

Learn in 30: Language Learning Apps

Leti Labell

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Leti Labell

- ▶ OLLI member and PATACS member with a lifelong love of computers.
- ▶ MS in computer science, and a Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP).
- ▶ Retired in 2014 from a long career in software development and general project management in the telecommunications industry and as a contractor to the federal government.
- ▶ Currently learning to speak Italian, using many iPhone apps as well as a variety of other methods.

Characteristics of a good language app

- ▶ Fun and addictive
- ▶ Spaced Repetition System (SRS)
 - ▶ Reviews the most difficult words more often
- ▶ Uses photos or other graphics to imprint words in your memory
- ▶ Uses the microphone to test your pronunciation
- ▶ Requires you to type answers as well as selecting from a list
- ▶ Free app available even if there is a paid option
- ▶ Encourages daily usage

Duolingo



- ▶ Fun and addictive
 - ▶ Awards “points” for completion of activities
- ▶ Encourages daily usage
 - ▶ Keeps track of your streaks (I’m at 125 days!)
- ▶ Lets you practice words that you had difficulty with
- ▶ Uses the microphone to test your pronunciation
- ▶ Requires you to type answers as well as selecting from a list
- ▶ Totally free app
- ▶ Very limited use of pictures
- ▶ The website has more features
 - ▶ Vocabulary flashcards on website

Duolingo



- ▶ My opinion:
 - ▶ Duolingo is definitely the most well known app
 - ▶ It's a good app, and I use it every day
 - ▶ However, I do not think it is the BEST app.
 - ▶ The lack of pictures to assist in remembering is a disadvantage.
- ▶ Languages:
 - ▶ Spanish, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Dutch, Irish, Turkish, Danish, Norwegian, Polish, Esperanto
 - ▶ In beta test: Hebrew, Ukrainian, Welsh, Hungarian, Greek, Romanian
 - ▶ Coming soon: Swahili, Czech, Hindi, Korean, Klingon, Indonesian



Memrise



- ▶ Fun and addictive
 - ▶ Includes user-created “Mems” that help you learn a word using graphics, humor and imagination
- ▶ Encourages daily usage
 - ▶ Keeps track of your streaks across multiple courses
- ▶ Lets you practice words that you had difficulty with
- ▶ Does not use the microphone
- ▶ Requires you to type answers as well as selecting from a list
- ▶ Includes courses created by the application developers as well as thousands of other courses created by users
 - ▶ Also includes courses on topics other than languages, e.g. math, science, computer training, law, trivia, entertainment
- ▶ Free app plus paid option with additional features
 - ▶ E.g. videos of native speakers, speed test

Memrise



▶ Sample “Mems”


sudare
to sweat

sudan has a sweaty climate



○ ● ● ● ●

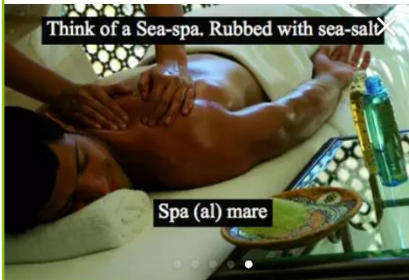
dividere
to separate, to share







spalmare
to rub something on



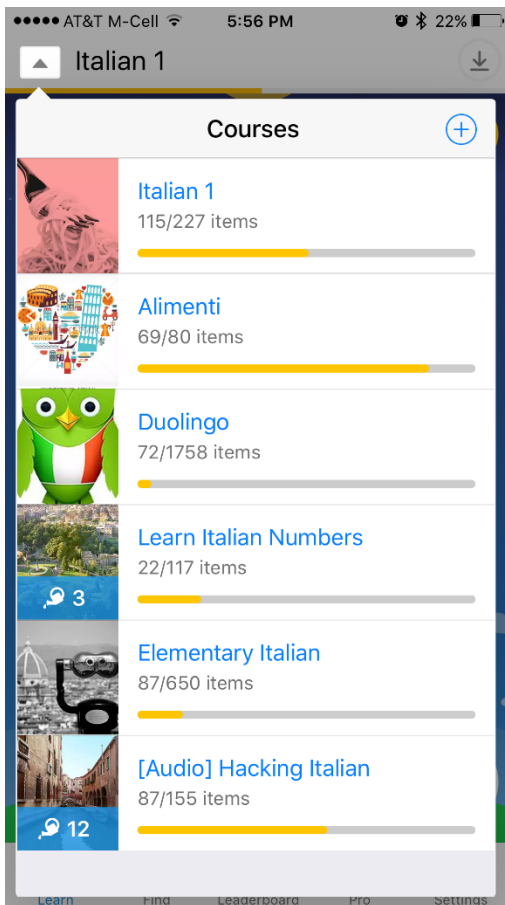
 

spalmare
to rub something on

Your use the sPALMS of your hands to SPALM or RUB ON suncream

○ ● ● ● ●

Memrise



- ▶ Memrise has thousands or courses to choose from.
- ▶ I'm currently taking six courses
- ▶ Just browsing, I've found more than a thousand Italian courses

