down in this new edition, since there are numerous self-correcting exercises in the Online Workbook which are, in the long run, more beneficial to the student.

As in the 6th edition, the *Invito alla lettura* section is composed of readings on the various regions of Italy. These selections, however, have been shortened so that they are more manageable and have also been updated with a bright, colorful background that always includes several well-chosen pictures of each region. *Invito alla lettura* also contains the *Scrivere* component, which is adapted, in terms of difficulty, to the vocabulary and grammar of the chapter at hand. Here students are asked to write a composition by answering questions based on the chapter theme. In the first several chapters, the directions are in English and additional words and expressions are provided. The details of the *Scrivere* component are given in Italian beginning with chapter six, the point at which most students reach an understanding of basic language structures and have also been introduced to the *passato prossimo*.

The 7th edition of *Prego!* provides excellent oral and listening comprehension practice through the audio program, which functions as a highly organized learning tool where each audio chapter is divided into specific tracks related to specific pages and sections in the accompanying *Laboratory Manual*. All the audio chapters end with a dictation and the dialogue component, *Sarà in Italia*, which not only tests aural comprehension, but can also be used to evaluate mastery of vocabulary and assimilation of grammar.

The video component, always enjoyed by students, has now been updated to a DVD format that is easier to use because of the menu that lists the title of each section. The DVD still corresponds to the *Videoteca* section of the text and is an important means of initiating class conversation as well as continuing the students' discovery of Italy via the beautiful photography and clearly enunciated explanations provided by the engaging main characters, Giuliana and Roberto.

In conclusion, the authors have done a thorough and commendable job of revising what was already an excellent text in previous editions. They have continued the tradition of creating a visually attractive, user-friendly and, most importantly, linguistically sound Italian language teaching tool that appeals to students and instructors alike. *Prego!* is a superb choice for use in beginning Italian courses and provides enough material to carry students through the first semester of the intermediate level. Congratulations to the authors of this innovative and always resilient Italian language learning package. Their meticulous work and fine tuning have resulted in the successful revision of a now classic text that will be equally appreciated by students and instructors in secondary schools, colleges, and universities well into the future.

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## **Publisher's Response**

We are pleased to respond to Dr. DeGregorio's very favorable review of the seventh edition of *Prego! An Invitation to Italian*, a complete program of materials for the introductory Italian course. *Prego!* has long been a favorite among many Italian instructors for its solid, balanced introduction to language and culture and its engaging activities that actively promote the development of all four language skills.

As Dr. DeGregorio points out in her review, the seventh edition of *Prego!* has been thoughtfully and carefully revised to ensure an organized, user-friendly and manageable program for introductory classes, while maintaining those hallmark characteristics that have made it an instructor favorite for many editions.

We are very pleased that Dr. DeGregorio has noted the revisions to the grammar explanations. This was a particularly important element of the revision for Dr. Lazzarino, whose experience in the classroom indicated to her that today's students would benefit greatly from an increased number of tables and charts and from more streamlined and precise grammar explanations. Dr. Lazzarino will be gratified to hear that these revisions have been so successful.

McGraw-Hill World Languages is committed to publishing high quality foreign language textbooks and media products, and we are proud to include *Prego!* and its rich package of ancillary materials among our many titles. We are delighted that Dr. DeGregorio has shared her review of *Prego!* with the readership of *The NECTFL Review*.

Christa Harris  
Executive Editor, World Languages  
McGraw-Hill