

This country has 17 million people and 23 million bicycles. Here, 27% of journeys are made by bicycle. The Netherlands is a country of bicycle lanes, special bicycle crossings, and great racing cyclist champions. Here, an absence of bicycles on the streets would be unthinkable. With all that in mind, we can safely say that bicycles are very popular in the Netherlands. In this article, we will give some suggestions why you should also hop on your bicycle now and again.

Special bicycle lanes have been constructed throughout the country. These cycling lanes are indicated by a round blue traffic sign bearing a white bicycle. Sometimes these bicycle lanes are also indicated by a rectangular sign with the Dutch text 'Fietspad' (cycling lane) on it.



Direction signs are placed at junctions on these bicycle lanes. These show the distance in kilometres to the different locations such as villages and towns. In more rural areas, such as in polders and forests, other signposts can be seen. Such signposts are also called 'paddenstoelen' (mushrooms) in the Netherlands, because of their red and white colour and their eye-catching shape.

The Netherlands is an especially flat country, and usually there are no strong winds to speak of. Distances between destinations are often short. There is also plenty to see and do along the many cycling routes throughout the Netherlands.



Cycling routes are easy to map out yourself, but there are also plenty of resources you can use such as the ANWB (Royal Dutch Touring Club) website that have ready-made routes.

Cycling in big cities such as Rotterdam or Amsterdam can prove to be hectic, with other cyclists, pedestrians, cars, buses, and trams all making their own ways to their respective destinations.

In contrast, cycling through the outer suburbs or the beautiful nature reserves can be a very relaxing experience. We therefore recommend exploring such areas of the Netherlands by bicycle.

Once you are on your bike and have decided where you want to go, you must take a number of things into account.

The next page lists six Do's and four Don'ts to ensure that you can enjoy cycling while staying safe:

1 <https://www.anwb.nl/fietsen/fietsroutes/zoeken/> (only available in Dutch)



Do's:

1) Respect pedestrians on zebra crossings

Dutch traffic rules state that pedestrians who are using a zebra crossing always have right of way!

2) Use your arm to indicate the direction you are going in

If you want to turn while cycling, you must extend an arm in that direction shortly before making the turn so that other road users know where you are going. When doing so, always observe the applicable traffic rules.

3) Lock your bike

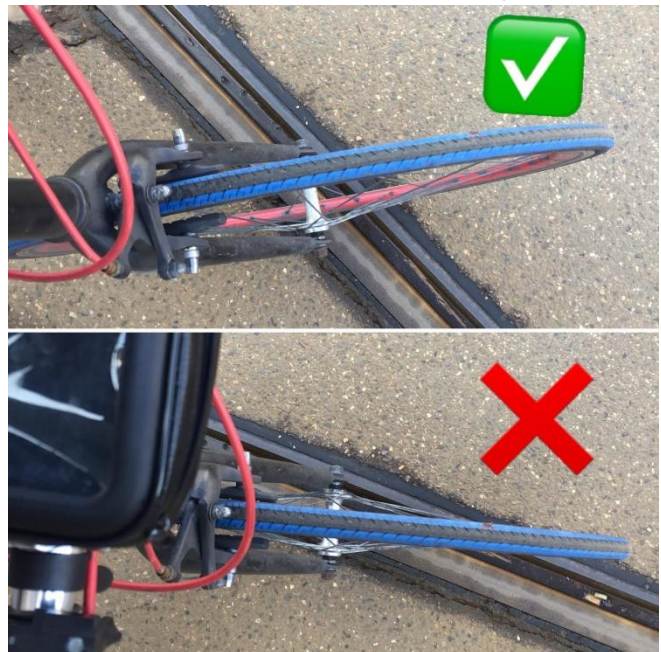
Despite the fact that – on average – everyone in the Netherlands has a bicycle, many bicycles are stolen. That is why you should always lock your bicycle, preferably with an extra chain lock. In cities, you can often use supervised bicycle parking facilities to park your bicycle (sometimes for a fee).

4) Make sure you have good lighting on your bicycle

In the Netherlands, you are required to turn on the lights on your bike as soon as it gets dark outside. Good lighting means a working white or yellow light on the front of your bike and a working red light on the rear of your bike. NL Jobs offers bicycle lights, which you can request free of charge. If you cycle without working lights, you may be fined €55.

5) Watch out for tram rails

Large cities in particular have many tram rails. These often go over paths that many cyclists use. It is easy to get your bicycle tyre caught in tram rails, which can lead to unpleasant consequences. That is why you should always make sure to cross tram rails at straight angles, as shown below.



6) Use the bell on your bicycle

Almost all bikes have a bell on them. Make sure you use it if you want to warn other road users. If there is no bell on your bicycle, you can buy them for a very low price at shops such as 'Action'.

Don'ts:

7) Cycle and drink (bad idea)

In the Netherlands, it is forbidden to use the road if you have had too much to drink. This also applies to cyclists. You should therefore not drink more than two glasses of beer or wine if you will be cycling afterwards.

8) Use your smartphone while cycling

As of 2019, it is forbidden to use a smartphone while cycling. People who violate this rule risk receiving a €95 fine.

9) Forget a coat or umbrella on cloudy days

In the Netherlands, rain can sometimes be very heavy. Always take a raincoat and/or umbrella with you if you see that it is cloudy before you leave on your bike. The law states that it is legal to hold an umbrella while you cycle.

10) Cycle through red lights

For cyclists, traffic lights are a common sight on bicycle lanes and other roads. If the light is red, stop for the traffic light. If you go through a red light, you may receive a traffic fine and endanger both yourself and others.

NL Jobs hopes that this document provides you with sufficient information and tips about cycling in the Netherlands. All that's left to do is further explore the Netherlands by bicycle. We hope you enjoy cycling far and safely!

If you still need some inspiration, then have a look at this cool video!

https://youtu.be/gUe_e6gmkeI

