F.A.Q. FOR USE OF THE POST CODES AND ASSOCIATED TERRITORIAL DATABASES

When did the latest edition of the CAP (Post Code) come into force?
Poste updates the list of Post Codes three times a year, indicatively in June/September and December of each year.

Has the structure of the Post Code changed?
The structure has not changed, the Post Code continues to contain 5 digits, each one of which has a clearly defined meaning depending on the position of the digit:
• 1st digit: identifies the Postal Region;
• 2nd and 3rd digits: identify the Province;
• 3rd digit: can assume the values 0, 1, 5, 8, 9. Digits 1 and 9 identify the provincial Capital. Digits 0, 5, and 8 identify the provincial localities identified by the first two digits.

If the 3rd digit is 0 or 8:

• 4th digit: Identifies the "provincial road network" i.e., a group of localities on the same communication line.
• 5th digit: digits from 1 to 9 identify the localities of the "road network" for which the Delivery Office can be directly identified through the post code.

  0 identifies a group of localities of the "road network". If the 3rd digit is an odd number 1 or 9:

• 4th and 5th digits: Identify the Area of the town code. Minor provincial capitals (e,g, Latina), are not divided into town codes; therefore, the 4th and 5th digits are "00". Cesena is an exception as it is divided into town codes despite not being a provincial capital.

What additions have been introduced to the Post Code system?
The changes of Post Codes are aimed at improving the automatic mail handling in the sorting and delivery phases.
To optimise the organisation of delivery and consequently improve the quality of the service, new Post Codes are periodically attributed throughout the country

Can I download the Post Code data for free?
No, Poste Italiane provides its users with the necessary tools to find the correct post code for every Italian address free of charge on its official website (Search Post Code), both through its contact centre (free-phone number 803.160)) or at post offices. This ensures full publicity of the data. However, the full files cannot be downloaded from the Internet as the post code database is the property of Poste Italiane, which owns its intellectual and industrial property rights.

Is it mandatory to write the post code in the mailing address?
Yes, the post code is a mandatory element of the address and must always be indicated.

What is the CAP Professional territorial database? Can I have an operating guide?
The CAP Professional is a database in MS Access format which contains all the Italian localities and the place-name data of the 41 cities with multiple post codes.

The CAP Professional does not include software for consulting the data for the normalisation of addresses. Based on the data contained in the CAP Professional, address updates and normalisations are charged to the customer. The technical specifications describing in detail the structure of the database and its use are supplied with the database. For further details, please contact us at dataservices@posteitaliane.it.

What is the CAP Street File database service?
The CAP Street File is an alphanumeric database and is available in MS
Access 2000 format, which provides not only the information contained in the CAP Professional, but the street directory of 1,000 of the main Italian cities (municipalities with a population of greater than 10,000 inhabitants).

What is the CAP Zone database service?
CAP Zone is the geographical database of the "territorial polygons" corresponding to the boundaries of the post code areas present on the entire Italian territory. A "territorial polygon" is a vector space format that can be used in geographic information systems (GIS). This database is provided in "shapefile" format.

What is the CAP Delivery Points database service?
This is the database of postal delivery points. Allows the correct positioning of delivery points of Italian residential and business units in order to develop mapping services or territorial analyses. The entire database is subject to a continuous certification process implemented within Poste Italiane.

What is the Points of Interest database service?
The POI is the database of Poste Italiane services which allows use of the information related to proprietary services, geo-referenced on the territory. It is composed of over 60,000 points of interest, complete with detailed information such opening/closing times, number of branches, postbox address, etc.

Do I need to have MS Access to be able to use the post code databases?
No, not necessarily. Our post code territorial databases can be accessed through various platforms and do not necessarily require the use of Microsoft systems. Our post code databases are sold in MS Access 2000 format, but that does not mean that you have to purchase MS Windows or MS Access to use them. You can use products of other suppliers or open source software. In fact, you can access our post code databases using any one of the operating systems available on the market (MS Windows, Linux, Sun Solaris, Mac OS X, etc) or open source software (e.g. OpenOffice, which you can download for free from the Internet) or even different drivers (such as MySQL, which can also be downloaded for free from the Internet). For further details, please contact us at dataservices@posteitaliane.it.

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Do I need to have ARCGis to be able to use the CAP Zone database?
No, not necessarily. The "territorial polygon" database is available in the standard "ESRI shapefile" format and can be used directly on all the most common GIS platforms. It can be easily converted to other formats by using open source conversion software (such as AutoCAD, QGIS, GRASS, OziExplorer, etc.). For further details, please contact us at dataservices@posteitaliane.it.

Do the CAP Professional and CAP Street File databases contain the abbreviations of all the DUGs or place-name markers (Via, Piazza, Viale, Corso, etc.)?
No, they don't. In accordance with the Poste Italiane standards, these two databases contain solely the abbreviations of the DUGs (generic urban denominations) relating to the roads of the cities respectively contained therein; therefore, the CAP Professional database contains the DUGs related to the 41 cities divided into postal areas, whereas the CAP Street File database contains the DUGs related to the 700 cities it refers to. Standard abbreviations of DUGs are a maximum of 4 characters long. For further details, please contact us at dataservices@posteitaliane.it.

Does the CAP Professional database allow you to extract/highlight the districts or roads that have changed their post code?
Yes, it does. The CAP Professional database has special "Variazione" tables that highlight all the changes that have occurred between the previous edition and the current one. Besides post code changes, you can also identify municipality, hamlet, and street name changes. For further details, please contact us at dataservices@posteitaliane.it.

