

BRINGING ELECTRICAL DEVICES TO ITALY

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Advance planning will best help you keep your electronic devices charged and ready to use. There are several things you will need to consider as you prepare for your trip.

DETERMINE WHETHER YOU NEED AN ADAPTER OR CONVERTER

Some travelers assume they need expensive voltage converters to charge their electronic devices. In reality, most laptop computers, cell phones and camera battery chargers are [dual voltage](#), meaning they will work on 110 volts (in the United States, for example) and on 220 volts (in Europe and most other parts of the world) and will work with electric frequencies ranging from 50 Hertz to 60 Hertz. In fact, **many electronic devices will be damaged or destroyed by voltage converters**, since the device already contains a converter.

To find out whether your electronic device is dual voltage, you will need to read the tiny words written on the bottom of your device or charger. (You may need a magnifying glass to read the miniscule print.) If your device is dual voltage, you will see something like "Input 100 – 240V, 50 – 60 Hz." If your device is indeed dual voltage, you will need a plug adapter to use it, but **not** a voltage converter.

Bring Only the Devices You Really Need

Take a few moments to review the capabilities of your mobile devices and the costs to use them in another country. Plan to bring only those devices you will use regularly; this will minimize your charging time and keep [data roaming charges](#) down. (If you don't know how much overseas cell phone or tablet use will cost, contact your service provider and ask before you travel.) If one device, such as a tablet, can do everything that your laptop and cell phone can, leave something at home.

Determine Which Plug Adapters to Bring

Each country determines its own [electrical distribution system and type of electrical outlet](#). In the United States, for example, two-pronged plugs are the standard, although three-pronged grounded plugs are also very common. In Italy, most outlets take plugs with two round prongs, although bathrooms, if they have any outlets, often have three-pronged (round prongs, all in a row) grounded outlets. You can buy a [multi-country plug adapter](#) if you are not sure which type of adapter to bring, or you can research the types of plug adapters commonly needed for your destination country and bring those.

Ideally, you should bring several adapters if you plan to charge more than one electronic device per day. Your hotel room may only have a few electrical outlets, but some may be in better condition than others, and some may be grounded outlets rather than standard ones. You may even need to plug one adapter into another in order to use it. For example, you can plug a smaller-sized two-pronged European adapter into the smaller-sized grounded three-prong European adapter in order to plug your electronic device's larger two-pronged European plug into a grounded outlet.

Test Your Adapters before Leaving Home

Obviously, you can't plug your adapters into an outlet that is hundreds of miles away, but you can determine which plugs fit into your collection of adapters. Be sure the plug fits smoothly and snugly into the adapter; a floppy fit will create problems when you try to charge your electronic devices.
