



HOW TO SURVIVE UTRECHT

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Dear student,

Congratulations! You have been accepted to the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences at Utrecht University. Although you must have already looked up some information on how people live in Utrecht, I thought it would be nice if you would have some inside information. I have lived in Utrecht as a student for 2 years now, and it is safe to say that I have become some of an expert on the do's and don'ts of the Utrecht way of living. So I thought I would share my wisdom and personal impressions with you! Read on and become inspired by Utrecht! I hope this little survival guide will help you get by in the early months of your stay.

Best wishes and enjoy your stay,

Marit Knoop

INTRODUCTION TO UTRECHT

Utrecht is Holland's fourth largest city. It is known for its art and culture, and general cozy vibe. The symbol of our city is the Dom tower, which is almost seven hundred years old. Utrecht also has its own weapon (or flag) that you will also notice on the clothing and memorabilia of Utrecht University. But the only important thing you need to know is Utrecht's own song Utereg me stadje (roughly translated it is something like Utrechhht ma citiej). You can find it through this [link](#). Memorize it so when it is played in a bar, you can wow all your new friends with a performance!

Transportation

Buy a bike! A bicycle is the main transportation method in Utrecht. Taxis are too expensive and busses don't take you everywhere (especially in the early mornings – or late nights). You can buy a (second-hand) bike from bike shops, and you will see that it will bring you much joy.

During the day, Utrecht has a vast bus network as well. From the city center to the campus (and vice versa) you can take busses 128, 228 and 28, and from the railway station and the soccer stadium to the Uithof (campus) you can take bus 12. For a more

detailed traveling schedule, please install the "9292ov" app or look at their [website](#). You only have to fill in your destination, present location and preferred time of departure or arrival, and the app will tell you which public transportation to take!



The legendary bus 12 to 'de Uithof'.

IMPORTANT SHOPS

Groceries

The Netherlands are overflowed with [Albert Heijn](#) shops and for good reason, because it is a good grocery store. Before you go to the Albert Heijn, you should watch this video through [this link](#). The [Jumbo](#) is slightly cheaper, but the [Aldi](#) and [Lidl](#) are the cheapest: Aldi is 10% cheaper than Albert Heijn. The Lidl has an especially nice fruit and vegetable department.

Grocery stores are generally open from 8 am until 9 pm, but on Sundays, the opening times can be different, so be sure to check that before you head out.

If you are staying at the Uithof (University Campus) during colleges or if you live there, please be aware that the little Spar-grocery store (next to the Langeveld building) has a small amount of products and is a little more expensive than the grocery stores in the city center.

Toiletries

The best stores you can go to for your toiletries are [Etos](#) or [Kruidvat](#). These shops have everything from toothpaste, shampoo to tampons, condoms, medication and make-up.



Small/useful stuff

For some other stuff you can go to [Blokker](#), [Hema](#) and [Action](#). These three shops are all Mecca's of the smaller living things. You can visit them if you need a washing sack, mouse traps, but also cutlery, dvd's and even clothes. Of the three, the Action is the cheapest.

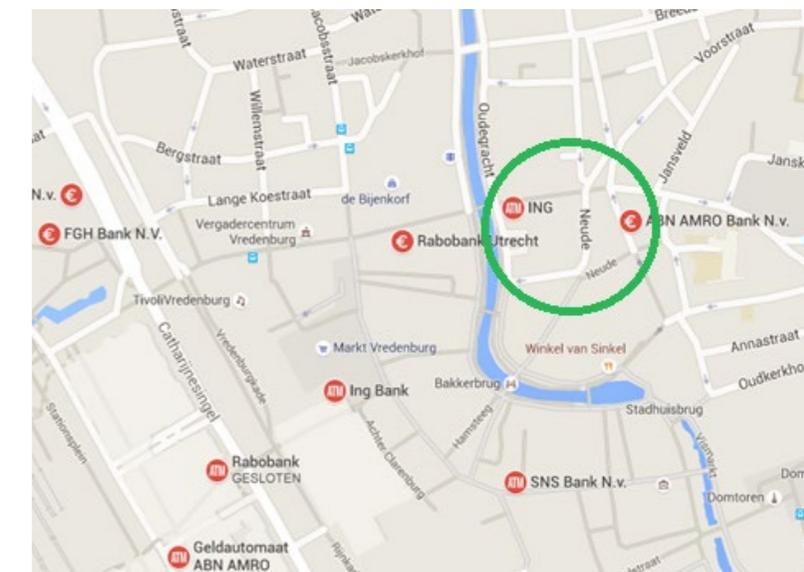


Furniture

Students love [IKEA](#). It is a cheap shop for all the large (and smaller) furniture. And additionally, they serve good breakfast, lunch or dinner for a nice price!

ATM

Below you will find an overview of the [ATMs in the city center](#). The best ones are the ING and the ABN AMRO Bank close to the Neude (emphasized by the green circle)



FUN THINGS TO DO IN UTRECHT

The tourist information center (called the [VVV](#)) is located opposite the DomTower. Here, you can get all the information on sightseeing trips that you will need! To inspire you in advance, below are my favorite tourist things to do in Utrecht.

