



LIVING IN YOUR ITALIAN HOME

Introduction: This Packet will provide you several pieces of information for living in your Italian home. We have broken the information down into **7** separate Sections:

- Section 1: Living in Italian Homes – information and helpful hints about a wide variety of topics and issues you may encounter in your leased unit
- Section 2: Maintenance – tenant and landlord responsibilities for maintaining the property
- Section 3: Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning (HVAC) – general information about Italian HVAC systems
- Section 4: Electrical – general information about Italian electrical systems and plugs
- Section 5: Mold – information about mold and humidity in Italy
- Section 6: Off Base Recycling – information about how recycling in Italy is different than in the States
- Section 7: Common Problems/Issues/Helpful Hints/FAQs – lessons learned, hints and tools and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) from past Aviano Airmen

Below is a quick reference index for locating information within this Packet

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LIVING IN ITALIAN HOMES

The following topics provide general information about living in Italy. Most all this information has been compiled over the years through experiences from past Aviano Airmen. Some of the information has been put into other Sections of this Packet to provide greater details; e.g. maintenance responsibilities, Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems, etc.

LEARNING ABOUT HOUSE SYSTEMS

If you have not done so, have the landlord explain how to use all the homes' systems. This can include, but not limited to electrical fuse panels, boiler reset buttons, telephone intercom systems, property gates, etc. DO NOT do anything that appears unsafe, e.g. reaching behind an electrical panel. In some cases your landlord may tell you to not touch anything, but rather, immediately call them for assistance when something stops working. To help you with this process we offer the following example questions/comments (if needed a housing counselor can assist you):

- Where is the main electrical box and can it be shut off in an emergency without endangering myself or my family?
- Where is the electrical circuit breaker box? (inside house and outside house)
- Are the fuses marked and if so can you provide translations? (or he/she can tell you as you write them down for your reference)
- Where is the gas meter and how can it be shut off in an emergency without endangering myself or my family?
- Where is the water main cut off valves and how can it be shut off in an emergency without endangering myself or my family? (inside and outside)
- Where is the heating fuel tank and how do I measure the tank for fuel level?
 - How many liters will it hold? Is it at least 1/4 full when you first start the lease?
 - Document how full the tank is upon move in for both you and the landlord?
- Many homes have air conditioning units called "splits units" and they are remotely controlled. Have the landlord show you how to use the remote for its operation. Where is the external unit and what (if anything) needs to be done to clean the unit? How are the internal unit(s) cleaned?
- What do I do if the heating system(s) stops working?
- If there's an electrical garage door opener and/or property gate, ensure you know how to manually operate in case of power outage or remote control battery is inoperative.
- If the home contains a fireplace, is there an operating manual? How is the flue opened or closed? How can it be cleaned?
- Many windows and doors in Italy have multiple positions, have the landlord show you how each type functions.
- Some units may have remotely controlled ceiling fans, have the landlord show you how to use the remote for its operation.

ENERGY RATING

Your home has an Energy Rating and the landlord should have provided you a certificate of the rating. The scale is A-G: A is excellent, G is poor. Better grades are more energy efficient and you'll pay less to heat/cool a home.

- Homes rated "A" likely have solar panels
- Newer homes: average a "B" rating
- Older homes: average an "E" rating

SEWAGE/PLUMBING

Unclogging of Drains: When unclogging drains, do not attempt to remove shower and bath tub drains by releasing the screw in the center of the drain. By doing so the drain cup and the gasket located under the tub/stall will separate causing major leaks and/or flooding. For major clogs, contact your landlord for assistance. Check for caulking compound around shower stall/bath tub, replace if deteriorated as this will cause water to seep through tiles generating wet/mold spots on adjacent rooms.

How to Prevent Toilet Clogging: Do not throw the following items in the toilet even if they are labeled as flushable—pipes are smaller in Italy:

- Paper Tissues (the paper is very resistant)
- Do not use excessive toilet paper
- Q-Tips Swabs, Toothpicks, Feminine Napkins, Tampons, wipes, and diapers.
- Condoms
- Plastic material i.e. cellophane, baggies, stickers
- Empty toilet deodorant cages or containers
- Razor blades

Sewage stoppages caused by misuse of products could result in high costs to the tenant for unclogging, cleaning, and repair.

