

CHEAT SHEET

The Dutch Alphabet

A	ah	J	yay	S	es
B	bay	K	kah	T	tay
C	say	L	el	U	uw
D	day	M	em	V	fay
E	ay	N	en	W	way
F	ef	O	oa	X	ix
G	khay	P	pay	Y	eye
H	hah	Q	kuw	Z	zet
I	ee	R	ehr		

Useful Expressions

- » **Hallo!** (hah-loa) Hello!
- » **Hoi!** (hoy) Hi!
- » **Goedemorgen!** (*khoo-duh-mor-khun*) Good morning!
- » **Goedemiddag!** (*khoo-duh-mih-dakh*) Good afternoon!
- » **Goedenavond!** (*khoo-duh-naa-font*) Good evening!
- » **Tot ziens!** (*tot zeens*) See you later!
- » **Dag/Hoi!** (*dakh/hoy*) Bye!
- » **Alstublieft!** (*als-tuw-bleeft*) Here you are!
- » **Alsjeblieft?** (*als-yuh-bleeft*) Please?
- » **Bedankt!** (*buh-dankt*) Thanks!
- » **Neem me niet kwalijk!** (*naym muh neet kvaag-luhk*) I am sorry!
- » **Sorry!** (*sor-ree*) Sorry!

Useful Questions

- » **Spreekt u Engels?** (*spraykt uw eng-uhls*) Do you speak English?
- » **Kunt u mij helpen?** (*kuhnt uw meye hel-puhn*) Would you help me please?
- » **Waar is het toilet?** (*vaar is het tvaag-let*) Where are the toilets?
- » **Hoeveel kost dat?** (*hoo-fayl kost dat*) How much is that?
- » **Waar kan ik de ... vinden?** (*vaar kan ik duh ... jin-duhn*) Where can I find ...?

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- » **Hoe laat gaat u open?** (*hoo laat khaat uw oa-puhn*) At what time do you open?
- » **Hoe laat gaat u dicht?** (*hoo laat khaat uw dikht*) What time do you close?
- » **Kunt u wat langzamer praten?** (*kuhnt uw vat lang-zaa-muhr praa-tuhn*) Could you talk a bit slower?
- » **Kunt u dat herhalen?** (*kuhnt uw dat her-haa-luhn*) Could you repeat that please?

Phrases for Emergencies

- » **Help!** (*help*) Help!
- » **Schiet op!** (*skheet op*) Hurry up!
- » **Bel 112!** (*bel ayn ayn tvay*) Please call 112!
- » **Politie!** (*poa-lee-tsee*) Police!
- » **Brandweer!** (*brant-vihr*) Fire brigade!
- » **Haal een dokter!** (*haal uhn dok-tuhr*) Get a doctor!
- » **Ik ben ziek!** (*ik ben zeek*) I am ill!
- » **Iemand heeft mijn ... gestolen** (*ee-mant hayft meyen ... khuh-stoa-luhn*) Somebody has stolen my ...
- » **Waar is het ziekenhuis?** (*vaar is het zee-kuhn-hoais?*) Where is the hospital?

The Dutch Calendar

- » **Days** de dagen (*duh daa-khuhn*)
- » **Sunday** zondag (*zon-dakh*)
- » **Monday** maandag (*maan-dakh*)
- » **Tuesday** dinsdag (*dins-dakh*)
- » **Wednesday** woensdag (*voons-dakh*)
- » **Thursday** donderdag (*don-duhr-dakh*)
- » **Friday** vrijdag (*freje-dakh*)
- » **Saturday** zaterdag (*zaa-tuhr-dakh*)
- » **Months** de maanden (*duh maan-duhn*)
- » **January** januari (*yah-nuw-vaa-ree*)
- » **February** februari (*fay-bruw-vaa-ree*)
- » **March** maart (*maart*)
- » **April** april (*ah-pril*)
- » **May** mei (*meye*)
- » **June** juni (*yuw-nee*)
- » **July** juli (*yuw-lee*)
- » **August** augustus (*aow-khuhs-tuhs*)
- » **September** september (*sep-tem-buhr*)
- » **October** oktober (*ok-toa-buhr*)
- » **November** november (*noa-fem-buhr*)
- » **December** december (*day-sem-buhr*)