1 DOMunder - the perfect opportunity to learn about the history of your new city! [DOMunder](#) is a unique and exciting underground journey below the Dom. Travel beneath the Utrecht square to see the 2000 years of history buried below. If you want to grab a drink or a quick bite afterwards, the Domsquare offers many great places like Walden or Lebowski.



2 Trajectum Lumen - At night, Utrecht transforms into a work of light art. Trajectum Lumen is a light art route through the historical city center of Utrecht. The works of art are created by national and international renowned light artists. Buildings, bridges and even alleys are transformed into a spectacle of light. The route can be enjoyed 365 nights a year, as soon as the street lighting is switched on until midnight. The walk takes about an hour and a half. Through this [link](#) you can get a map to guide you.

3 Boat ride - Take a boat ride through Utrecht's famous canals. They sail daily from 11:00 to 17:00 and costs are €10,50. One boat ride takes approximately one hour. The Schuttevaer organization has boats leaving near the Ekko and 'stadskasteel Oudaen'. For the exact location, see this [link](#).

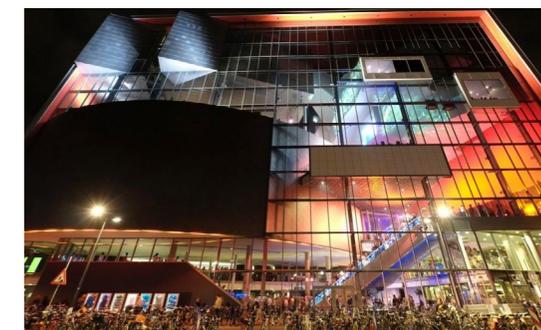
4 Climb the Domtower - The Dom tower is more than 600 years old and is the symbol of the city of Utrecht. It is also the tallest church tower in our country. For €9 you can climb the medieval tower in an hour, with a guide. During the climb you will learn all about the bell chime and the largest bells in the Netherlands. Once you have climbed the tower, which has 465 steps, your sporting performance is rewarded

5 Bike Route - The Netherlands are famous for their usage of bicycles. To really experience the Dutch way of living, try something different and follow a bike route through the best bits of Utrecht. Bike maps are available at the VVV or online.

DRINKING & DANCING

To make your Utrecht-experience complete, you have to visit one of Utrecht's charming bars and clubs. Starting at the city's theater (the "Stadsschouwburg") and ending at the railway station, there are numerous of fun bars. You should know that in Utrecht, the "party" nights for students are mainly Thursdays and Fridays, and occasionally a Tuesday or Saturday. You should definitely see for yourself and find out which ones you like, but to help you out, below you can find a few of my recommendations.

1 Tivoli Vredenburg - By far the best opportunity to go "clubbing". Tivoli has a large dance club, and every Thursday it is free for students! You should also definitely visit one of Tivoli's special parties like "Singles party" (where you can choose a song and hand it to the DJ) or "Zero's Heroes" (where only music from the year 2000 is played). You can find the program [here](#) and their Facebook page [here](#).



2 Club Poema - You can find 'de Poema' at the famous restaurant street, de Drieharingstraat, and it is the club to visit on a Tuesday. This evening is actually known as the ESN International Student Night but nowadays you can find a lot of Dutch students there too. The lights are dimmed and the floor is sticky from all the beer but the people are nice and the music is good!

3 Neude - The Neude is Utrecht's most famous square, and it holds a lot of fun cafés. Le Journal has great wine and (special) beers, and the Beurs is good for dancing.

4 De Voortuin - Across the street from the Neude, on the left, there is a little bar called "De Voortuin". It is here where quite a lot of foreign people come to grab a drink, and on the average they are older than 25. It is not so much good for dancing, but it is a really nice place to have a drink! And, at de Voortuin they have a Bring Your Own Food policy, which means that you can bring your own food (not entirely coincidental, there are numerous snack bars in that street as well).



5 Ubica - Close to the Neude is the Ganzenmarkt, which is a smaller square with a few cozy bars. You should try out Ubica, a sophisticated little bar where they serve nice drinks. In this bar as well, the average age is a bit older (>25).

6 Zussen - Across the Janskerkhof (close to the Dom) there is cocktailbar 'Zussen' (Dutch for 'Sisters'). It is a very nice place that serves amazing cocktails, and with an amazingly variety of choices! It is quite expensive, but definitely something you should try! For an impression, see this [link](#).

7 t Gras van de Buren - 't Gras (the well-known abbreviation) is a cozy place to grab lunch or a cheap meal, but at night, it turns into an awesome dancebar! You should definitely visit it on a Friday. The music is awesome and the people are nice as well (>21 years).



8 Stathe - Close to the Bijenkorf (Netherlands' most famous department store), there is café Stathe. It is an old café, but has been modernized over the years. Visit this bar for live performances on Fridays, and later on the evening it turns into a dance bar, filled with nice people of >22 years. What makes Stathe special is that it is mostly a drinking bar, but at night, the dance room in the back is opened, so you have the best of both worlds!