Sewage Smell: Kitchen/Bathroom/Laundry fixtures drains are “P” shaped, commonly called “P-TRAP”. This is to assure a small quantity of water remains immediately below the fixture to prevent bad odors from backing up. If you don’t regularly use any of the fixtures (i.e. Bidet) water in the P-TRAP will evaporate causing sewage odors to backflow. Running water at least once a week in fixtures not regularly used will prevent raw sewage smell. Often laundry rooms have a floor drain, pour water in the drain once a week to prevent bad odors.

WASHER, DRYER, STOVE AND REFRIGERATOR MAINTENANCE

Ensure the washer and dryer work properly, don’t forget to clean out the various filters and empty the water tray in the dryer. Clean refrigerator vents located beneath the door (vacuum). Manuals have been provided. Clean stove top with appropriate stainless steel cleaners (non-corrosive), and avoid excessive water as it will short electric igniter causing malfunction (self-spark/no spark)

Appliance Repair: To initiate repair action for government-provided appliances go to FMS located in the Housing Building. You can also call 632-2272 (commercial 0434-30-2272) or e-mail 31CES.CEIH.Furnishings@US.AF.MIL. 31 CES/CEO Appliance Repair Shop will perform repairs from Monday thru Friday during regular duty hours. Repair of these items will be free of charge, however, any damage caused by other than fair wear and tear will be charged to the member.

Emergency Refrigerator Replacement: Emergency service for government issued refrigerators is available on weekends and after 1700 through the Fire Department. Emergency repair is defined as repairing or replacing an inoperative refrigerator when necessary to prevent food spoilage. Occupants should call 632-5381 or commercial 0434-30-5381 after regular duty hours.

EXTENDED LEAVE/TDY

If you are going to be absent for 1 week or more you must give your keys to someone to periodically inspect your unit. They need to check for water leaks, heat working properly during winter months, ventilate to prevent mold, or any other possible emergencies that the landlord may need to take care of immediately.

QUIET HOURS

Please remember that Italy is a foreign country and has different customs and procedures. Local law places limits on noise levels. The most frequent complaint in any neighborhood is unruly or noisy neighbors. As per law, you must observe the quiet periods from 2200 in the evening to 0700 hours in the morning and during the lunch period from 1300 to 1600 hours. Noises such as loud music, cutting of wood, running lawn mowers and noisy outside games/activities during the prohibited hours should be avoided. Violators could be subject to fines. Radios and TV sets must be kept down to levels that cannot be heard out of your unit.

PET CONTROL

All companion animals, such as dogs or cats, will be leashed when outside your home or kept in a fenced yard. You must ensure cleanliness of your pet areas to control and prevent vermin infestation. Feces should be picked up daily. Do not let your pet become a neighborhood nuisance with excessive barking, please pay attention to the Italian quiet hours. Do not allow your pet to stray. Remember to make arrangements for your pets while on leave or TDY. The Vet Clinic can give you names of local kennels by calling 632-8485.

GROUNDS

Mow grass, mow/rake adjacent grassy areas, fill holes and cut hedges/bushes. Sweep patios and remove all spider webs from around the house. Hose off areas around exterior of house, including walls/patios.

LOCKOUTS

The Housing Office and landlords do not maintain spare keys to your unit; you must make arrangements with a locksmith. The cost is not reimbursable by the government and this service is expensive, so guard your keys well. Make a copy of your house keys and keep them in a safe place in case you lose your set. If keys are lost, you will be responsible for replacement of the master key.

VISITORS

Sponsors are responsible for the actions of their dependents and visitors at all times. Occupants of family housing are allowed to have guests or social visits by people other than their dependents for a period not to exceed 30 days, providing there are no "Health, Morale or Welfare" issues involved. Extensions may be requested through the Housing Management Office. Leasing or subleasing of government controlled quarters or any part thereof is not authorized.

ENVIRONMENT

In Italy it is against the law to pour engine oils, engine coolants, car grease, and corrosive liquid or drain cleaners and other similar products either down sanitary drains or on the ground or paved surfaces. It is considered an offense to maintain a faulty automobile that has an oil leak creating a pollutant problem. Should the Italian police detect an automobile with an oil leak, they may fine

you and clean the oil spill at your expense. Check with your local commune before burning waste or leaves, etc. in any area of the city.

