



AMSTERDAM INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY SCHOOL

PARENTS SURVIVAL GUIDE

2025/2026



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	4
THE PARENT COMMUNITY AT AICS—GETTING STARTED	5
AICS PARENTS SOCIETY	5
CLASS REP NETWORK	5
AICS PARENT COMMUNITY ON WHATSAPP	5
EMERGENCY NUMBERS & HELPLINES	6
EMERGENCY SERVICES	6
HEALTH EMERGENCIES	6
GAS AND ELECTRICITY	6
HELPLINES	6
NATIONAL EMERGENCIES AND WEATHER WARNINGS	6
DIGID, BSN & THE GEMEENTE	7
DIGID	7
BSN	7
GEMEENTE (MUNICIPALITY)	7
LEARNING DUTCH & INBURGERING	8
LANGUAGE SCHOOLS IN AMSTERDAM	8
CIVIC INTEGRATION (INBURGERING)	8
PRACTISE DUTCH FOR FREE	8
WASTE, RECYCLING & STATIEGELD	9
GENERAL WASTE (RESTAFVAL)	9
RECYCLING	9
STATIEGELD	9
PUBLIC TRANSPORT	10
LOCAL OPERATORS	10
OV PAY	10
FREE AND DISCOUNTED TRAVEL FOR CHILDREN	10
INTERNATIONAL TRAINS FROM AMSTERDAM	10
OTHER WAYS TO GET ABOUT	11
RIDE-SHARING APPS	11
PARKING APPS	11
BICYCLE RENTALS	11
TAXI SERVICES	11
EMPLOYMENT & VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES	12
EMPLOYMENT PLATFORMS	12
VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES	12
RENTING AN APARTMENT	13
ESSENTIAL DOCUMENTS	13
WHERE TO LOOK	13
FURNITURE RENTAL SERVICES	13
FOOD, SHOPPING & MARKETS	14
GROCERY STORES	14
DUTCH RETAILERS	14
INTERNATIONAL FOOD SHOPPING	15
FOOD DELIVERY	15
STREET MARKETS	16

SPORTS, FITNESS & WELLNESS 17
 SPORTS CLUBS.....17
 GYMS AND STUDIOS.....19
 WELLNESS ACTIVITES.....19

ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS 20
 CAMPS FOR KIDS.....20
 INDOOR PLAY CENTRES.....20
 OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES AND PLAY AREAS.....21
 CITY PARKS.....21
 AMUSEMENT PARKS AND ZOOS (NATIONWIDE).....22

MUSIC, DANCE & THEATRE (LESSONS)..... 23
 MUSIC23
 DANCE23
 THEATRE.....23

MORE USEFUL INFORMATION 24
 WEBSITES FOR EXPATS24
 LEISURE, CULTURE AND TOURISM.....24
 SCHOOL HOLIDAYS24
 CLEANERS, CONTRACTORS AND BABYSITTING.....25
 RESOURCES FOR SPECIAL NEEDS FAMILIES.....25
 MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES25
 PET CARE25
 TENANT SUPPORT25
 LOST AND FOUND26
 USEFUL APPS.....26

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the **AICS Parents Survival Guide!**

This guide has been created by the **AICS Parents Society (APS)** to help support families with children attending the **Amsterdam International Community School (AICS)** as they adapt to life in the Netherlands.

Whether you are brand new to the Netherlands or simply looking for a helpful resource for things to do in and around Amsterdam, we hope to provide you with practical information on everything from **emergency numbers** and **public transport** to resources for finding **volunteer opportunities**, **international food** and **family-friendly activities**.

This guide is based on inputs from existing AICS parents and is by no means comprehensive. It is intended to be a starting point for information and a taste of what is on offer.

If you would like to contribute any information or resources to future versions of this guide, please contact the APS at APS@aics.espritscholen.nl.

Enjoy!

AICS Parents Society



THE PARENT COMMUNITY AT AICS—GETTING STARTED

AICS PARENTS SOCIETY

As expat parents at an international school, it can sometimes be challenging to make connections with other parents and find community. The **AICS Parents Society (APS)** is here to make that process easier and more fun! Through organizing social events and showcasing the diverse cultures of AICS families, the APS is dedicated to building and supporting an active and engaged community of parents surrounding the school.

Please see our pages in the **AICS Parent App** for more information about APS events and ways to get involved. The parent app is managed by the school and can be downloaded on your mobile phone using these links: [iOS](#) or [Android](#).

Meantime, here's a quick primer to get you connected to other parents!

CLASS REP NETWORK

Each primary class and secondary mentor group has a designated WhatsApp group chat for parents where you can connect directly with other parents in your child's class. It is created by a volunteer parent in the class (the **parent class rep**) who is connected to the teacher/mentor and to a network of other class reps across year groups and campuses.

Contact your child's teacher/mentor to be put in touch with your class rep and be added to the group chat for your class.

AICS PARENT COMMUNITY ON WHATSAPP

In addition to the class rep network, there is an **AICS Parent Community** on WhatsApp where parents can create WhatsApp groups around their own interests so that other parents can find their groups and join them.

Look for a link in the **AICS Parent App**: *AICS Parents Society (APS)*—>*How do I join a parent club?*

There are groups that connect parents around **shared nationality** or **language**, groups that connect parents who want to go **running**, play **padel** or play **music** together, groups that share a love of **food** or **books**, groups of parents that live in certain parts of the city, parents who practice **yoga** and many more!

Plus, you are free to suggest your own group if you have an interest and would like to connect with AICS parents with similar interests.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS & HELPLINES

EMERGENCY SERVICES

In **life-threatening** situations, call **112** and ask for the **police, ambulance** or **fire department**.

If your situation is not life-threatening, you can contact the emergency services as follows:

Ambulance	035 692 6492	www.ambulancezorg.nl
Fire Department	035 688 5555	www.brandweer.nl
Police	0900 8844	www.politie.nl

HEALTH EMERGENCIES

If you are experiencing a non-life-threatening health emergency, contact your own doctor (huisarts) BEFORE going to the emergency room at the hospital. Your doctor's practice will likely have an out-of-hours service, but if you are unable to reach them, you can contact the huisartsenpost (emergency doctor) 24 hours a day.

Emergency Doctor	08800 3060	www.huisartsenpostenamsterdam.nl
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GAS AND ELECTRICITY

24-hour number: 0800 9009

This is a national number to report electricity, gas or metre problems. If you smell gas and suspect a gas leak, call this number.

