

Gemini: models and plans

Who is who among Flash, Pro and subscriptions, before you spend a single euro



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How to use this handout

This handout gathers, in written and ordered form, everything covered in the lesson. You do not need to memorise it: it is there so you can find things again calmly, later, when the lesson is over and a question is left hanging.

GOAL

Understand what Gemini really means, recognise the models in the app's selector and choose the right plan without being confused by version numbers.

What you will be able to do

- Explain in plain words the difference between Gemini as a family of models and Gemini as an app.
- Recognise Flash-Lite, Flash, Pro and extended reasoning in the selector, and say what each one is for.
- Compare the free, Plus, Pro and Ultra plans and decide which one to start from.
- Read the usage limits page to see how much «fuel» you have left.

1. What Gemini is (and why it has so many names)

Gemini is a brand, not a single program: like Fiat, which makes the Panda but also the delivery van.

If you have tried to understand Gemini by reading the news, you have probably got confused. One day it is «Google's chatbot», the next it is «a model», then «an app», then «a subscription». They are all right, because the word is used for three different things.

- **The models:** the real artificial «brains», trained by Google (for example Flash and Pro).
- **The app and the website:** the window where you talk to those brains, at gemini.google.com and in the Windows app.
- **The tools built around them:** Gemini Notebook for studying, Antigravity to let an agent work on your computer, the open Gemma models.

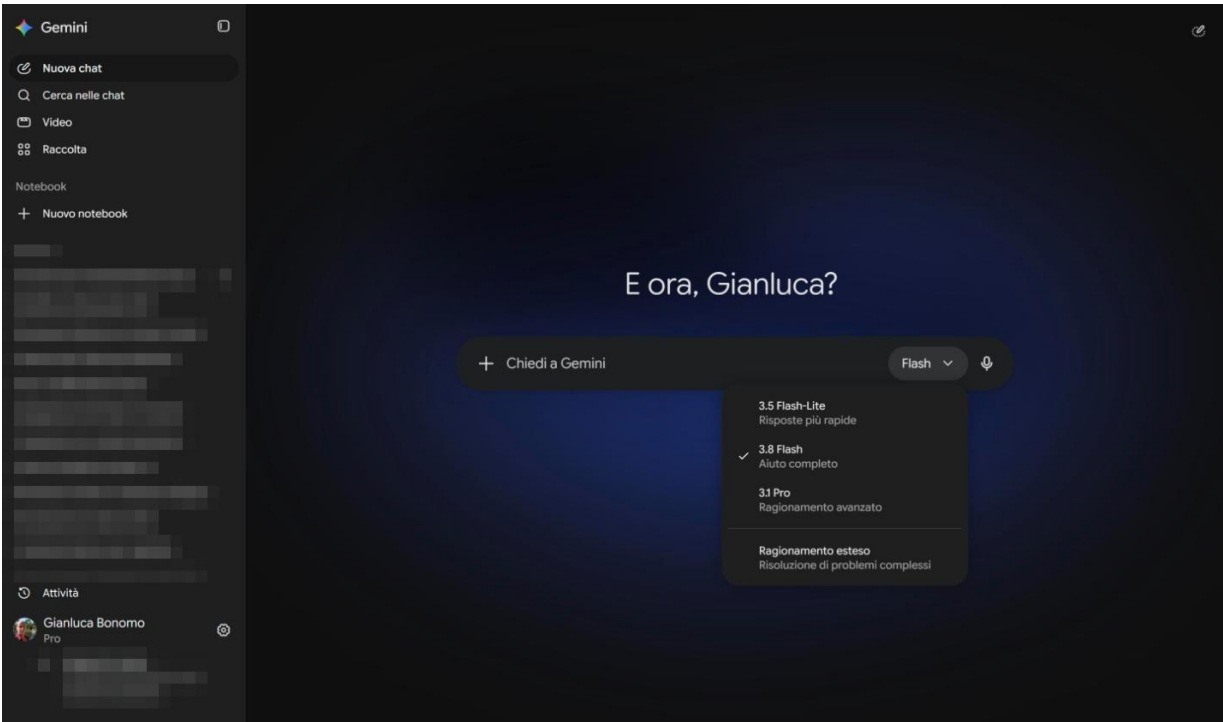
IN PLAIN WORDS

The model is the engine. The app is the dashboard. The subscription decides how many miles you can drive.

In this course we will see every piece, one at a time. Today we tidy the garage: which engines exist, how much they cost and which one you really need.

2. The models: light, balanced, powerful

When you open Gemini on the web, next to the writing box you find a word, for example **Flash**, with a small arrow. That is the model selector. Click it and a small menu opens: the list of engines available on your account.