RESTAURANTS

The most famous restaurant street is called the "**Drieharingstraat**" between the Vredenburgsquare and the Oude Gracht. This small street is filled with wonderful restaurants from hamburgers and Italian food to tapas and Japanese cuisine, so whatever you're looking for, it is here.

Another nice place to grab a bite is the square called **Mariaplaats**. Dine in the midst of a yard in restaurant Le Jardin, or enjoy an international meal at Se7en (inspired by the 7 Wonders of the world).

For **chicken**, go to KLOEK (opposite the Tivoli building), they serve amazing chicken for amazing prices, accompanied by special beers that are brewed in Utrecht!

If you enjoy eating a **hamburger**, you should definitely grab one at the burgerbar "Meneer Smakers" (translated to Mister Tasty in English). This burgerbar has three locations: on the Nobelstraat, the Twijnstraat and the Oudegracht. They serve amazing burgers, and very creative ones as well. You can order burgers of beef, lamb, chicken, vegetarian, salmon and even a vegan burger. I recommend the "Tante Connie burger" which is a vegetarian goat cheese burger with grilled eggplant, courgette/zucchini, walnut, green olives and wild flower honey (for only €8!), and the "Ome Huib burger" which is a burger made of chicken, with a topping of grilled courgette/zucchini, avocado, spring onions and fresh yoghurt sauce. See this [link](#) for their entire menu and opening hours.

You can drink the tap water in the Netherlands, it has a very high quality. If you want to buy a bottle of water: most bottles with a blue cap are non-sparkling and most bottles with a red or pink cap are sparkling.

SPORTS

There are many opportunities to engage in sports. The city center has many gyms that offer student-deals. For example, there is a "TrainMore" at the corner of the street of Janskerkhof-square. You can also join one of the fitness-groups that work out together in the parks of Utrecht.



Another really cool thing is the Utrecht's Skate Parade, that is held every Friday at 8 o'clock during the summer. It is enormously popular, and with good cause because you can roller-blade behind a truck with a DJ in it, through the streets of Utrecht, what's not to like?! See this [link](#) for more information.

In addition, the University Campus has its own sport facility called "Olympos". Olympos has a gym as well, but you can also register unlimitedly for group workout sessions like Spinning, Zumba, Karate, Pilates, you name it! You have to buy an access-card called the Olympas that costs around €130, but it does give you unlimited exercise opportunities. Visit their [website](#) or drop by at the facility to ask for more information.

Olympos is also the base for 30(!) student-sport associations like soccer, basketball, volleyball, hockey, dance, handball and rugby. See this [link](#) for a complete view of the associations. From my own experience I can say that joining one of those squads is really fun and a great way to engage in the student life – as there are parties and drinks almost every Friday! Team sports are therefore also a great way to meet new friends.

GLOSSARY

This is a list of words and sentences that help you get by in the daily life. People from Utrecht ('Utrechters') generally speak English as well, so if you are not in a very Dutch mood, you can manage yourself by solely speaking English as well.

Your first words

Hallo!	= Hallo! (hah-low)
Hi!	= Hoi! (hoy) / Hi! (hay)
Good morning!	= Goedemorgen! (khoo-der-mor-khern)
Good afternoon!	= Goedemiddag! (khoo-der-mi-dakh)
Good evening!	= Goedenavond! (khoo-der-aa-font)
See you later! Bye!	= Tot ziens! (toat seens) / Dag! (dakh) Hoi! (hoai)
Here you are!	= Alstublieft (als-stuw-bleeft)
Please?	= Alsjeblieft? (als-yer-bleeft)
Thanks!	= Bedankt! (ber-dahnkt)
I am sorry!	= Neem me niet kwalijk (naym mer neet kvoa-lerk) / sorry! (sor-ree)
Cheers	= Proost



The Dutch King, Willem-Alexander, saying 'Hallo' to President Obama.

Your first sentences

Do you speak English?

Would you help me please?

Where are the toilets?

How much is that?

Where can I find ...

At what time do you open?

What time do you close?

Could you talk a bit slower?

Could you repeat that please?

= Spreekt u Engels? (spraykt uw eng-erls)

= Kunt u mij helpen? (kuhnt uw may hel-pern)

= Waar is het toilet? (vaar is het tvaa-let)

= Hoeveel kost dat? (hoo-feyl kost dat)

= Waar kan ik de ... vinden (vaar kan ik der ... fin-dern)

= Hoe laat gaat u open? (hoo laat khaat uw o-pern)

= Hoe laat gaat u dicht? (hoo laat khaat uw dikht)

= Kunt u wat langzamer praten? (kuhnt uw
vat lankh-sa-mern praatern)

= Kunt u dat herhalen? (Kuhnt uw dat her-haa-lern)

NOTE: In case of an emergency you can call 112 directly for an ambulance, the police or the fire department.



A beautiful windmill with some tulips for your viewing pleasure.

ABOUT THE MAGAZINE

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Feel free to share this magazine with your fellow international students!