CHEAT SHEET

The numbers

- » nul (*nuhl*)
- » één (*ayn*)
- » twee (*tvay*)
- » drie (*dree*)
- » vier (*feer*)
- » vijf (*feyef*)
- » zes (*zes*)
- » zeven (*zay-fuhn*)
- » acht (*akht*)
- » negen (*nay-khun*)
- » tien (*teen*)
- » elf (*elf*)
- » twaalf (*twaalf*)
- » dertien (*dehr-teen*)
- » veertien (*fih-teen*)
- » vijftien (*feyef-teen*)
- » zestien (*zes-teen*)
- » zeventien (*zay-fuhn-teen*)
- » achttien (*akh-teen*)
- » negentien (*nay-khun-teen*)

- » twintig (*tvin-tukh*)
- » eenentwintig (*ayn-uhn-tvin-tukh*)
- » tweeëntwintig (*tvay-uhn-tvin-tukh*)
- » drieëntwintig (*dree-uhn-tvin-tukh*)
- » vierentwintig (*feer-uhn-tvin-tukh*)
- » vijfentwintig (*feyef-uhn-tvin-tukh*)
- » 30 dertig (*dehr-tukh*)
- » 40 veertig (*fih-tukh*)
- » 50 vijftig (*feyef-tukh*)
- » 60 zestig (*zes-tukh*)
- » 70 zeventig (*zay-fuhn-tukh*)
- » 80 tachtig (*takh-tukh*)
- » 90 negentig (*nay-khun-tukh*)
- » 100 honderd (*hon-duhrt*)
- » 200 tweehonderd (*tvay-hon-duhrt*)
- » 300 driehonderd (*dree-hon-duhrt*)
- » 400 vierhonderd (*feer-hon-duhrt*)
- » 500 vijfhonderd (*feyef-hon-duhrt*)
- » 1000 duizend (*daai-zuhnt*)

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1

Getting Started

IN THIS PART . . .

You have to start somewhere, but we bet that you already jumped in. This part is a lifeboat that you can use whenever you fear that drowning is near. This part contains the alphabet, pronunciation and most basic grammar – why not check your lifeboat before trying out the rest of the book?

IN THIS CHAPTER

Familiar Dutch words

Useful responses and wishes

Pronouncing vowels and diphthongs

Trying the 'ch' and the 'g'

Pronunciation and stress

Chapter 1

You Already Know Some Dutch

The best way to learn a language is simply to jump right in. This chapter shows you the Dutch you probably know already, explains how to pronounce Dutch words and introduces you to some popular Dutch expressions.

The Dutch You Already Know

Dutch is an Indo-European language. Among the families of Indo-European languages, Dutch, like German and English, belongs to the German group. Many words are identical to German words or look-alikes. Though English is not as close a relative as German, English-speaking people will recognize many words as well. These words either have their roots in the same language family or belong to the growing group of internationally used words.

Close relatives

The words listed below are the same in Dutch, English and German and mean the same. The only difference is the pronunciation and the spelling. German nouns start with a capital letter.

Dutch	Pronunciation	German	English
de arm	<i>duh arm</i>	der Arm	the arm
de bank	<i>duh bank</i>	die Bank	the bank
fantastisch	<i>fan-tas-tees</i>	fantastisch	fantastic
het glas	<i>het khlas</i>	das Glas	the glass
de hand	<i>duh hant</i>	die Hand	the hand
de sport	<i>duh sport</i>	der Sport	the sport
de tunnel	<i>duh tuh-nuhl</i>	der Tunnel	the tunnel
de wind	<i>duh vint</i>	der Wind	the wind

Kissing cousins



TIP

More and more English words and phrases are used in Dutch, in an area such as sports but also in daily life. The Dutch usually make small adaptations, generally in spelling. Some elderly people and purists dislike the growing influence of English but all those who make use of new products and innovations cannot avoid the English expressions. There are no truly Dutch words for digitale TV (*duh dee-khee-taa-luh tay-fay*) (digital TV) or de megastore (*duh may-khaa-stoar*) (the megastore)!