The model selector in Gemini on the web (7 October 2026, Google AI Pro plan). The interface is in Italian.

On my account, that day, the list said this. Each entry has a name and a short description written by Google.

Menu entry	Google's description	Comparison
3.5 Flash-Lite	Faster answers (Risposte più rapide)	The bicycle: quick for errands near home.
3.8 Flash	Complete help (Aiuto completo)	The family car: fine for almost everything.
3.1 Pro	Advanced reasoning (Ragionamento avanzato)	The truck: slower, but it carries heavy loads.

Menu entry	Google's description	Comparison
Extended reasoning (Ragionamento esteso)	Solving complex problems	The same truck, with a driver who stops to study the map.

The models shown in the selector. Descriptions are the ones displayed by Gemini, translated.

2.1 The number does not tell you who is best

Look closely: there is a **3.8** Flash and a **3.1** Pro. A higher number does not mean «more powerful»: it shows the generation. The name (Flash-Lite, Flash, Pro) shows the **role**. A new Flash may be more up to date than an older Pro, but it is still built to be nimble, not for the longest reasoning.

NAMES CHANGE FAST

Version numbers change every few months, and Google retires old models. Do not memorise «3.8»: learn the criterion. **Light** for speed, **balanced** for everyday work, **powerful** for hard problems. Data checked on 7 October 2026.

Which model for which job

Flash-Lite

Quick, simple questions

Flash

Everyday work

Pro

Long, difficult tasks

Extended reasoning

Really complex problems

Four roles, four choices

3. The plans: free, Plus, Pro and Ultra

Gemini can be used for free, but paid plans widen the limits and add features. The simplest way to see them is to think of a **gym membership**: with the free one you get in and use the basic machines; with the pricier ones you get more visits, more classes and the weights room.

Plan	Indicative price in Italy	What changes
Free	0 euros	Gemini on the web and in the app, with Flash and variable access to Pro. Images, Deep Research, Live, Canvas and Gems included, with lower limits.
Google AI Plus	about 4.99 euros a month	Limits roughly double the free plan, video generation, more storage.
Google AI Pro	about 21.99 euros a month	Limits roughly four times the free plan, the Pro model and much more storage. It is the plan I use.
Google AI Ultra	from about 99.99 euros a month	Much higher limits and early access to new things, such as Deep Think. Meant for people who work with AI all day.

Google AI plans, Italian page checked on 7 October 2026. Prices and limits may change.

ALWAYS CHECK THE OFFICIAL PRICE

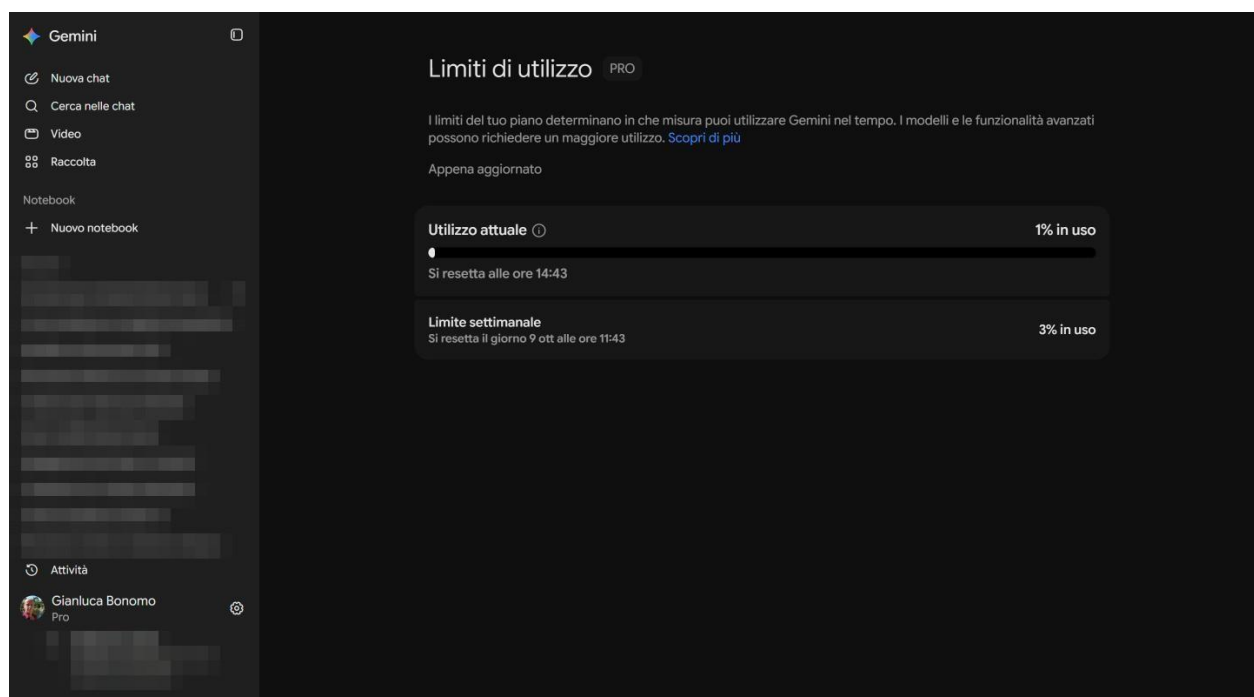
The figures in the table are the ones seen on the official plans page on 7 October 2026, in Italy. Before subscribing open gemini.google/subscriptions and read the current price: they change often, especially with promotions, and they differ from country to country.