HELPLINES

Child and Teen Helpline	0800 0432	www.kindertelefoon.nl
Sexual Assault Centre	0800 0188	https://centrumseksueelgeweld.nl
Suicide Prevention	0800 113	https://www.113.nl
Domestic Violence	0800 2000	https://veiligthuis.nl
Alcoholics Anonymous	020 625 6057	www.aa-netherlands.org
Narcotics Anonymous	062 234 1050	www.na-holland.nl

NATIONAL EMERGENCIES AND WEATHER WARNINGS

Download the [NL-Alert App](#) for mobile phone updates in the event of a national emergency. **Emergency sirens** are tested nationwide at noon on the first Monday of every month.

The [KNMI](#) (Royal Netherlands Meteorological Institute) provides advice and warnings about risks from weather, climate and seismology.

See their website for live **weather warnings**: <https://www.knmi.nl/nederland-nu/weer/waarschuwingen/noord-holland>.

TIP: AICS has protocols around Code Red weather warnings (see **Storm Agreements** in the parent app).

DIGID, BSN & THE GEMEENTE

DIGID

DigiD is the secure online identification platform for interacting with all Dutch public services. It is linked to your Dutch citizen service number (BSN) and other personal data. You can apply for DigiD online via the [DigiD website](#).

BSN

You will need a citizen service number, known as a BSN (burgerservicenummer), for all interactions with the Dutch government and related organizations, including health care, taxes and social security. You will need to register at your local municipality (gemeente) to receive your BSN.

GEMEENTE (MUNICIPALITY)

If you stay in the Netherlands more than four months, you are required to register with the local municipality (gemeente) where you live. When you register, you will receive a citizen service number (BSN) for each member of your family. When you move within the Netherlands or permanently leave the country, you will need to update the gemeente.

The gemeente handles applications for various permits, including parking permits and building permits, and applications for official documents like passports and driving licences. The gemeente is also responsible for waste management and collection.

Not sure which municipality you live in? Check this map: [Netherlands: Administrative Division](#).

Amsterdam	14 020	https://www.amsterdam.nl/
Amstelveen	(020) 540 49 11	https://www.amstelveen.nl/
Diemen	(020) 31 44 888	https://www.diemen.nl/
Ouder-Amstel	(020) 496 21 21	https://www.ouder-amstel.nl/

Gemeente Amsterdam has a branch office (stadsloket) in **Nieuw West, Noord, Oost, West, Zuid, Zuidoost** and **Weesp**. Click on the links for opening times. If you live in Amsterdam, you can visit any of the branch offices.

Stadsloket Centrum	Amstel 1, 1011 PN Amsterdam
Stadsloket Nieuw-West	Osdorpplein 946, 1068 TD Amsterdam
Stadsloket Noord	Buikslotermeerplein 2000, 1025 XL Amsterdam
Stadsloket Oost	Oranje-Vrijstaatplein 2, 1093 NG Amsterdam
Stadsloket West	Bos en Lommerplein 250, 1055 EK Amsterdam
Stadsloket Zuid	President Kennedylaan 923, 1079 MZ Amsterdam
Stadsloket Zuidoost	Anton de Komplein 150, 1102 CW Amsterdam
Stadsloket Weesp	Nieuwstraat 70a, 1381 BD Weesp

LEARNING DUTCH & INBURGERING

LANGUAGE SCHOOLS IN AMSTERDAM

Taalhuis Amsterdam	Large language school. Course levels are from A0 (beginner) to C1 (proficient)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Many course options at each level○ Dutch conversation○ Book club and debate club○ Summer immersion classes	Gerard Doustraat 220, 1073 XB Amsterdam
Koentact	Dutch-only language school. Course levels are from A0 (beginner) to B2 (advanced)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Daytime and evening classes○ Business Dutch○ Dutch conversation○ Online courses and private lessons	Elandsgracht 70, 1016 TX Amsterdam
Taalboost	Dutch-only language school. Course levels are from A0 (beginner) to B2 (advanced)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Online options at all levels○ In-person evening classes○ Private lessons○ Intensive courses	Chasséstraat 34-36, 1057 JG Amsterdam
UvA Talen	Independent language centre at University of Amsterdam. Course levels are from A0 (beginner) to C1 (proficient)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Group and individual courses○ Online courses○ 26 different courses available○ Preparation for inburgering exams	Roetersstraat 25, 1018 WB Amsterdam

For more options, including private coaching and language schools located outside of Amsterdam, visit <https://www.iamexpat.nl/education/language-schools/dutch-courses-netherlands>.

TIP: *C'est Fab* (language school based in Zandvoort) offers Dutch classes to AICS parents at both campuses during school hours. Stay tuned to the school app to learn when the next classes are scheduled.

CIVIC INTEGRATION (INBURGERING)

Adults from countries outside the EU, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland who are residing in the Netherlands long-term are required to complete a civic integration process, known as **inburgering**.

In general terms, this means being able to speak and write in Dutch at level B1 within three years of arriving in the Netherlands (and becoming familiar with Dutch society and the labour market). For more information (and exceptions), start here: <https://www.government.nl/topics/integration-in-the-netherlands/civic-integration-in-the-netherlands>.

If you are required to go through the inburgering process, you will automatically receive a letter from Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs (DUO). The [DUO website](#) has step-by-step instructions and offers loans to cover the cost of courses and exams.

PRACTISE DUTCH FOR FREE

- The gemeente (municipality) offers **free** Dutch courses. For more information, including who is eligible, visit:
 - <https://www.amsterdam.nl/en/education/learning-dutch> (Amsterdam)
 - <https://www.amstelveen.nl/beroepsonderwijs-en-taalcursussen-voor-volwassenen> (Amstelveen)
- Search for **Taalcafe** events (free) in your local **OBA (Amsterdam public library)** or **Bibliotheek Amstelland**.
- **Participe Amstelland** offers free activities and Dutch conversation in **Amstelveen**.
- For free **online** resources, see Oefenen.nl and www.leefenleer.nl.

WASTE, RECYCLING & STATIEGELD

GENERAL WASTE (RESTAFVAL)

Your waste and recycling services will depend on your municipality. Contact your [gemeente](#) directly to get a waste and recycling pick-up schedule for your area and for any other details about how waste management works where you live.

Residents pay directly for household waste collection in the Netherlands either through a waste collection charge (**afvalstoffenheffing**) or via an **afval pass** that is used to access large underground containers located on city streets.

RECYCLING

Expect to separate recyclable items from your household waste. Depending on where you live, you can dispose of recyclable materials either in household bins supplied by the gemeente or in large underground containers located on the streets.

