

*Michel Thomas*<sup>®</sup> method

# Portuguese

## Introductory Course

Virginia Catmur

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# Introduction

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## What is the Michel Thomas Method?

The Michel Thomas Method\* all-audio courses, published by Hodder Education, provide an accelerated method for language learning that is truly revolutionary. And they promise a remarkable educational experience that will make your learning both exciting and pleasurable.

## How does the Method work?

The Method works by breaking a language down into its component parts, enabling learners to reconstruct the language themselves – to form their own sentences, to say what they want, when they want. Because you learn the language in small steps, you can build it up yourself to produce ever more complicated sentences.

**No books**  
**No writing**  
**Just confidence – in hours**

The Michel Thomas Method is 'in tune' with the way your brain works, so you assimilate the language easily and don't forget it! The Method teaches you through your own language, so there's no stress, and no anxiety. The teacher builds up the new language, step by step, and you don't move on till you've absorbed and understood the previous point. As Michel Thomas said, *'What you understand, you know, and what you know, you don't forget.'*

With parallels to the way you learnt your own language, each language is learnt in 'real-time' conditions. There is no need to stop for homework, additional exercises or vocabulary memorization.

\*US patent 6,565,358

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*'Learning Spanish with Michel was the most extraordinary learning experience of my life – it was unforgettable.'*

**Emma Thompson**

*'Michel Thomas is a precious find indeed.'*

**The Guardian**

The classroom situation on the recording lets you learn with others. You enjoy their success, and you learn from their mistakes. The students on the recordings are not reading from scripts and they have received no additional instruction or preparation – just the guidance you hear on the recording. You, as the learner, become the third student and participate actively in the class.

A very important part of the Michel Thomas Method is that full responsibility for your learning lies with the teacher, not with you, the pupil. This helps to ensure that you can relax, and feel confident, so allowing you to learn effectively.

You will enjoy the Method as it creates real excitement – you can't wait to use the language.

*'There's no such thing as a poor student, only a poor teacher.'*

**Michel Thomas**

## **What level of language will I achieve?**

The Introductory and Foundation courses are designed for complete beginners. They make no assumption of a knowledge of any language other than English. They will give the beginner a practical and functional use of the

### HOW ARE THE RECORDINGS BEST USED?

- **Relax!** Make yourself comfortable before playing the recording and try to let go of the tensions and anxieties traditionally associated with learning.
- **Do not write or take any notes.** Remove notebooks, pens, dictionaries and anything else associated with learning at school.
- **Do not try to remember.** While participating in the recording and afterwards, it is important that you do not try to memorize specific words or expressions. It is a basic principle of the Michel Thomas Method that the responsibility for the student's learning lies with the teacher. With the Michel Thomas Method as your teacher, your learning will be based on understanding, and what you understand you don't forget.
- **Interact fully with the recordings.** Use the pause button and respond out loud (or in a whisper, or in your head, if you are in a public place) before the students' responses. *This is essential.* You do not learn by repetition but by thinking out the answers to each question; it is by your own thought process that you truly learn.
- **Give yourself time to think.** The students on the recordings had all the time they needed to think out their responses. On the recordings their 'thinking time' has been cut in order to make full use of the recording time. You can take all the time you need (by using your pause button). The pause button is the key to *your* learning! To get you used to pausing the recording before the students' responses, bleeps have been added to the first few tracks. When you hear the bleep, pause the recording, think out and say your response, then release the pause button to hear the student's, then the teacher's, response.
- **Start at the beginning of the course.** Whatever your existing knowledge of the language you are learning, it is important that you follow the way that the teacher builds up your knowledge of the language.
- **Do not get annoyed with yourself if you make a mistake.** Mistakes are part of the learning process; as long as you understand why you made the mistake and you have the 'ahaa' reaction – 'yes, of course, I understand now' – you are doing fine. If you made a mistake and you do not understand why, you may have been daydreaming for a few seconds. The course is structured so that you cannot go on unless you fully understand everything, so just go back a little and you will pick up where you left off.
- **Stop the recording whenever it suits you.** You will notice that this course is not divided into lessons; you will always be able to pick up from where you left off, without the need to review.

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spoken language. They are also appropriate for anyone who has studied a language before, but has forgotten much of it or does not have confidence in speaking.

The Introductory course comprises the first two hours of the Foundation Course. The Advanced course follows on from the Foundation course and expands on structures touched on in the earlier course to improve your understanding and mastery of complex language.

