

## RIDE

This guide goes into Public Transport in the Netherlands and how to get around in it.

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## 1. TRAINS

The Dutch trains are clean and a desirable alternative to your own car, especially during rush hours. The Netherlands has an extensive railway network (by NS - *Nederlandse Spoorwegen*). Regular connections are supported to all parts of the country. There is a fast train connection between Schiphol Airport and Amsterdam, and other major cities. There is even an hourly night service between Utrecht, Amsterdam, Schiphol, Den Haag, Rotterdam and vice versa. There is an Intercity network, a national system of express trains, linking major cities. These IC trains stop at the main stations.

"Stop-trains" supply connections to smaller towns. There are at least half-hourly services on most lines with anything from four to eight per hour on busier routes. It is not possible to reserve seats on national train services.

For information on departure/arrival times you can find information about fares, routing, and schedules on the NS website [www.ns.nl/en](http://www.ns.nl/en) (English). NS also offers iPhone and Android travel planner apps.

For door-to-door travel information 9292 is a source for public transport for all kinds of passengers. All information from all transport companies is brought together in a user-friendly way. <https://9292.nl/en>

### **TEE (Trans Europe Express)**

The TEE trains are first class only. This comfortable service is amazingly fast and runs between Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Belgium, France, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy.

### **Day excursions (Dutch National Rail)**

Dutch Rail offers more than 75 daytrips to a wide choice of tourist attractions, mostly from May until September. Combination tickets, *dagtochtkaartjes*, covering train, boat or bus trips and admission fees, are available at most railway stations in the Netherlands. A more sporting choice is to take the train and then go for a bicycle ride or a walk. More information is available from the information counter at main stations.

When an important exhibition is being held, Dutch Rail very often has a reduced ticket offer. Ask for the free booklet, published in English, on rail travel in the Netherlands.

**NOTE:** At large stations you can rent bicycles. However, often you can take your own bicycle along on the train.

### Fares

Fares are low compared to other European transport networks. They are calculated on a sliding scale, so the further you travel, the lower the cost per kilometre. There are a large variety of ticket options to suit different requirements (children, teenagers, families, European travel, etc). It is advisable to get the Dutch Rail brochure, which tells you everything about ticket options and day excursions. At most railway stations you can buy tickets at a ticket machine (with cash or your direct debit card) beforehand.

### To and from the station

#### By bus, tram, metro or on foot

- All stations can be reached by bus, tram, or metro.
- On Foot with the help of printable Maps and directions

#### By bicycle

- OV-Fiets (Public Transport Bicycle)
- Hiring a bicycle at the station
- Storing your bicycle

#### By car

- Free parking
- P+R car parks
- Q-Park car parks
- Greenwheels Car
- Hertz Rental Car

#### By taxi

- Train taxi
- OV-taxi (public taxi)
- Regio taxi
- Taxi-hopper

Transportation to the station for persons with functional disabilities.

### Special taxi transport

In many cities, you can use Collectief Vraagafhankelijk Vervoer (Collective Transport on Demand) to get to and from the station. To find out which cities offer this type of transport and for specific terms and conditions, please call 0900-9292 (euro 0.70 per minute; within the Netherlands only).

### Valys

You may apply for a Valys pass if you are entitled to transport under the WVG (Disablement Provisions Act), a wheelchair under the WVG, a mobility scooter/power wheelchair or a disabled parking permit from the municipality. For more information: call 0900-9630, open daily from 06.00 to 01.00 (euro 0.05 per minute; within the Netherlands only).

## 2. BUSES, TRAMS & SUBWAYS

Where the train stops, other public transport takes over. The bus can take you anywhere in the Netherlands. Bus stops are recognized by the yellow sign marked Bushalte showing the bus line numbers that stop there, as well as the start and finish of the line. You can buy a ticket or strippenkaart from the driver. Children up to three years old travel free. Dogs cost the equivalent of a child's fare unless they can be carried.

You can travel by streetcar or tram in some of the major cities like Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and The Hague. For all public transport you can use the OV Chipcard.

Both buses and trams have buttons marked "Stop" found near the windows. You should press these just before the stop at which you want to disembark. You should always exit from the rear. If the door of a tram does not open, you should push the "deur open" button.

The Subway or Metro is unique to the Amsterdam and Rotterdam area.