Can I update the CAP Professional or CAP Street File databases on any platform?
Yes, you can update the CAP Professional or CAP Street File database on any platform. Please bear in mind that the post code territorial databases do not include address normalisation software. Therefore, based on the data contained in the CAP Professional and CAP Street File post code databases, address updates and normalisations are charged to the customer. For further details, please contact us at dataservices@posteitaliane.it.

What does "internal user licence" of the territorial databases of Poste Italiane mean?
This licence is issued exclusively for internal company use, like the processing of its address archives. The database cannot, under any circumstances, be transferred or sold to third parties. Furthermore, the use of the databases cannot be extended to any associates, affiliated companies, subsidiaries or parent companies. Therefore, purchasers can use the database to verify the status of their personal details, updating them with the changes in the place-name structure of the national territory and adjusting the addresses into line with the standard wordings of Poste Italiane. The internal user licence is valid for 36 months. Users can request the supply of the individual database in force, or can opt for the continuous supply of updates that are periodically published by Poste Italiane. For further details, please contact us at dataservices@posteitaliane.it.

What does "Corporate internal user licence" of the territorial databases of Poste Italiane mean?
This licence is issued exclusively for internal company use, like the processing of its address archives. However unlike the simple internal user licence, this extends the use of the databases to any associates, affiliated companies, subsidiaries or parent companies. The internal user licence is valid for 36 months. Users can request the supply of the individual database currently in force, or can opt for the continuous supply of updates that are periodically published by Poste Italiane. For further details, please contact us at dataservices@posteitaliane.it

What does commercial use of the Territorial Databases of Poste Italiane mean?
The commercial user licence is issued to companies that:

- Provide address processing services (normalisation and de-duplication) intended for third party customers, through batch mode (off-line) or via the web, or that perform market analyses for third party customers based on the organisational data of the territory.
- Provide services of any kind, both to the end consumer and business users, which make provision, among other things, for the processing of third party addresses (typically business customers but also consortium companies or associated in various guises with the company that do not fall under the "corporate" cases as above).
- Include the Territorial Databases of Poste Italiane in an application (desktop software or on-line mode) in protected format, so as not to transmit or sell the Poste database to the end user.

The commercial licence is available on a fixed-term (36 months) and open-ended (perpetual) basis. For more detailed information please contact us at dataservices@posteitaliane.it.

What is the difference between a single update and the continuous supply of updates?
Regardless of the licence type, the customer can opt for two different types of supply:

- In the event of the single update-based supply, the customer will receive only the supply of the latest database available at the date of signing of the contract. The contract will not be automatically renewed on expiry.
- In the event of supply of the database with continuous updates, the customer will receive the supply of the latest database available at the date of signing of the contract and subsequently, for the entire duration of the contract and any renewals, he will receive two updates per year, included in the price, when they are issued. The contract will be automatically renewed. In the event of withdrawal, the customer will no longer receive periodic updates.

I have to send a mail item. Can I write just the recipient's titles (Ms, Miss, Mr. Dr) in the first line?
Although we recommend writing all the recipient's details (title, full name, company name) in the first line, you can use the first line to write only the titles, provided that the limit of maximum 5 lines (maximum 6 for foreign addresses) is met. Therefore, the following address is acceptable:

To Mr. Mario Rossi
VIALE EUROPA 300
00144 ROMA RM

Can I specify information regarding staircase, flat number, and floor after the house number?
No, you can't. No further recipients' information should be indicated after the house number. Information regarding staircase, flat, floor, building, block, etc. can be included in the "building" line (between the recipient and the address).

For example:
Mario Rossi Scala A Interno 4
VIA FRANCESCO CILEA 12
20151 MILANO MI

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Is it mandatory to write the address without punctuation or special characters?
Please do not use punctuation or special characters when writing the address, especially in the address, district and country lines. However, you can use the full stop and superscript in the Street, Locality and Country lines.
You can add a slash / to the house number as a separator between the main number and the number extension, and you can add a comma to separate the metre fractions in house numbers indicating the kilometre.

How do I write the address on correspondence to be sent to a hamlet that is not included in the Italian Post Code volume?
The Italian Post Code volume includes all the most important municipalities and hamlets from a postal perspective. If the correspondence is addressed to a hamlet published by Poste Italiane, the District line must indicate: Post code, name of the hamlet, Province abbreviation

For example:
ABC Srl
VIA DEL PALAZZINO 19
40051 ALTEDO BO

If the hamlet has the same post code of the Municipality it belongs to, you can also indicate the name of the Municipality; otherwise, you must only indicate the name of the hamlet.

For example:
ABC Srl
VIA DEL PALAZZINO 19
40051 MALALBERGO BO

If the correspondence is addressed to a hamlet not published by Poste Italiane, the Locality line must indicate: Post code, name of the Municipality to which the hamlet belongs, and the Province abbreviation.

If you want to indicate the hamlet, this must be added in the line between the recipient and the address without any other marker.

How do I write the address on correspondence delivered to PO boxes?
For correspondence addressed to PO boxes, the address line must indicate the word "CASELLA POSTALE" followed by its number (maximum 5 digits). You must also indicate, in one of the two optional lines, the name of the Post Office where the PO box is located, preceded by the word "Ufficio". This information must be included in the line immediately above the Address line. Lastly, the Locality line must indicate the specific post code associated to the Post Office where the PO box is located and not a generic postal code.

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