Some more frequently used words with small adaptations are:

de supermarkt	<i>duh suw-puhr-markt</i>	the supermarket
usb-lader	<i>uw-es-bay-laa-duhr</i>	usb charger

Dunglish

As Dutch-speaking people are internationally orientated, the Dutch use a lot of English verbs and expressions, especially in sports, IT and business. They adapt the verbs to Dutch rules, which results in a combination of Dutch and English, or Dunglish. For example, you might hear: **Ik ga dat even checken** (*ik khaa dat ay-fuhn cheh-kuhn*) (I'm going to check that) or **Het vliegtuig was overboekt** (*het fleekh-toaikh vas oa-fuhr-boekt*) (The plane was overbooked). The Dutch find it very difficult to correctly spell this kind of verb!

Some verbs that are used in sports:

fitnessen	<i>fit-nuh-suhn</i>	to go to a fitness centre
joggen	<i>jo-guhn</i>	to jog
stretchen	<i>stret-sjuhn</i>	to stretch
trainen	<i>tray-nuhn</i>	to train, to work out

Some words from the IT-world:

deleten	<i>duh-lee-tuhn</i>	to delete
downloaden	<i>down-loa-duhn</i>	to download
inloggen	<i>in-loh-khuhn</i>	to log in/on
printen	<i>prin-tuhn</i>	to print

English is very popular in management and business. Check the following verbs:

coachen	<i>koa-chuhn</i>	to coach
managen	<i>meh-nuh-juhn</i>	to manage
marketen	<i>mar-kuh-tuhn</i>	to market
pushen	<i>poo-sjuhn</i>	to push

Find more about the Dutch way of conjugating English verbs in Chapter 8.



PLAY THIS

TALKIN' THE TALK

Don't think that the following conversation gives you an idea of how the average Dutchman talks. However, you might overhear a similar conversation between two young men in the street:

Marcel: **Hi, hoe is 't? Hoe is je nieuwe job?**
hi hoo is het. hoo is yuh nee-wuh job
Hi, how are you, how is your new job?

Jacco: **Prima! Ik ben HR-manager bij Lease Consult en leasing is een spannende business.**
pree-maa. ik ben haa-ehr meh-nuh-juhr beye lees kon-suhlt en lee-sing is uhn spah-nuhn-duh bis-nis
Fine! I'm a Human Resource manager at Lease Consult and leasing is an exciting business.

Marcel: **Echt waar? Lease Consult is een major account van ons!**
ekht vaar. lees kon-suhlt is uhn may-juhr uh-kaownt fan ons
Really? Lease Consult is one of our major accounts!

Jacco: **Ik kom je dus nog wel eens tegen in de Boardroom.**
ik kom yuh duhs nokh vel ayns tay-khuhn in duh bortroom
So we're bound to meet in the Boardroom.

Marcel: **Wie weet!**
vee vayt
Who knows!

- Jacco: **En ben jij weer happy?**
en ben yeye vihr heh-pee
 So, are you happy again?
- Marcel: **Ja, maar Renate zit in een dip. Fulltime werken met een kid is nogal heavy en ze wil graag parttime werken.**
yaa maar ruh-naa-tuh zit in uhn dip. fool-taim vehr-kuhn met uhn kit is no-khal heh-fee en zuh vil khraakh par-taim vehr-kuhn
 Yes, but Renate is in a dip. Working full-time with a kid is rather heavy and she wants to work part-time.
- Jacco: **Ik begrijp het. Is parttime werken een optie?**
ik buh-khreyep het. is par-taim vehr-kuhn uhn op-see
 I see. Is working part-time an option?
- Marcel: **Op dit moment niet. Ze zitten midden in een reorganisatie.**
op dit moa-ment neet. zuh zih-tuhn mih-duhn in uhn ray-or-khaa-nee-saa-tsee
 Not at the moment. They are in the middle of a reorganization.