If you live in Amsterdam, this map shows where all types of waste containers are located:
<https://www.amsterdam.nl/afval/afvalcontainers-kaart/>.

Paper and cardboard	Blue bin or papierbak	Do NOT recycle paper or card that is soiled with food (e.g. used paper plates and cups, pizza boxes, etc.) or paint. Shop receipts, food napkins and hygiene products are also NOT recyclable. Remove plastic tape from boxes.
Glass	Yellow bin or glasbak	Most glass from food and drink containers can be recycled. Bottles and jars should be washed or rinsed as appropriate. Some municipal recycling centres will have separate bins for different coloured glass.
Metal and plastic packaging	Check with your municipality	Much plastic waste is not recyclable. Some cities offer bins for metal food cans and certain recyclable plastics. Others mechanically separate recyclable items further down the waste stream. But see statiegeld section below.
Food waste	Groenbakje	If food waste collection is not available in your area, ask your gemeente for information about disposing of food waste, e.g. where your nearest worm hotel is or if there is a volunteer composting scheme. Otherwise food waste goes in the general waste (restafval).
Clothes and shoes	Textielbak	For clothes and shoes that are in good condition, consider donating these to a kringloopwinkel (second-hand shop). For fabrics that are torn or worn out, these can be recycled by placing them in large textile recycling containers. Items should still be CLEAN before putting them in the bins.

Many supermarkets have recycling bins for **batteries**, small **electronics** and **light bulbs**. For larger electronic items and bulk waste (sofas, mattresses, appliances etc.), contact your gemeente for collection or to find your local municipal waste centre.

STATIEGELD

Statiegeld is a deposit system on many drinks containers (plastic, metal and glass) to encourage recycling. Depending on the size of the bottle or can, you can get back 15–25 cents per bottle.

Many supermarkets and other locations have deposit machines that automatically read the statiegeld symbol on the bottle or can and instantly print a receipt that can be redeemed against your grocery shopping or for cash.

See the statiegeld website for drop off locations: <https://www.statiegeldnederland.nl/>.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Public transport in and around Amsterdam is well-organized, reliable, safe and easy to use.

LOCAL OPERATORS

- **GVB** runs the **metro, trams, city buses** and **ferries** in Amsterdam
- **NS** is the national rail service
- **Connexion** operates regional buses in and around Amsterdam

OV PAY

All public transport—**openbaar vervoer**, or OV for short—within the Netherlands (including in other cities and regions) can be paid for in the same way.

- **OV Pay**
 - Any form of contactless payment (debit card, credit card, mobile phone, etc.) can be used to check in and out of all buses, trams and trains within the Netherlands (not for international trains)
- **Anonymous OV-chipkaart**
 - Can be bought/topped up at service locations at train stations and in some supermarkets
 - Anyone can use the card (not for simultaneous journeys)
 - Needs a €20 minimum balance for train travel (NS)
- **Personal OV-chipkaart**
 - Subscription-based card linked to your bank account
 - Cannot be used by other travellers
 - Ticket discounts are available through various paid subscriptions

Always remember to check in and out with the same payment method to avoid being fined.

The ferries that cross the IJ (the waterway that separates the city centre from Amsterdam-Noord) are free!

FREE AND DISCOUNTED TRAVEL FOR CHILDREN

Children up to and including 3 years old travel for **free** on all carriers.

Children aged 4 to 11 travel with a 34% discount on buses and trams if they have their own **personal OV-chipkaart**. This discount does not apply to NS trains. However, children up to the age of 11 can travel for free on NS trains if they sign up for the Kids Vrij subscription (personal OV-chipkaart required for subscriptions).

***TIP:** Starting July 2025 for children aged 4–11 living in Amsterdam, free travel on all GVB buses, trams, and metros until 2027. See <https://www.amsterdam.nl/en/news/free-public-transport-children> for additional information and how to sign up.*

INTERNATIONAL TRAINS FROM AMSTERDAM

- **NS International** operates trains into Germany, Belgium and France
- **Deutsche Bahn** operates high-speed ICE trains that connect to cities Germany, Austria, Switzerland and France
- **Eurostar** connects to destinations in France, Belgium and the UK

***TIP:** Kids get free Interrail passes up to the age of 12 (great for holidays!).*

OTHER WAYS TO GET ABOUT

RIDE-SHARING APPS

Don't have a car in Amsterdam? No problem, there are plenty available through ride-sharing apps:

Sixt Share	Cars by the minute, hour or day; pick up and drop off is within a designated zone
Share Now	Free-floating car sharing in various European cities
Greenwheels	Nationwide network of 2,800 cars in designated parking spots; rates vary per subscription
MyWheels	Station-based and flexible rentals; choose from private or company-owned cars
SnappCar	Peer-to-peer car-sharing; great for longer trips or unique vehicles; insurance included
Getaround	Peer-to-peer car-sharing; contactless pick-up available

PARKING APPS

No excuse for getting a parking ticket with so many parking apps!

MOBIAN	Parking and (e)bike subscription in one app
My Way	Connects users to underutilized parking spaces from businesses, hotels etc.
ParkBee	Similar principle as My Way with real-time availability
Q-Park Nederland	Real-time availability, navigation to selected parking, parking sessions managed via the app
Seety	Interactive map showing prices and regulations; parking sessions managed via the app
Yellowbrick	Pay only for the actual parking time; parking sessions managed via the app
EasyPark NL	Find and pay for parking in garages or on the street, including spots with charging for electric vehicles.

BICYCLE RENTALS

Bicycles are an essential part of living like the Dutch! From cargo bikes to e-bikes, there are plenty of options.