Memrise



- ▶ My opinion:
 - ▶ This is my favorite app
 - ▶ It's lots of fun, and has a lot of variety
 - ▶ Most versatile app, with the very large number of courses to choose from
- ▶ Languages:
 - ▶ Spanish, French, German, Portuguese, Italian, Dutch, Danish, Greek, Norwegian, Swedish, Armenian, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Turkish, Russian, Polish, Bulgarian, Latin, Esperanto

Mondly

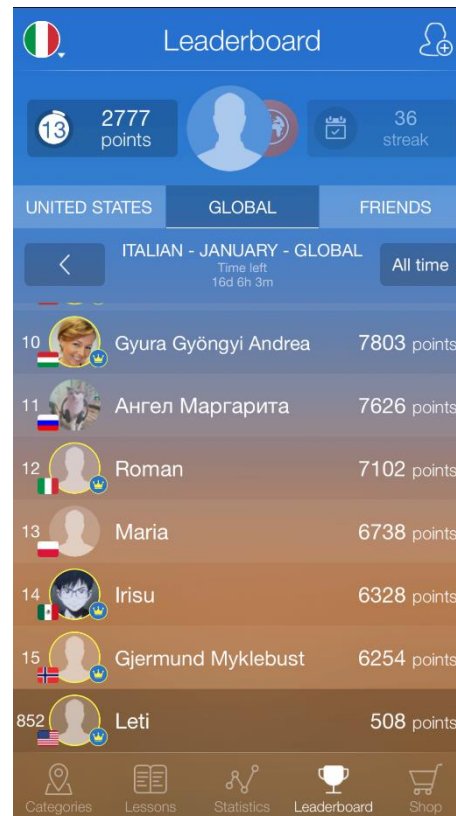
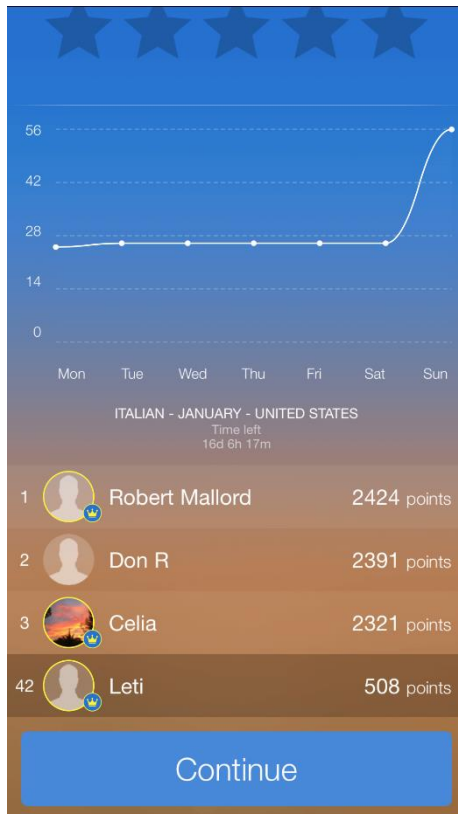


- ▶ Fun and addictive
 - ▶ Includes Daily Lessons and plus a Weekly Quiz if you complete a week of daily lessons
 - ▶ Compares you to a leader board
- ▶ Encourages daily usage
 - ▶ Keeps track of your streaks
- ▶ Uses the microphone to test your pronunciation
- ▶ Uses pictures
- ▶ Requires you to type answers as well as selecting from a list
- ▶ Includes dialogues where you repeat and record the responses
- ▶ Includes verb conjugations

Mondly



► Leaderboard examples:



Mondly



- ▶ Free app with paid option
- ▶ My opinion:
 - ▶ This is my second favorite app
 - ▶ Daily and weekly lessons encourage usage
 - ▶ Dialogues let you practice speaking, and let you hear recording of your speech
- ▶ Languages:
 - ▶ Spanish, French, German, Italian, Russian, Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Turkish, Arabic, Persian, Hebrew, Portuguese, Dutch, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, Finnish, Greek, Romanian, Afrikaans, Croatian, Polish, Bulgarian, Czech, Hungarian, Ukrainian, Vietnamese, Hindi, Indonesian, Thai

Busuu



- ▶ Encourages daily usage
- ▶ Use the microphone on website but not on the app
- ▶ Requires you to type answers as well as selecting from a list
- ▶ Includes writing exercises with corrections from native speakers
 - ▶ Encourages you to correct exercises of people learning your language
 - ▶ Additional writing exercises on the website
- ▶ Includes dialogues to read and listen to (with translation)
- ▶ Free app plus paid option with additional features
 - ▶ Paid version has quizzes and vocabulary trainer for weak words on website