Street language for Dummies



Young people in the street use their own language, which changes every day. This lingo is influenced by languages such as American English, Surinam, Antillean, Turkish and Moroccan. Street language reflects the multicultural society, while trends from music (hip-hop) and TV give it an international sound. In the big cities you might overhear the following street language words:

Dutch word	Pronunciation	Translation
nakken	<i>nah-kuhn</i>	to nick, to steal
doekoe	<i>doo-koo</i>	money
flex	<i>fleks</i>	OK, good
loesoe	<i>loo-soo</i>	away
een chickie checken	<i>uhn chi-kee cheh-kuhn</i>	hitting on a girl

Family members, teachers and bosses have adopted parts of the language of the youngsters they live and work with. You might hear them saying things like: **Wie is die weirdo?** (*vee is dee vihr-doa*) (Who is that strange person?).

Words from other languages have found their way into the **Van Dale Groot woordenboek van de Nederlandse taal** (the main dictionary of the Dutch language). Some 360,000 Surinam people live in the Netherlands and about 150 phrases from their language have found their way into the dictionary. Some funny ones are: **het okselruitje** (*het ok-suhl-troai-tyuh*) (the sleeveless T-shirt) which literally means 'armpit T-shirt' and **de handknie** (*duh hant-knee*) (the elbow), literally translated 'the hand knee'. Not only Surinam words, but also words from Japanese, like **tsunami** (*tsoo-naa-mee*) (seaquake), Flemish, like **onthaalouder** (*ont-haal-aow-*

duhr) (host parent) and Arabic, like **felouka** (*fuh-loo-kaa*) (Egyptian sailboat) can be found in a Dutch dictionary.

Useful Responses and Wishes

All language students get into a stage in which they understand a lot, but still speak poorly. People notice that you understand what they are saying and they start talking to you, expecting a response. But you don't know how to react! Learning by heart at least one positive and one negative response can be helpful in a difficult situation.

Learn a positive term like: **prima** (*pree-maa*) (excellent), a neutral one that you can use in almost any occasion without insulting anybody, like **interessant** (*in-tuh-ruh-sant*) (interesting), and have one ready in case somebody tells you something negative: **wat jammer** (*vat yah-muhr*) (what a pity). Here are some examples of useful responses and when to use them:

- » **Wat vind je van dit restaurant? – Prima!** (*vat fint yuh fan dit res-toa-rant. pree-maa*) (How do you like this restaurant? – Excellent!)
- » **Heb je zin om dit weekend mee te gaan zeilen? – Fantastisch!** (*hep yuh zin om dit vee-kent may tuh khaan zeye-luhn. fan-tas-tees*) (Would you like to go sailing this weekend? – Great!)
- » **Zullen we even pauzeren? – OK.** (*zuh-lynn vuh ay-fuhn paow-zih-ruhn. oa-kay*) (Shall we take a short break? – Okay.)
- » **Dit zijn foto's van Amsterdam twintig jaar geleden. – Wat interessant!** (*dit zeyen foa-toas fan am-stuhr-dam tvin-tuhkh yaar khuh-lay-duhn. vat in-tuh-ruh-sant*) (These are photographs of Amsterdam 20 years ago. – How interesting!)
- » **Het concert is afgelast. – Wat jammer!** (*het kon-sehrt is af-khuh-last. vat yah-muhr*) (The concert has been cancelled. – Too bad!)
- » **Mijn auto is stuk. – Wat een pech!** (*meyen aow-toa is stuhk. vat uhn pekh*) (My car broke down – Bad luck!)

In case somebody asks you to do something, you may use the next positive answers:

- » **Help je me even? – Natuurlijk.** (*help yuh muh ay-fuhn. naa-tuur-luhk*) (Can you help me for a moment? – Of course.)
- » **Kunt u mij om 11 uur bellen? – Geen probleem.** (*kuhnt uw meye om elf uwr beh-lynn. khayn proa-blaym*) (Could you call me at 11 o'clock? – No problem.)