Black Bikes	Largest bike rental company in the area
A-Bike	Bike rentals and tours
OV-fiets	Available at train stations via OV-chipkaart
Swapfiets	Subscription-based long-term rentals
Cargoroo	App for shared cargo bikes

TAXI SERVICES

Taxi Centraal Amsterdam (TCA)	020 777 7777
Taxi Amsterdam Centrum	+31 6 17 28 77 90
Bolt	App
Uber	App

EMPLOYMENT & VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

EMPLOYMENT PLATFORMS

IamExpat	English-speaking jobs	https://www.iamexpat.nl/career/jobs-netherlands
Werk.nl	All sectors, government listings	https://www.werk.nl
EURES	All sectors, government listings	https://eures.ec.europa.eu
LinkedIn	Professional roles in many fields	https://www.linkedin.com/jobs
Indeed	Professional roles in many fields	https://www.indeed.nl
Glassdoor	Professional roles in many fields	https://www.glassdoor.nl
Nationale Vacaturebank	National coverage	https://www.nationalevacaturebank.nl
Magnet.me	Graduates and students	https://magnet.me
Undutchables	Multilingual and agency-based roles	https://www.undutchables.nl
Randstad	Multilingual and agency-based roles	https://www.randstad.nl

TIP: *Empowerment Foundation* offers a full suite of career coaching, leadership programmes, outplacement services, events, workshops and volunteer opportunities tailored to international professionals across Europe. Their services are accessible, community-driven, and rooted in promoting integration, inclusion and sustainable change in the labour market.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Vrijwilligers Centrale Amsterdam (VCA)	Large volunteer hub with English-speaking placements	Community gardening, elder care, refugee support, animal shelters etc.
NL Cares (Amsterdam)	Flexible volunteer opportunities in Amsterdam	Meals for the homeless, park clean-ups, city gardening etc.
Serve the City	Calendar of community events	Connecting with elderly residents, Vondelpark clean-up etc.
Dierenopvang Amsterdam (DOA)	Animal shelter	Dog walking, cat care and cleaning help
Plastic Whale	Plastic-free / recycling initiatives	Canal clean-ups in boats made from recycled plastic
Dutch Red Cross	National and international humanitarian and disaster response	Sign up via Ready2Help or download the Tools2Go app

TIP: Volunteer at AICS! Sign up in the school app to supervise playground activities, help in the library and more. Or contact the **AICS Parents Society** to help grow our parent community around the school: aps@aics.espritscholen.nl.

RENTING AN APARTMENT

Housing in Amsterdam and in surrounding areas is in short supply, and this makes renting (or buying) highly competitive. Prices can be high (especially in Amsterdam), and properties move fast, so be prepared to act quickly if you find something that suits your needs.

ESSENTIAL DOCUMENTS

- **Proof of identity** – passport or ID card
- **Proof of income** pay stubs or bank statements showing regular deposits. Self-employed people may need additional proof of income, such as tax returns. In lieu of a steady income, proof of savings may be used to show you can meet financial obligations.
- **Employment contract** (or letter of intent) confirming employment status and salary
- **Residence permit** if you are from outside the EU/EEA
- **References** from previous landlords or a rental history
- **Rental application** form

A one- or two-month security deposit is standard, and there are sometimes additional deposits for pets, etc.

WHERE TO LOOK

[Pararius](#) and [Funda](#) are the two largest property-search platforms in the Netherlands. But with properties moving so fast, you may want to consider contacting a real estate company directly who may have access to unlisted properties. Here are a few that cater to expats.

○ https://www.housingnet.nl/en	○ https://expatrentals.com/
○ https://www.expats1ststop.com/	○ https://expatproperty.amsterdam/
○ https://www.von-poll.nl/	○ https://www.expathousingnetwork.nl/

Or hire a relocation specialist to help not only with housing, but also with immigration, municipality registration, taxes, furniture removal, temporary accommodation, airport pick-ups and more. Here are just a few:

Ana Risson Expat Assistance	https://anarisson.com/	Portuguese, English, Spanish and Dutch
Orange Homes	https://orange-homes.com/	Dutch American Friendship Treaty (DAFT) specialists
WE4EXPATS	https://we4expats.nl/	English, French, Spanish, Bulgarian, Russian, Latvian, Dutch

FURNITURE RENTAL SERVICES

There are many options if you need to rent furniture either long or short term. Here are a few furniture rental companies that cater to expats. All offer a turnkey service (furniture is fully set up in your home and collected at the end of the leasing period) and a variety of furniture packages.

Expat Furniture Holland	https://expatfurnitureholland.com	Sustainable and circular mission
KeyPro	https://www.keypro.nl	Flexible rental periods from one day to 4 years
Furniture4Rent	https://furniture4rent.nl	6 month minimum rental period
In-Lease	https://www.in-lease.com	Rent to buy option

GROCERY STORES

Albert Heijn	Largest Dutch grocery chain with stores everywhere
Dirk	Generally considered to be the cheapest groceries
Plus	Supermarket chain in the Netherlands
Aldi	Discount supermarket chain across Europe
Lidl	Discount supermarket chain across Europe and the USA
Jumbo	Second largest Dutch grocery store
Makro	Wholesale and retail (membership card needed)
Sligro	Wholesale and retail (membership card needed)
Hanos	Wholesale and retail (membership card needed)
Marqt	Organic, ethical and vegan brands
Ekoplaza	Organic, ethical and vegan brands
Picnic	Online grocery app; free delivery

TIP: [AlleFolders](#) publishes daily promotions from well-known grocery stores in the Netherlands.

DUTCH RETAILERS

Amazon.nl	Amazon Netherlands
Bol	Online only. Fast delivery of a wide range of goods
HEMA	Homeware, clothing, stationery etc.
Action	Crafting supplies, homeware, hygiene products, toys etc.
Decathlon	Sporting apparel
Media Markt	Electronic consumer goods chain
Rituals	Dutch cosmetic and lifestyle brand
Kruidvat	Drugstore company
Praxis	Hardware store
Cool Blue	Home goods, electronics etc.
Etos	Drugstore company
C&A	Dutch-owned fashion retail clothing chain
De Bijenkorf	High-end department store
Xenos	Low-cost housewares
Zeeman	Discount clothing and textiles
Leen Bakker	Home furnishing and decor

INTERNATIONAL FOOD SHOPPING

Toko Dun Yong	Stormsteeg 9, 1012 BD Amsterdam	Asian
Amazing Oriental	Nieuwmarkt 27, 1011 JS Amsterdam	Asian
	De Flinesstraat 6, 1114 AL Duivendrecht	
Finalmente Brasil	Kinkerstraat 355, 1053 EX Amsterdam	Brazilian
Cantinho Brasileiro	Online only	Brazilian
BR-Market	Online only	Brazilian
Casa Brasil Portugal	Kinkerstraat 28, 1053 DV Amsterdam	Brazilian / Portuguese
Little India	Online only	Indian
Kashmir Food Store	Lindenlaan 376, 1185 NM Amstelveen	Indian
Star Asian Supermarket	Rembrandtweg 103, 1181 GG Amstelveen	Indian
Raja Spices	Online only	Indian
Novaitalia	New Hemweg 1, 1013 BG Amsterdam	Italian
Toko Sinar Mas	Hoofddorpplein 9, 1059 CV Amsterdam	Indonesian
Tjin's Intenational Foodstore	Eerste van der Helststraat 64, 1072 NZ Amsterdam	International
Atariya	Kastelenstraat 262-264, 1082 EJ Amsterdam	Japanese
Iseya	Kostverlorenhof 66, 1183 HG Amstelveen	Japanese
Shilla Food Market	Gelderlandplein 187, 1082 LW Amsterdam	Japanese / Korean
	Westwijkplein 62, 1187 LV Amstelveen	
Coco Mercado Latino	Online only	Latin American
Pacomer Traiteur	Gerard Doustraat 68-H, 1072 VV Amsterdam	Spanish
Kelly's Expat Shopping	Ferdinand Bolstraat 139, 1072 LG, Amsterdam	USA / UK
	Kinkerstraat 189-191, 1053 DR, Amsterdam	