The Michel Thomas Method teaches the everyday conversational language that will allow you to communicate in a wide variety of situations, empowered by the ability to create your own sentences and use the language naturally, having absorbed the vocabulary and grammatical structures.

### **How quickly can I learn with the Michel Thomas Method?**

One of the most remarkable features of the Michel Thomas Method is the speed with which results are achieved. A knowledge of the language that will take months of conventional study can be achieved in a matter of hours with the Michel Thomas Method. The teacher masterfully guides the student through an instructional process at a very rapid rate – yet the process will appear informal, relaxed and unhurried. The teacher moves quickly between numerous practice sessions, which all build the learners' confidence in their ability to communicate in complex ways.

Because the Michel Thomas Method is based on understanding, not memorization, there is no set limit to the length of time that you should study the course. It offers immersion without strain or stress, and you will find the recordings are not divided into lessons, though the material has been indexed for your convenience. This means that you can stop and start as you please.

The excitement of learning will motivate you to continue listening and learning for as long a time as is practical for you. This will enable you to make progress faster than you ever imagined possible.

## Who is the Michel Thomas Method for?

Anyone can learn a language with the Michel Thomas Method – and the wide diversity of Michel Thomas’s own students proves this. Not only did Michel instruct the rich and famous, but he also taught many so-called ‘hopeless cases’. For example, in 1997, Michel taught French to a group of sixteen-year-olds in north London who had been told they could never learn a language, and gave them the ability to use the new language far beyond their expectations – in just a week. Perhaps more importantly, he gave them the confidence to speak and a belief in, and the experience of, their own ability to learn.

Whatever your motivation for learning a language, the Michel Thomas Method quite simply offers the most effective method that is available.

## What can I do next?

Try to speak with native speakers whenever possible, as this is invaluable for improving your fluency. Television and radio programmes via satellite podcasts, newspapers and magazines (print or on-line) (especially those which feature interviews) will give you practice in the most current and idiomatic language. Expose yourself to the language whenever you can – you will have firm foundations on which to build.

Continue your study with the Foundation and Advanced courses. Then build your vocabulary with the existing and planned Vocabulary courses, which carry forward the Michel Thomas Method teaching tradition and faithfully follow Michel Thomas’s unique approach to foreign language learning. The series editor is Dr Rose Lee Hayden, Michel’s most experienced and trusted teacher. The courses remain faithful to the method Michel Thomas used in his earlier courses, with the all-audio and ‘building-block’ approach. The presenter builds on Michel’s foundations to encourage the student at home to build up their vocabulary in the foreign language, using relationships with English, where appropriate, or connections within the foreign language itself. The student takes part in the audio, following prompts by the presenter, as in Michel Thomas’ original Foundation and Advanced courses.

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## Who was Michel Thomas?



*Michel with Grace Kelly*

Michel Thomas (1914–2005) spent most of his childhood in Germany and France. He studied psychology at the Sorbonne (Paris) and at the University of Vienna. During the Second World War he fought for the French Resistance; after the war he worked for the U.S. army. His war-time experiences, including two years in concentration and labour camps and torture at the hands of the Gestapo, fuelled his passion for teaching languages, as a result of which he developed a uniquely effective language-teaching method that brought to his door celebrities (including Barbra Streisand and Emma Thompson), diplomats, academics and business executives from around the world. He established the first Michel Thomas Language Center in Beverly Hills in 1947, and continued to travel the world teaching languages for the rest of his life.

## Whom did Michel Thomas teach?

People came from all over the world to learn a foreign language with Michel Thomas – because his method works. His students, numbering in the thousands, included well-known people from the arts and from the corporate, political and academic worlds. For example, he taught French to filmstar Grace Kelly prior to her marriage to Prince Rainier of Monaco.

Michel's list of clients included:

- *Celebrities:* Emma Thompson, Woody Allen, Barbra Streisand, Warren Beatty, Melanie Griffith, Eddie Izzard, Bob Dylan, Jean Marsh, Donald Sutherland, Mrs George Harrison, Anne Bancroft, Mel Brooks, Nastassja Kinski, Carl Reiner, Raquel Welch, Johnny Carson, Julie Andrews, Isabelle Adjani, Candice Bergen, Barbara Hershey, Priscilla Presley, Loretta Swit, Tony Curtis, Diana Ross, Herb Alpert, Angie Dickinson, Lucille Ball, Doris Day, Janet Leigh, Natalie Wood, Jayne Mansfield, Ann-Margaret, Yves Montand,

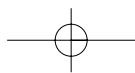
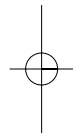
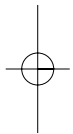


Kim Novak, Otto Preminger, Max von Sydow, Peter Sellers, François Truffaut, Sophia Coppola.