Busuu



- ▶ Languages:
 - ▶ Spanish, Italian, French, Portuguese, Turkish, Arabic, Polish German, Russian, Japanese, Chinese

Rosetta Stone



- ▶ Fun and addictive
- ▶ Uses pictures
- ▶ Uses the microphone to test your pronunciation
- ▶ Requires you to type answers as well as selecting from a list
- ▶ Follows a specific order of lessons
 - ▶ Does not emphasize weak or difficult words
- ▶ Website has more lessons than iPhone app
- ▶ No free app - paid version is only option
- ▶ But free for OLLI members through Mason
 - ▶ Separate PDF with instructions will be available on OPCUG/PATACS website

Rosetta Stone



- ▶ Languages:
 - ▶ Spanish, French, Italian, German, Arabic, Chinese, Dari, Dutch, Filipino, Greek, Hebrew, Hindi, Indonesian, Irish, Japanese, Korean, Latin, Pashto, Farsi, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Swahili, Swedish, Turkish, Urdu, Vietnamese

Innovative Language



- ▶ Least “fun” of all of these apps
 - ▶ But offers more traditional language information (grammar, culture, etc.)
- ▶ Includes app as well as emails, podcasts and website (e.g. italianpod101.com)
 - ▶ Word-a-day emails
 - ▶ Topical vocabulary lists (holidays, winter activities)
- ▶ Has audio and video lessons
 - ▶ Each includes vocabulary words, transcript, and other information
- ▶ Includes Spaced Repetition Flashcards
- ▶ Does not use the microphone
 - ▶ But includes numerous dialogues to repeat

Innovative Language



- ▶ Free app with paid option
 - ▶ Free version has specific free lessons; the paid version has all of the lessons
 - ▶ Downside - you will get a million emails asking you to upgrade to paid version
 - ▶ However, I think the paid version is worth it, so I'm glad I upgraded
- ▶ Languages:
 - ▶ Afrikaans, Arabic, Bulgarian, Cantonese, Chinese, Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, Filipino, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hebrew, Hindi, Hungarian, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Malaysian, Mongolian, Nepali, Norwegian, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, Swahili, Swedish, Thai, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu, Vietnamese

Anki



- ▶ Flash card application
 - ▶ Free web version, free Android version, EXPENSIVE iOS version
- ▶ Gold standard for Spaced Repetition System (SRS)
 - ▶ Allows you to specify how difficult a word was, to determine when next to test you on that word
- ▶ Can create your own word lists, or use many lists available on the website
- ▶ Can include graphics and audio on your word lists
- ▶ Good for any type of memorization, not just languages
- ▶ But the website and the app are VERY confusing to set up

Chegg Flashcards+



- ▶ Flash card application
- ▶ Free app
- ▶ Can mark a card as learned
 - ▶ Can study all cards, or just ones that are unlearned
- ▶ Create your own word lists
- ▶ I enter vocabulary words that aren't obvious to me, but I think are useful words
 - ▶ I put them in categories like Food, Places, Shopping, Time, Verbs, Expressions, etc.
- ▶ Good for any type of memorization, not just languages

Chegg Flashcards+



- ▶ App can read your cards in over 20 languages
 - ▶ Arabic, Chinese, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hindi, Hungarian, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak, Spanish, Thai, Turkish

Microsoft OneNote



- ▶ When learning a language, it's important to take notes of what you are learning.
- ▶ Writing things down (or typing them) helps you remember.
- ▶ I use Microsoft OneNote because I like the way I can organize the tabs, and sync across my devices.
- ▶ But any type of notetaking application would work (Evernote, etc.)

- ▶ You can also create your own flashcards (with words and pictures) using OneNote.
- ▶ See link on the References page

References

- ▶ **Duolingo** ▶ <https://www.duolingo.com/>
- ▶ **Memrise** ▶ <http://www.memrise.com/home/>
- ▶ **Mondly** ▶ <https://www.mondlylanguages.com/>
- ▶ **Busuu** ▶ <https://www.busuu.com/>
- ▶ **Rosetta Stone** ▶ <http://www.rosettastone.com/>
- ▶ **Innovative Language** ▶ <https://www.innovativelanguage.com/>
 - ▶ Or <http://www.italianpod101.com/>
- ▶ **Anki** ▶ <http://ankisrs.net/>
- ▶ **Chegg Flashcards** ▶ <https://www.chegg.com/mobile/>
- ▶ **Microsoft OneNote** ▶ <https://www.onenote.com/>
- ▶ **Make flashcards with OneNote** ▶ <https://blogs.office.com/2010/08/28/test-yourself-with-paperless-onenote-flashcards/>