## 3. TAXIS

Taxis do not cruise the streets in the Netherlands. They are recognizable by the "taxi" sign on top of the car. It is customary in the Netherlands to book a taxi by phone although they can always be hailed at any of the taxi stands situated near hotels and stations.

The taxi meter price includes service charge. A 5km journey in town would cost approx. €20. The journey from Schiphol to the centre of Amsterdam would cost approximately €55. Although tips are included, drivers still expect something extra. It is up to you.

"Train taxis" are available at thirty-six stations throughout The Netherlands. The train taxi supplies economical and comfortable transport to and from the station.

Because you share the taxi with other passengers, the fare is less than a regular taxi without sacrificing the comfort.

The train taxi schedules have been designed to coincide with the train schedules. In Delft, train taxis also run at night. You can recognise the train taxi rank by the blue-and-yellow column.

#### 4. CARDS & PASSES

The OV-Chipcard (or in Dutch the OV-chipkaart) is a smart card that will soon replace The OV Chip card or *OV-chipkaart* ([www.ov-chipkaart.nl](http://www.ov-chipkaart.nl) or [www.ns.nl/en](http://www.ns.nl/en) or [www.public-transport-holland.com](http://www.public-transport-holland.com)) is a smart card that has replaced all other public transport tickets in the Netherlands. The card is the size of a credit card and can be credited (in euros) or you can add a travel product (such as a season ticket) to the card.

There are three types of cards:

1. **Personal OV Chip card:** can be bought online <https://www.ov-chipkaart.nl/en/apply-for-personal-ov-chipcard> You will need a digital photo and pay via IDEAL.
2. **Anonymous OV Chip card:** can be bought at the ticket office and at vending machines at the station, but also in supermarkets and specialised tobacco shops.
3. **Single-use OV Chip card** (used for a single or return journey): can be bought at vending machines at the station.



Personal OV Chip card



Anonymous OV Chip card





## 5. Costs

Personal and anonymous cards cost € 7,50; you can use them each time you travel by public transport. Both cards are valid for 5 years. Single-use cards cost the full rate of the trip plus €1 per card.

When you have a personal OV Chip card with a travel product, and you wish to travel by **train**, the balance must be at least €10 to be able to check in; in case you have an anonymous card or a personal card without a travel product, the balance must at least be €20. If you travel by **other means of public transport** and do not have a travel product on your (personal) card, you must have a credit of €4 or more. Please note that you might also need a return journey and that your first journey may cause the balance to drop below the limit needed for checking in. You will then have to top up the card before your return journey.

At the start of your journey, your card will be charged with the largest amount (the highest possible ticket price). When you check out, your actual travel costs will be calculated and deducted from the credit. The difference will be credited (returned) to the card.

If you hold a personal OV Chip card with a with a travel product, you pay a monthly/yearly fee in advance.

### How to use the OV Chip card?

#### Step 1: Topping up

To travel with an OV Chip card, you must first credit your card with a balance (in euros) and/or a travel product (only possible with personal cards). Single-use cards are already credited with a balance. You can top up your card at a vending machine (with English instructions) at train/bus/metro stations and in most supermarkets.

#### Step 2: Checking in

You check in by simply holding the card in front of the card reader (the pink or grey circle, not the screen) until it beeps.

The card is automatically scanned (to check if your card has sufficient balance or is credited with a valid travel product): one beep means you are good to go, three beeps mean you either did not hold the card against the card reader long enough (try again) or there is not enough balance on your card/the travel product is no longer valid (top it up). No beep means that the card reader is not functioning.

### Step 3: Checking out or changing means of transport

To check out at the end of your journey, you again hold the card in front of the card reader until you hear a beep: two short beeps mean you have checked out, three beeps mean you did not hold the card against the card reader long enough (try again).

### Changing means of transport

On the occasion that you change from one form of transport to another (e.g., from the metro to the bus), you must first check out and then check in again with the second means of transport

### Forgot to check out?

In case you forgot to check out, you can request a refund via the NS Customer Service (train only) at: [www.ns.nl/en/customer-service](http://www.ns.nl/en/customer-service). You can send a refund request from 24 hours to 6 months after your journey. If you used another form of public transport, you can request a refund online: [www.ov-chipkaart.nl](http://www.ov-chipkaart.nl).

### PLEASE NOTE

From 2023 onwards, you can ride the train and pay for your fare with your direct debit card or OVPay <https://www.ns.nl/en/customer-service/payment/ovpay.html>