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- *Diplomats, dignitaries and academics:* Former U.S. Ambassador to France, Walter Curley; U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., Joseph V. Reed; Cardinal John O'Connor, Archbishop of New York; Anthony Cardinal Bevilacqua, Archbishop of Philadelphia; Armand Hammer; Sarah Ferguson, Duchess of York; Professor Herbert Morris, Dean of Humanities at UCLA; Warren Keegan, Professor of Business at Pace University in New York; Professor Wesley Posvar, former President of the University of Pittsburgh.

- *Executives from the following corporations:* AT&T International, Coca-Cola, Procter & Gamble, Chase Manhattan Bank, American Express, Merrill Lynch, New York Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Boeing Aircraft, General Electric, Westinghouse Electric, Bank of America, Max Factor, Rand Corporation, Bertelsmann Music Group-RCA, Veuve Clicquot Inc., McDonald's Corporation, Rover, British Aerospace.



## Track listing

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### CD1 Track 1

Introduction

### CD1 Track 2

Words ending in '-ible' and '-able' in English (e.g. 'possible', 'probable') are similar in Portuguese. The Portuguese ending is *-ível* or *-ável*, with the stress on the *i* or *á*: 'possible' = *possível*. The unstressed *o* sounds almost like the English 'oo'.

Pronunciation of *rr*: *horível* = 'horrible'; *terrível* = 'terrible'

*confortável* = 'comfortable'; *provável* = 'probable'; *aceitável* = 'acceptable'

*é* = 'is' or 'it is'

### CD1 Track 3

*para* = 'for' as in 'for me'; unstressed *a* sounds like the 'a' in the English name 'Linda'

*para mim* = 'for me'. The *m* at the end of a word indicates that it is a nasal sound (pronounced through the nose).

*o senhor* = 'you' (speaking to a man); *a senhora* = 'you' (speaking to a woman). (There is a less formal form *você*, but you need to know when it is appropriate to use it; we will use *o senhor* / *a senhora* in this course.)

### CD1 Track 4

*não* 'not' and 'no' (*ã* is also a nasal sound). *Não* goes before *é* to mean 'not it is = it is not': *não é possível* 'not it is possible = it is not possible'.

To ask a question, just raise your voice at the end: *É possível?* = 'It is possible? = Is it possible?'

### CD1 Track 5

*porque?* (literally 'for what?') = 'Why?' Portuguese-speakers often add *é que* = 'is it that' after a question word: *Porque é que não é aceitável para o senhor?* = 'For what is it that not it is acceptable for you? = Why isn't it

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acceptable for you?’

*assim* = ‘like that’, ‘that way’

### CD1 Track 6

*lamento*, literally ‘I lament’ = ‘I’m sorry’ – the *o* at the end of *lamento* indicates the verb ending for ‘I’. *eu* = ‘I’, but you only need to use this if you want to emphasise who is doing the action.

*desculpe* = ‘excuse (me)’

*mas* = ‘but’. The final *-s* will sound differently depending on what follows it. It sounds like the ‘s’ of the English ‘measure’ when the following word starts with a consonant (e.g. *mas não é* = ‘but it is not’).

*sim* = ‘yes’

Words ending in ‘-ent’ and ‘-ant’ in English (e.g. ‘different’, ‘important’) are similar in Portuguese. The Portuguese ending is *-ente* or *-ante*. Portuguese words only have one stressed syllable per word. Words ending in a vowel are usually stressed on the syllable before last, so on the *a* of *importante*: *importante* = ‘important’.

*diferente* = ‘different’

*restaurante* = ‘restaurant’. The *s* here sounds like the English ‘sh’ because it’s in front of *t*.

Pronunciation of an unstressed *e*: skate over it.

### CD1 Track 7

*bom* (masculine thing), *boa* (feminine thing) = ‘good’

*muito* = ‘very’

Pronunciation of *s*: the *s* of *mas* sounds like English ‘z’ when the following word starts with a vowel (e.g. *mas é* = ‘but it is’).