WINDOW SAFETY FOR CHILDREN

If you have small children, please ensure their safety by following these recommendations:

- **Window Covering Cords:** Install and use hooks to a height not accessible to your young children to prevent strangulation.
- **Accidental Falling Hazard:** If you have window openings that can be accessed by small children, i.e. window seals less than 3 feet high, make sure that they can and are locked/secured to prevent accidental falling.

FIRE PROTECTION/PREVENTION

Fire Protection: It is your responsibility to ensure that the safety and well-being of all housing occupants is at the highest level at all times.

Smoke, Natural Gas, and Carbon Monoxide Detectors are not required by Italian law but it is recommended that you install these in your home with your landlord's approval. Check the batteries annually

Fire Prevention: Fire Prevention briefing and fire extinguisher training is given to new arrivals during Newcomers Orientation.

Fire Reporting: If a fire occurs in your home, evacuate the premises immediately, call 115 and then notify the base fire department at 043-430-8911. Make sure you give the house number and the street you live on. Wait outside by the road to give directions to the arriving fire crews.

Storage of Flammable Liquids: A maximum of three (3) gallons of flammable liquid is allowed to be stored in outside storage areas only. Flammables are not allowed to be stored in the living area for any length of time. Outside storage areas should be child proof. Do not store in furnace room or near heaters.

Barbecue Grills: Used and supervised by adults only. They should not be used near buildings with overhangs or porches and not on balconies of apartment complexes. Do not store flammable or combustible materials near the grill while in use or for a period after being used. Extinguish the hot coals when they are no longer needed. Smoke damage to overhangs or porch ceiling is not fair wear and tear and costs for repair are the occupant's responsibility.

Cooking Appliances: Never leave the stove unattended while cooking, especially when cooking with grease or any item that produces its own grease. The kitchen exhaust fan should be cleaned frequently to prevent the buildup of grease. In the event of a grease fire, cover the pan with a lid that fits snugly over the pan, and turn off the appliance. **NEVER THROW WATER ON A GREASE FIRE AND NEVER ATTEMPT TO MOVE A BURNING PAN!**

Electrical: Fit proper Italian Plugs where possible, and ensure fuses are rated for the intended appliances (refer to **Section 4** of this Packet). It is safer to fit Italian 3 pin plugs than to use adapters for 220/240V appliances fitted with continental 2 pin plugs. If you use an extension lead,

ensure it meets UL or European Community standards and is rated for the intended appliance. Avoid running it under rugs, through doorways, windows and walls. Avoid using multiple adapters.

Fire Evacuation Plan: A home fire evacuation plan should be devised with primary and alternate routes of escape in the event of a fire. Establish and practice your escape plan as a family activity. Remember to include a meeting place outside the home so all can be accounted for. The fire department should be made aware of handicapped members.

Housekeeping: Keep trash from accumulating in closets, attics and basements. Never store anything near a heater or furnace.

Power Equipment: Lawn mowers and edgers should not be refueled while the motor is running. Equipment should have sufficient time to cool before refueling. Store gas operated equipment in a fire safe environment.

Fireworks: Only authorized fireworks sold in Italy can be used, all others are strictly forbidden. Check with your Municipality to see if there are further restrictions in your neighborhood

POLICE/CRIME STOPPERS

Patrolling is accomplished on a routine basis by the local community police force (Carabinieri or Polizia). Reminder for emergencies the local emergency phone number for off base is 112. If your house is broken into, contact your local Carabinieri Station and then Command Post (+390434303100) who can dispatch Security Forces (+390434307200) and a Translator. It is suggested that you program all the necessary emergency contact numbers in your cell phone and protect your personal documents, i.e. passports, Codice Fiscale, Military ID etc.

PARKING

Parking of privately owned vehicles will be in authorized parking areas only. Depending on your local community, recreational vehicles may be prohibited from parking in community housing areas. Check with your local city hall. Parking may be at a premium at some locations so it is important to use common sense and courtesy when parking.

CAR SECURITY

Always park your car in the garage if you have one or in a well-lit area close to your house. Always lock your car. Do not leave valuable items inside your car. Always practice Force Protection by keeping uniforms, American papers, etc. from view.

FIREARMS

Personal firearms are not authorized in Italy. If you need additional information contact Security Forces at 0434-30-7200.