3.1 And if it is a company account?

If you use Gmail and Google Drive with a work account (Google Workspace), the administrator decides what is switched on. In that case the privacy and data rules change: ask whoever manages the account before pasting confidential documents.

4. Usage limits: the fuel tank

Every plan has a **fuel tank**. The more you ask, the emptier it gets; then it refills by itself. Gemini shows it in plain sight: from the settings menu (the cog at the bottom left) choose **Limiti di utilizzo** (Usage limits).



The usage limits page: current usage, with the refill time, and weekly limit.

The page has two bars. **Current usage** is the short tank, with the time it refills; **Weekly limit** is the long one, with the reset day. The day I took the screenshot I was at one per cent and three per cent: I had just started.

- Long requests and the most powerful models use more than a short question to Flash.
- Images, video and Deep Research weigh more than a normal chat.
- If you always run out of tank, that is the signal to consider a higher plan, not before.

5. How to choose without going crazy

Here is a practical rule: **start from the free plan and change only when you feel the need**. A three-by-two-metre pond does not need an Olympic swimming pool pump.

1. Use **Flash** to write, summarise, translate and answer everyday questions.
2. Move to **Pro** when the task has many pieces to hold together (a plan, an analysis, a long text).
3. Try **extended reasoning** when Pro's answer feels hasty on a really complicated problem.
4. Consider **Plus or Pro** when you often hit the limits, need video or want more room in your Google Drive.

5. Skip **Ultra** unless AI is your daily work tool.

A REAL CASE

Marta is building a pond. With Flash she asks for the list of materials. With Pro she gets a work plan over three weekends, with estimated costs. All the other questions, a thousand little things, she asks Flash-Lite while her hands are covered in soil.

Hands-on exercise

Fifteen minutes, a Google account and the website gemini.google.com.

1. Open gemini.google.com and sign in. Click the model name next to the writing box and note the entries you see, with their description.
2. Write the same question with two different models, for example Flash and Pro: «Explain to a child why the water in a pond turns green in spring».
3. Compare the two answers: length, clarity, time taken. Which one do you prefer for this task?
4. Open the settings menu, go into Usage limits and note the current and weekly usage percentage.
5. Write in one line which plan you have (or which one seems right for you) and why.

WATCH OUT

Can you say what each model in the list is for?

Did you find the usage limits page?

Questions that come up in class

Is Gemini free?

Yes, there is a free plan with Gemini on the web and in the app. Paid plans raise the limits and add features, such as video generation.

What is the difference between Gemini and Google AI Pro?

Gemini is the artificial intelligence; Google AI Pro is the subscription that gives you higher limits, more storage and the most powerful model. It is like the difference between the engine and the gym membership.

Why is 3.8 Flash newer than 3.1 Pro?

Because the number shows the generation, not the power. Flash and Pro are two different roles: a Flash version may come out after a Pro version.

Can I change model in the middle of a conversation?

Usually yes: the selector is always next to the writing box and applies to the following requests. If the answer changes a lot, remember that the new model may read the earlier conversation differently.

Is Gemini Notebook the same as Gemini?

No: it is the new name of NotebookLM, a tool for studying your own documents. We look at it in lesson 9. From the Gemini app, however, you open it from the sidebar.

Glossary

Term	What it means
Extended reasoning	A mode in which the model takes more time to think about complex problems.
Flash	The family of fast models for everyday use.
Model	The artificial «brain» trained by Google that generates the answers.
Plan	The subscription (free or paid) that decides limits and features.
Pro	The family of more powerful models, built for difficult tasks.
Usage limit	The ceiling of requests you can make in a given period, which refills by itself.

Further reading

Google, Google AI plans (gemini.google/subscriptions) - Italian page checked on 7 October 2026

Gemini app on the web, model selector and Usage limits page - author's screenshots, 7 October 2026

WATCH OUT

Data and prices checked on 7 October 2026, on the Italian site (euro prices). Model names, limits and prices change often: always check Google's official pages before subscribing.