*tenho* = ‘I have’

Pronunciation of *nh*: sounds like English ‘ny’.

*tenho-o* = ‘I have it’; *quero-o* = ‘I want it’

*agora* = ‘now’

Position of 'it' in the negative: *não o tenho* = 'not it I have = I don't have it'.  
*constante* = 'constant'; *evidente* = 'evident'; *urgente* = 'urgent':  
 pronunciation of *g* and *ur*.

### CD1 Track 8

*porque* = 'because'

*tem* = 'you have'

*o que* (literally 'the what') = 'what'. In this case also, Portuguese-speakers often add *é que*: *O que é que tem?* = 'The what is it that you have? = What do you have?'

*o* used for masculine things; *a* for feminine things; *o / a* = both 'the' and 'it'.  
*tem-no* = 'you have it'. When you add 'it' to 'you have' you add an *n* to *o / a* to make it easier to say after the nasal sound of *tem*: *tem-no / tem-na*.

Position of 'it' with *porque*: before verb (like with *não* and question words):  
*porque (eu) o / a quero* = 'because (I) it I want = because I want it';  
*Porque (é que) o / a tem?* = 'Why (is it that) it you have? = Why do you have it?'

### CD1 Track 9

*quer* = 'you want'. To make it easier to say, an *e* is added at the end in 'you want it' = *quere-o / a*, but you skate over it.

### CD1 Track 10

*saber* = 'to know'. In Portuguese, the 'to' form, the whole verb, ends in *r* and, therefore, is always stressed on the ending.

*quero saber* = 'I want to know'; *não quero saber* = 'not I want to know = I don't want to know'

*posso* = 'I can'

*pode* = 'you can'. Pronunciation: stress the *o*, skate over the *e*. In Portuguese, the stress in the present tense is on the syllable before last.

*fazer* = 'to do'; *o que posso fazer?* = 'The what I can to do? = What can I do?'

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### CD1 Track 11

*hoje* = 'today'

*algo* = 'something'

### CD1 Track 12

*comer* = 'to eat'. Pronunciation of the *r*.

*tenho fome* = 'I have hunger = I am hungry'; *tem fome* = 'you are hungry'

Pronunciation of the *o*: when stressed should sound like the 'o' of English 'not', and when not stressed should sound almost like the English 'oo', as in 'food'.

### CD2 Track 1

English words ending in '-ary' end in *-ário* in Portuguese: 'necessary' = *necessário*; 'contrary' = *contrário*; 'vocabulary' = *vocabulário*. Portuguese *u* sounds like English 'oo', not like 'yew'.

*preciso de* (literally 'I precise of') = 'I need'. With *preciso de*, if you want to say 'I need it', the 'it' will not be *o* / *a* but *dele* (for a masculine thing) and *dela* (for a feminine thing). *Dele* / *dela* = *de* ('of') + *ele* / *ela* ('he' / 'she' or 'it').

*não preciso dele* = 'I don't need it'. Although we have *não*, 'it' doesn't go before the verb, because the Portuguese is 'need of it'.

*e* = 'and'

### CD2 Track 2

*ver* = 'to see'

*vê-lo* / *vê-la* = 'to see it'. When you attach the 'it' to the 'to' form of the verb, it drops the final *r* and the *o* / *a* turns into *lo* / *la* to make it easier to say.

*não o quero ver* (= 'not it I want to see') means the same as *não quero vê-lo* = 'not I want to see it = I don't want to see it'. If there are two or more consecutive verbs in a sentence, the second and subsequent verbs will be in the full form (the 'to' form in English): *quero ver* = 'I want to see'.

*fazê-lo* / *fazê-la* = 'to do it'

**CD2 Track 3**

Words in English ending in '-ence' and '-ance' end in *-ência* (*-ença*) and *-ância* in Portuguese: 'influence' = *influência*; 'preference' = *preferência*; 'difference' = *diferença*; 'importance' = *importância*.

Most words ending with the letter *-a* are feminine and most words ending with the letter *-o* are masculine.

*a diferença* = 'the difference'; *uma diferença* = 'a difference'

*que* = 'what': *Que preferência tem?* = 'What preference do you have?' *Tem preferência?* = 'Do you have a preference?' (no 'a' in Portuguese)

*por que* = 'for what': *Por que restaurante tem preferência?* = 'For what restaurant do you have a preference?'