In case you need a negative answer, try the next safe ones:

- » **Bent u morgen op kantoor? – Nee, het spijt me.** (*bent uw mor-khuhn op kan-toar. nay het speyet muh*) (Are you at the office tomorrow? – No, I am sorry.)

» **Gaan jullie met ons mee? – Misschien de volgende keer.** (*khaan yuh-lee met ons may. mis-kheen duh fol-khuhn-duh kihr*) (Are you accompanying us? – Maybe next time.)

For special occasions, use one of the following wishes:

- » **Fijne avond.** (*feye-nuh aa-font*) (Have a nice evening.)
- » **Goed weekend.** (*khaot vee-kent*) (Have a nice weekend.)
- » **Goede reis.** (*khoo-duh reyes*) (Have a good trip.)
- » **Veel plezier.** (*fayl pluh-zeer*) (Have fun.)
- » **Beterschap.** (*bay-tuhr-skhap*) (I wish you a speedy recovery.)
- » **Sterkte.** (*stehrk-tuh*) (All the best.)

When drinking alcohol in company you can raise your glass, saying:

Proost! (*proast*) (Cheers!)

As your understanding of Dutch grows and you're making friends, conversations may become more personal. In Chapter 17 you'll find useful responses to confidential or hilarious stories.

A Mouthful of Pronunciation Rules

The key to pronouncing a new language is overcoming your fear of sounding awkward and never getting it right. Don't be afraid to sound silly and do not think that you will never succeed!

In the beginning, you won't understand a word when people are speaking a language you don't know, but after a while you'll start to distinguish sounds and repeating patterns. Later on you will recognize some of the patterns, like greetings and how people start and finish a phone call.

Most language learners start imitating the popular patterns, repeating them as well as they can. As soon as they get a reaction, this stimulates them to go ahead and try more complex phrases. At this stage, pronunciation becomes important. The Dutch will not understand you when they don't recognize the words you're trying to say.

When mastering a language, it speeds up the process when you learn some basic rules about how to pronounce the written words. On the road, in the streets and in the shops you will not only hear but also read words and when you know how people pronounce them, you can add them to your personal vocabulary. The following sections present you the alphabet and some basic guidelines for proper pronunciation.

Dealing with pronunciation in this book

Throughout this book, you can find the pronunciation of a Dutch word next to it in parentheses, which we call pronunciation brackets. Within the pronunciation brackets, we separate all the words that have more than one syllable with a hyphen, like this: **goedemorgen** (*khoo-duh-mor-khuhn*) (good morning). An underlined syllable within the pronunciation brackets tells you to accent, or stress, that syllable. You'll find more about stress in the section 'Pronunciation and Stress' in this chapter.

In this book the phonetic script (the script that shows you how to pronounce a word) uses letter combinations that are the English equivalents of the Dutch letter's pronunciation.

Reciting Your ABC

The Dutch alphabet has the same number of letters as the English and German alphabets, 26. However, many of the letters are pronounced differently. English-speaking people will find the Dutch G difficult to pronounce. You'll find some extra words to exercise.



PLAY THIS

Track 1 on the website gives you the sounds of the Dutch letters. The Dutch alphabet

A	<i>ah</i>	N	<i>en</i>
B	<i>bay</i>	O	<i>oa</i>
C	<i>say</i>	P	<i>pay</i>
D	<i>day</i>	Q	<i>kuw</i>
E	<i>ay</i>	R	<i>ehr</i>
F	<i>ef</i>	S	<i>es</i>
G	<i>khay</i>	T	<i>tay</i>
H	<i>hah</i>	U	<i>uw</i>
I	<i>ee</i>	V	<i>fay</i>
J	<i>yay</i>	W	<i>way</i>
K	<i>kah</i>	X	<i>ix</i>
L	<i>el</i>	Y	<i>eye</i>
M	<i>em</i>	Z	<i>zet</i>