FOOD DELIVERY

- [Thuisbezorgd](#)
- [Uber Eats](#)

STREET MARKETS

Albert Cuyp	Monday–Saturday	Largest outdoor market in the Netherlands with everything from Dutch street food to fresh fish, cheese and clothing	Albert Cuypstraat, De Pijp
Bloemenmarkt	Daily	Floating flower market between Muntplein and Koningsplein; popular tourist market for buying fresh cut flowers and bulbs	Singel, Amsterdam-Centrum
Boerenmarkt	Wednesday & Saturday	Small organic farmers’ market with farm-fresh vegetables, cheese, bread and artisanal products	Haarlemmerplein, Jordaan
Dappermarkt	Monday–Saturday	Multicultural market, with international products and food from around the world	Dapperstraat, Amsterdam-Oost
IJ-Hallen	One weekend per month	Largest flea market in Europe; second-hand furniture, clothes and collectibles; check the website for dates	NDSM Wharf, Amsterdam-Noord
Lindenmarkt	Saturday	Traditional street market offering fresh produce, flowers, cheese and seafood in the heart of the Jordaan	Lindengracht, Jordaan
Nieuwmarkt	Monday–Saturday	Daily farmers market (organic on Saturdays) in the medieval part of Amsterdam	Nieuwmarkt, Amsterdam-Centrum
Noordermarkt	Saturday & Monday	Large selection of food and artisanal products on Saturdays. On Mondays, it is a flea market	Noordermarkt, Jordaan
Ten Katemarkt	Monday–Saturday	Local neighbourhood market with affordable goods and fresh produce (less touristy than many other city markets)	Ten Katestraat, Oud-West
Waterlooplein	Monday–Saturday	Amsterdam’s oldest flea market with lots of vintage clothing, art and antiques	Waterlooplein, Jodenbuurt
De Markt van Amstelveen	Friday	High-quality fresh produce, flowers and artisanal goods in the heart of Amstelveen	Stadshart, Amstelveen

Amsterdam has dozens of year-round markets that are enjoyed by locals and tourists alike. For a more complete list of street markets in and around Amsterdam, including books, art, antiques and more, visit

<https://www.iamsterdam.com/uit/agenda/winkelen/markten>.

SPORTS CLUBS

American Football	Amsterdam Crusaders	Kids/youth	American football club with thriving youth and community programmes
Basketball	MBCA	Kids/youth	Structured training from beginners to high-performance players
	BC Apollo	Kids/youth	Home to Amsterdam's top pro team; hosts a youth academy focusing on inclusive skill development
Bouldering	Be Boulder	All ages	Indoor bouldering gym
	Beta Boulders	All ages	Indoor bouldering gym
Cricket	VRA Cricket	All ages	Historic club based in Amstelveen with excellent junior coaching
Football (Soccer)	RKAVIC	Kids/youth	Family-friendly club with a strong youth section in Amstelveen
	NFC	Kids/youth	Large youth football clubs in Amsterdam; competitive teams at all levels
	Sportvereniging Ouderkerk	Kids/youth	Community-focused club welcoming all levels of players
	Ubuntu Sport	Kids/youth	Integrates social impact with sport, offering football training and life skills
	AVV Swift	Kids/youth	Historic Amsterdam club; trains at Olympiaplein
	SC Buitenveldert	Kids/youth	Family-friendly atmosphere and youth development
	Voetjebal @AFC	Kids	AFC programme introducing children to football in a playful, early-learning setting
	ICFA	Kids/youth	Inclusive training and skill-building; professional-level coaching
	Amsterdam GAC	Kids/youth	International football academy; emphasizes cross-cultural team play
Gymnastics	Ritmica Rhythmic Gymnastics Club	Kids/youth	Rhythmic gymnastics club with competitive and recreational groups
	City Gymnastics Amsterdam	Kids/youth	Classes aimed at flexibility and strength; beginner to intermediate training
	Turnz Amsterdam Gymnastics	Kids/youth	Caters to all levels including competitive talent streams
	United Amstelveen	Kids/youth	Boys' and girls' classes from basic skills to advanced levels
Hockey	Ubuntu Sport	Kids/youth	Integrates social impact with sport, offering hockey training and life skills
	Athena HC	Kids/youth	Women's hockey club with a strong youth academy feeding into top-tier teams
	THC Hurley	Kids/youth	Large hockey club with youth teams and modern facilities
	Amsterdamsche Hockey & Bandy Club	Kids/youth	Historic club with junior sections and provincial/national youth representation
	Hockey is Cool	Kids	Introducing young children to hockey in fun, informal setting
	Pinoké	Kids/youth	Elite club regularly producing national-level players
Horse Riding	Ponymanege Equito	All ages	Riding school in Amstelveen
	Amsterdamse Manege	All ages	Riding school in Amsterdamse Bos
	Manege Nieuw Amstelland	All ages	Riding school in Amsterdamse Bos
Ice Skating	Jaap Eden Ijsbaan	All ages	Large outdoor public ice rink