*esta noite* = 'this night = tonight'

**CD2 Track 4**

*onde* = 'where'

*jantar* = 'to dine = to have dinner'

Words ending in '-tion' in English end in *-ção* in Portuguese: 'condition' = *condição*; 'nation' = *nação*; 'situation' = *situação*; 'organization' = *organização*. The *ç* of *-ção* sounds like 's', not 'k'. The *-ção* ending is always stressed in Portuguese.

Pronunciation: single *-s-* between two vowels sounds like a 'z': *posição* = 'position'

One English '-tion' word that does not end in *-ção* in Portuguese: 'reservation' = *reserva*

For feminine things: *a* = 'the'; *uma* = 'a'; for masculine things: *o* = 'the'; *um* = 'a'

**CD2 Track 5**

*de* = 'of'; *do* / *da* = 'of the', from = *de* ('of') + *o* / *a* (= 'the'): *da reserva* = 'of the reservation'. For the plural just add *s*.

*dum* / *duma* = *de* ('of') + *um* / *uma* (= 'a') = 'of a': *duma reserva* = 'of a reservation'. When you add *s* to make the plural, the sense is 'some'.

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*confirmação* = 'confirmation': Pronunciation of *ir*: pronounce the *i* and the *r* separately. *ir* in Portuguese does not sound like 'ir' in English.

*tipo* = 'kind / type': *que tipo de* = 'what type of'

### CD2 Track 6

There are some '-tion' words that end in *-ção* but are slightly different from the English: 'translation' = *tradução*; 'explanation' = *explicação*. Most words that end in '-ion' in English and in *-ção* in Portuguese are feminine words, for which 'the' is *a*.

Polite requests: *pode ...?* = 'can you ...?' = 'will you ...?': *Pode fazer uma tradução para mim?* = 'You can to do a translation for me? = Will you do a translation for me?'

*por favor* = 'for favour = please'

Pronunciation of *x*.

*dar* = 'to give'

### CD2 Track 7

Verbs that come from nouns that are similar in English and Portuguese (e.g. 'formation' = *formação*) will also be similar in the two languages. To make the verb in Portuguese, you just add *-ar* to the English verb: 'to form' = *formar*; 'to confirm' = *confirmar*.

The whole form of a verb, the infinitive, is expressed with 'to' in English (for example, 'to eat'). In Portuguese, it is expressed in an ending. There are four endings: *-ar* (*falar* = 'to speak'), *-er* (*comer* = 'to eat'), *-ir* (*sair* = 'to leave / to go out') and *-or* (*pôr* = 'to put').

*impressão* = 'impression'

### CD2 Track 8

*aqui* = 'here'. Like *assim*, *aqui* is stressed in the last syllable because Portuguese words with *i* or *u* in the last syllable are stressed on that last syllable. Words ending in *-l* are also stressed on the last syllable: *Portugal*; *Brasil*; *Funchal*; *Miguel*.



Words that end in *-r*, *-l*, *-i* or have *i* or *u* in the last syllable and are not stressed on that last syllable have a written accent to show where the stress goes: *possível*; *provável*.

Pronunciation of *ss*: like English 's'.

Plural of 'it': *os* / *as* = 'them'; *vê-los* / *vê-las* = 'to see them'

*o* (masculine) and *a* (feminine) not only means 'the' and 'it' in English but also can be used to refer to *o senhor* / *a senhora*. So, 'to see you ('you' = *o senhor* / *a senhora*)' is *vê-lo* / *vê-la*. For the plural just add *s*.

*me* = 'me': *ver-me* = 'to see me'

### CD2 Track 9

*compreender* = 'to understand'

*dizer* = 'to say', 'to tell'

*lhe* (same form for masculine and feminine) = '(to) you': *dizer-lhe* = 'to tell you'

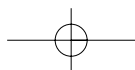
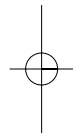
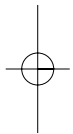
Pronunciation of *lh*: similar to English *y*

*pode dizer-me* and *pode me dizer* (= 'will you tell me') are both correct; the second is more common.

### CD2 Track 10

*isto* = 'this' (in general)

*comprar* = 'to buy'



## Your guide to the Michel Thomas Method courses

- No books
- No writing
- Just confidence

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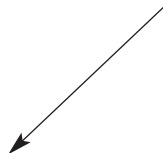
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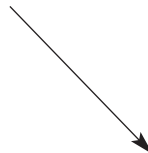
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