	Figure Skating Amsterdam	Kids/youth	Lessons and training for competitive and recreational skaters
Judo	Judoschool Onaji	Kids/youth	Martial arts club providing judo lessons
Karate	Shorin Ryu Karate Amsterdam	Kids/youth	Traditional karate dojo teaching with graded belts
Padel	Padel Solution	All ages	Padel club offering junior and adult coaching in a casual, social environment
	Park Startbaan	All ages	Multi-sport facility including padel courts; competitive youth training
	Frans Otten Stadion Amsterdam	All ages	Large sports complex hosting padel clubs with structured junior programmes
Rowing	TopRow	All ages	Rowing club on the Amstel
Rugby	Amstelveense Rugby Club	Kids/youth	Mixed youth teams in contact and non-contact rugby
	Amsterdam Athletic Club	All ages	Long-standing club with men's, women's and youth teams
Running	Midnight Runners Amsterdam	Adults	Social running group organizing evening runs around Amsterdam (18+)
	Park Run Amsterdamse Bos	All ages	Saturday morning timed 5K runs for all ages and abilities in Amsterdamse Bos
	Sunday Run Club	Adults	Sunday morning route runs with different paces and distances
	Phanos	All ages	Athletics club offering track & field and cross-country training for youth and adults
Tennis	Higgins Tennis Nederland	All ages	Structured, high-level coaching in English and Dutch for juniors and adults
	Tennisclub IJburg	All ages	Tennis club on IJburg offering youth camps and competitive training in all age groups
	Park Startbaan	All ages	Multi-sport facility including tennis courts; competitive youth training
	Tennispark Buitenveldert	All ages	Extensive junior training programmes from beginners to tournament players
	Amstelpark Tennisclub	All ages	Well-equipped club offering kids' lessons, youth teams and summer camps
	T.C. Kattenlaan	All ages	Friendly tennis club in Amsterdam-Zuid with junior membership and social-league training
	Frans Otten Stadion Amsterdam	All ages	Large recreation centre with tennis courts alongside padel and football facilities
Snowboarding	Snow World Amsterdam	All ages	Indoor snow dome offering lessons for kids and adults on artificial slopes year-round
Swimming	De Dolfijn	Kids/youth	Competition swimming club located at Optisport Sloterparkbad
	RA Sports & Swimming	All ages	Swim school and sports training for all ages with focus on technique, fitness and safety
	De Mirandabad	All ages	Public pool offering swimming lessons, aqua fitness and youth training programmes
	KONAZ	Kids/youth	Competition swimming club located at Optisport Bijlmer
Water Sports	Watersportcentrum Sloterpas	All ages	Sailing, kayaking and canoeing courses from junior beginner to expedition prep

GYMS AND STUDIOS

Basic-Fit	https://www.basic-fit.com	Various locations: 24/7 access, no-frills gym
TrainMore	https://www.trainmore.nl	Various locations: discounts for frequent training
SportCity	https://www.sportcity.nl	Various classes: sauna in some locations
Special Sports	https://specialsports.com	Amstelveen: strength area, pool, child-friendly gym
CrossFit Amstelveen	https://www.crossfitamstelveen.nl	Amstelveen: high-intensity workouts, community focus
CrossFit Amsterdam	https://www.crossfitamsterdam.nl	Amsterdam: high-intensity workouts, community focus
Mom in Balance	https://mominbalance.com	Fitness for moms (pregnancy/postnatal)
Saints & Stars	https://www.saints-stars.com	HIIT/yoga/Pilates studios in Amsterdam
PLTS	https://www.plts.nl	Reformer Pilates studios in Amsterdam
Rocycle	https://rocyclestudios.com/	Premium spin studios in Amsterdam
Studio 191	https://studio191.nl/	High-intensity reformer Pilates and barre in Amsterdam
CORE40	https://core40.nl	Reformer Pilates studios in Amsterdam
Zest Your Life	https://zestyourlife.nl	Pilates, barre, yoga studio in Amstelveen
David Lloyd	https://www.davidlloyd.nl	Various locations: pool, spa, tennis courts, gym, café

Apps like [OneFit](#) and [ClassPass](#) offer pay-as-you-go access to many fitness classes. Many parks have free outdoor fitness areas.

WELLNESS ACTIVITIES

Guerlain	Spa	Herengracht 542-556, 1017 CG Amsterdam	Luxurious hotel spa offering bespoke treatments, including massages and facials
Sauna Deco	Sauna	Herengracht 115, 1015 BE Amsterdam	Steam rooms, plunge pools and massages in historic art deco surroundings.
Spa Zuiver	Spa	Koenenkade 8, 1081 KH Amsterdam	Modern wellness centre featuring saunas, pools, a gym and a restaurant
The Beauty House	Spa and beauty centre	Reestraat 22, 1016 DN Amsterdam	A boutique spa offering facials, massages, hair and nail treatments, etc.
The Spa	Spa	Paulus Potterstraat 50, 1071 DB Amsterdam	Hotel spa offering a range of holistic treatments and facilities
Koan Float	Massage and floatation centre	Herengracht 321, 1016 AW Amsterdam	Massage and floatation therapy promoting deep relaxation and stress relief
De Nieuwe Yogaschool	Yoga and Pilates	Laurierstraat 109, 1016 PL Amsterdam	Yoga, Pilates, tai chi and meditation; experienced instructors offering a variety of classes
Cosmos	Yoga and Pilates	Various locations	Many different types of yoga and Pilates; challenging classes and motivational instructors
Movements	Hot yoga and Pilates	Various locations	Offers a range of hot yoga and Pilates classes
Shiva Yoga Center	Yoga	Lindenlaan 75, 1185 LC Amstelveen	Variety of yoga classes on offer
Studio Anna Mora	Pilates	Nieuwe Looiersstraat 21A, 1017 VA Amsterdam	Personalized instruction and small class sizes
Yoga Spot	Yoga	Laan der Hesperiden 142, 1076 DX Amsterdam	Yoga, Pilates and meditation classes and workshops

ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS

CAMPS FOR KIDS

There is a huge range of camps that run during school holidays offering outdoor activities, sports, arts and crafts, water activities and more. For a searchable list of all the vacation camps in and around Amsterdam, visit <https://vakantiekamp.amsterdam/en>.

Little Star Fitness	https://littlestarfitness.com/camps/	4–12 years old	Aerial and circus skills, dance, movement
The Science Camp	https://www.thesciencecamp.nl/holiday-camps	5–10 years old	STEAM activities
Summer Camp	https://www.summercamp.nl	4–17 years old	ELL with fun activities
Art Zuid Art Camp	https://artzuid.nl/artcamp/	5–12 years old	Arts and crafts
Ajax Camps & Clinics	https://www.ajaxcampsenclinics.nl	6–16 years old	Football (soccer)
Nordic Terrain Academy	https://nordicadventure.camp/amsterdam	6–10 years old	Outdoor adventure
Terragon Nature Lab	https://terragon.nl/kids-nature-camp-amsterdam/	4–10 years old	Nature, sustainable living, innovation
UP Events	https://upeventskids.nl/en/event/summer-camp	8–13 years old	Archery, laser tag, bubble football
Little Makers	https://www.littlemakers.nl/3in1camp	4–10 years old	Creativity, science, music
Project Fearless	https://www.projectfearless.org/	9–12 years old	Skateboarding camp for girls

INDOOR PLAY CENTRES

VROG	https://vrog.nl/	Parkour / trampoline park in Amsterdam-Centrum
Ballorig	https://www.ballorig.nl/	Indoor playground with various locations nationwide
Monkey Town	https://monkeytown.eu/nl/amsterdam_west/home	Indoor playground with locations in Amsterdam-West and Noord
Candy Castle	https://candycastle.nl/	Indoor playground in Amsterdam-West
You Jump	https://www.trampolinepark.nl	Trampoline park with locations in Amsterdam-Oost and Noord
Jimmy's Speelparadijs	https://www.jimmysspeelparadijs.nl/	Indoor playground in Amsterdam-West
Playhood	https://www.playhood.nl/	Indoor playground in Amsterdam-West
Wonderpark Café	https://www.wonderparkcafe.nl/	Indoor play centre and café in Amstelveen

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES AND PLAY AREAS

Jeugdland	https://jeugdlandamsterdam.nl/	Kids build with pallets in Amsterdam-Oost
Speelpark Oud Valkeveen	https://www.oudvalkeveen.nl/	Large playground with lots of attractions
Linnaeushof	https://www.linnaeushof.nl/	Europe's biggest playground in Hoofddorp
Fun Forest Amsterdam	https://www.funforest.nl/amsterdam/	Ropes course in Amsterdamse Bos
Twiske-Waterland	https://www.twiske-waterland.nl/	Nature preserve north of Amsterdam
Elsenhove Speelboerderij	https://www.elsenhove.nl/elsenhove-play-farm/	City farm in Amstelveen
Geitenboerderij Ridammerhoeve	https://www.geitenboerderij.nl/	Goat farm in Amsterdamse Bos
Fruittuin van West	https://fruittuinvanwest.nl/	Pick-your-own fruit farm in Amsterdam-West
Speeleilanden	https://www.amsterdamsebos.nl/kinderen/speeleilanden/	Play islands in Amsterdamse Bos

CITY PARKS

The city's parks are a fantastic resource and not just for children! But they do offer excellent playgrounds, paddling pools, petting zoos and more. See: <https://www.iamsterdam.com/en/see-and-do/nature-and-active/best-parks-in-amsterdam>.

Beatrixpark	Playgrounds and a summer paddling pool, art and a medicinal herb garden	Amsterdam-Zuid
Amstelpark	Playgrounds, mini golf, a city farm, a maze, a miniature train, art, gardens, restaurants and cafes	Amsterdam-Zuid
Vondelpark	Playgrounds, eateries, outdoor music venue, splash park	Oud-Zuid
Oosterpark	Playgrounds, nature, art, monuments	Amsterdam-Oost
Rembrandtpark	Playgrounds, fountains, art and a petting zoo	Amsterdam-Nieuw West
Westerpark	Nature, playgrounds, petting farm and the Westergasfabriek, a cultural centre with cinemas, exhibitions, restaurants and a monthly market	Amsterdam-West
Amsterdamse Bos	Huge area with woodlands, playgrounds, splash pools, kayaking, paddleboat rentals, an outdoor theatre, stables, a goat farm, restaurants and cafes, and a monthly market	Amstelveen

AMUSEMENT PARKS AND ZOOS (NATIONWIDE)

Efteling	Amusement park	Kaatsheuvel	https://www.efteling.com
Walibi	Amusement park	Biddinghuizen	https://www.walibi.nl
Duinrell	Water park	Wassenaar	https://www.duinrell.com
Slagharen	Amusement park	Slagharen	https://www.slagharen.com
Toverland	Amusement park	Sevenum	https://www.toverland.com
Avonturenpark	Amusement park	Hellendoorn	https://www.avonturenpark.nl
Julianatoren	Amusement park	Apeldoorn	https://www.julianatoren.nl
KidZcity	Amusement park (indoor)	Utrecht	https://kidzcity.nl
Ouwehands Dierenpark	Zoo	Rhenen	https://www.ouwehand.nl
ARTIS	Zoo	Amsterdam	https://www.artis.nl
Diergaarde Blijdorp	Zoo	Rotterdam	https://www.diergaardeblijdorp.nl
Burgers' Zoo	Zoo	Arnhem	https://www.burgerszoo.nl
Apenheul	Primate zoo	Apeldoorn	https://www.apenheul.nl
Wildlands Adventure	Zoo and theme park	Emmen	https://www.wildlands.nl
AquaZoo	Zoo	Leeuwarden	https://www.aquazoo.nl
SEA LIFE Scheveningen	Aquarium	The Hague	https://www.visitsealife.com
Dierenpark Amersfoort	Zoo	Amersfoort	https://dierenparkamersfoort.nl

MUSIC, DANCE & THEATRE (LESSONS)

MUSIC

Muziekpakhuis Amsterdam	Individual and group lessons and workshops teaching a variety of musical instruments plus singing lessons	All ages	Alberdingk Thijmstraat 19, 1054 AH Amsterdam
Muziekschool Amsterdam	Music lesson provider; piano, guitar, flute, violin, drums and singing	Kids/youth	Multiple locations in Amsterdam
BeatZone	Street, hip hop and breakdancing lessons; group and private singing lessons	All ages	Poeldijkstraat 391, 1059 VL Amsterdam
Nieuw Vocaal Amsterdam	Youth choir and permanent children's choir partner of the Dutch National Opera and Ballet	Kids/youth	Partners with many Dutch schools including AICS

DANCE

Platform C	Cultural centre offering courses in music, dance, visual arts and theatre	All ages	Stadsplein 99, 1181 ZM Amstelveen
BeatZone	Street, hip hop and breakdancing lessons; group and private singing lessons	All ages	Poeldijkstraat 391, 1059 VL Amsterdam
The Dance Warehouse	Street dance, hip hop, Afro dance, dancehall, jazz, ballet, tap, contemporary and Tik Tok dance	All ages	Mortar Mill 6a, 1185 XV Amstelveen
Amsterdam Dance Centre	Street dance, hip-hop, ballet, contemporary, K-pop, toddler dance, musical theatre	All ages	Marnixstraat 342-E, 1016 XT Amsterdam
Amsterdam Ravers Academy	Shuffle, jump style, electro and freestyle classes and workshops	Kids/youth	Baarsjesweg 202, 1057 HS Amsterdam
Amsterdam Kids Drama & Dance	Theatre and movement skills for young children led by professional theatre practitioners in English	Kids	Overtoom 301, 1054 HW Amsterdam
StreetDance Club Amstelveen	After school dance and movement classes for children	Kids	Catharina van Clevepark 10, 1181 AT Amstelveen
Nationale Balletacademie	National academy for ballet; junior programme starts at age 9, but pre-NBA classes are also offered	All ages	Nicolaas Tetterodestraat 13, 1096 BM Amsterdam

THEATRE

Platform C	Cultural centre offering courses in music, dance, visual arts and theatre	All ages	Stadsplein 99, 1181 ZM Amstelveen
Academie voor Theater en Dans	Theatre, contemporary dance degrees, workshops, courses and summer schools	Youth	Jodenbreestraat 3, 1011 NG Amsterdam
Young Theatre Makers	English-speaking youth theatre for ages 8-25; acting, improv and performance	Kids/youth	Cliffordstraat 38, 1051 GV Amsterdam
Orange Theatre Company	English-speaking theatre company in Amsterdam with youth programmes	All ages	Linnaeusstraat 2A, 1092 CK Amsterdam

TIP: Many of the Primary afterschool clubs offered at AICS are geared towards music, dance and performance. Keep an eye on school communications for sign-up details in September and January.

MORE USEFUL INFORMATION

WEBSITES FOR EXPATS

Many people have immigrated to the Netherlands before you, and many of them have created websites with practical advice and news tailored to immigrants living in the Netherlands!

IamExpat	Lots of detailed information about all practical aspects of moving to and living in the Netherlands: from immigration, integration and taxation to healthcare, social security and family life. Plus, sections on career, housing, education, lifestyle , expat services and a dedicated news feed .
Amsterdam Mamas	Large and fast-growing community of English-speaking parents in Amsterdam. Lots of useful and practical information about living in the city with children. Family-friendly and community-minded.
Expatica Netherlands	Global website with lots of information about education, finance, healthcare, housing, moving to and working in the Netherlands.
ACCESS	Volunteer organization helping internationals integrate in the Netherlands. As well as many FAQs, the website also has a helpdesk number and email. Staffed by friendly and helpful volunteers.
XPAT.nl	Guide to living, working and studying in the Netherlands.

LEISURE, CULTURE AND TOURISM

Too many interesting things to do and see in Amsterdam and surrounding cities! Here are a few websites to get you started:

What's on guide to Amsterdam	https://www.iamsterdam.com
What's on guide to Amstelveen	https://www.visitamstelveen.nl/en
Amsterdam tourist information and travel guide	https://www.amsterdam.info
Amsterdam concerts and tour dates	https://www.songkick.com
Live music and concert listings	https://www.bandsintown.com
Things to do and see in Amsterdam	https://amsterdamspotted.com
Netherlands museums and museum pass	https://www.museum.nl/

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

As a Dutch school, AICS is broadly required to follow the nationwide school holiday schedule set by the government.

However, because of its international community, AICS has an option to borrow a week from the **Meivacantie** (May holiday) and add it to the **Kerstvacantie** (Christmas holiday). Every five years the school surveys parents to ask for their preference (two weeks in May or three weeks in December/January). Currently AICS has a longer winter break and a shorter May break than the government dates.

For other vacations, the government calendar is followed (AICS is in the Noord region):

<https://www.government.nl/topics/school-holidays/overview-of-school-holiday-dates-per-academic-year/>.

The school calendar (including study days and staff training days) is in the parent app and on the school website:

<https://aics.espritscholen.nl/home/about-aics/calendars>.

CLEANERS, CONTRACTORS AND BABYSITTING

Many families will have personal recommendations for cleaners, babysitters and contractors, but if your network is not yet established, you can start here:

Cleaning services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ https://easyclean.nl/○ https://reinventservices.com
Contractors and handypersons	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ https://zoofy.nl/en/
Screened babysitters and elder care	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ https://www.charlycares.com/en

RESOURCES FOR SPECIAL NEEDS FAMILIES

[Kidsproofplus](#) is a compilation of recommended playgrounds, museums, party venues, holiday destinations, dining options etc. that are suitable for children in wheelchairs, children with audiological or visual impairments, sensitive children and children with intellectual disabilities.

[Sports Club Only Friends](#) is a sports club in Amsterdam for children and youth with disabilities. Offers 32+ sports in a modern and accessible facility.

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

iHub Education & Family Care offers a wide range of support services to children and families at home and in schools: <https://www.ihub.nl>.

The **Trimbos Institute** advocates for better mental health in society and offers research and interventions on alcohol, tobacco and drug use, gaming, digital media and gambling: www.trimbos.nl.

PET CARE

Amsterdam is a very dog-friendly city with dogs' welcome in many parks, restaurants, buses and trams and a large Facebook community: [Expats with dogs in Amsterdam](#).

There are also many places to find dog walkers or pet sitters, such as <https://en.pawshake.nl/petsitters/amsterdam> or <https://www.petbnb.nl/hondenoppas-in-amsterdam>.

For any animal related emergency, the **Dieren-Ambulance** (animal ambulance) is a not-for-profit foundation that can provide first aid to sick and injured animals:

Dieren-Ambulance	0900-0245	www.dierenambulance.nl
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There is also a national information number for various services such as missing animals, animal crematoriums, animal assistance etc.: **0900-4440400**

TENANT SUPPORT

!WOON is a tenant support agency (funded by the Amsterdam municipality) that provides information, free advice and support for tenants and owner-occupants in Amsterdam.

<https://www.wooninfo.nl>

LOST AND FOUND

To search for lost items online, use www.verlorenofgevonden.nl or ilost.co. Many organizations and municipalities partner with these platforms, allowing you to filter your search to where you lost your item.

- For bus/tram/metro, check <https://ilost.co/org/GVB>
- For NS trains, check <https://www.nsinternational.nl/en/after-the-journey/lost-and-found-objects>
- For Schiphol (AMS), check <https://www.schiphol.nl/en/at-schiphol/services/lost-found-objects>

Tip: For items lost at school, follow the parent app for **Lost and Found** dates at each campus.

USEFUL APPS

Tikkie	Send and receive payment requests via WhatsApp or SMS
Buienradar	Weather app with very accurate rain forecasting
Google Translate	Instantly translate Dutch text using your phone's camera
9292	Travel planner for public transport nationwide
NL-Alert App	Public warning system app in the Netherlands
KNMI	Early warning for weather events
DigiD	Secure login for Dutch public services