

Car & driving



Car & Driving License in the Netherlands

Driving license

As an expat, you can use your own driving license for a certain period of time, after which you are obliged to exchange it for a Dutch one.

- **EU/EEA Driving License:**
You can continue to use your license from your home country until it expires, depending on the issue date. If it was issued before January 2013, you can use it for another 10 years. If it's older than 9 years, you can use it for another 2 years, counting from the date of your registration with your municipality. For licenses issued after January 2013, you can continue driving with your license for another 15 years (if it's valid). Keep in mind that it is not possible to renew your foreign driving license. Once your original one expires, you will need to apply for a Dutch one.
- **Non-EU/EEA Driving License:**
You can use your license for up to 185 days from the date of your registration with your municipality, and you need to apply for the Dutch driving license within this time. If you fail to do so, you will be obligated to take the Dutch driving exams. Also, if your foreign license is lost or stolen, you will need to pass the Dutch driving exams to get a new one.
- **30% Ruling:**
If you have been granted the 30% ruling, your valid foreign driver's license can be exchanged for a Dutch one without having to pass a Dutch driving exam, regardless of your country of origin.
- **How to Apply for a Dutch Driving License:**
To obtain your Dutch driving license, you will need to submit an application at the municipality where you are registered. You will be asked for your BSN, photo, current driving license, and a valid identity document. The cost is 51.50 euros (as of 2024). Your application will be forwarded to the Road Transportation Authority RDW (Rijksdienst voor het Wegverkeer). The entire process takes around 2 weeks. Important note: You will not be able to drive while waiting for your Dutch driving license, so plan accordingly."

How to bring your car from abroad?

There are several steps you need to follow if you plan to bring your car from your home country:

- Have your car inspected at one of the RDW (Netherlands Vehicle Authority) stations. You will need to make an appointment and bring the following documents: identity card, COC (Certificate of Conformity), foreign license number certificate, and APK (vehicle inspection report). Based on the car assessment and the information provided by you, RDW will decide whether it's possible to register your car in the Netherlands.
- Get familiar with the car-related taxes: [BPM](#) and [Road Taxes](#).
- Arrange the Dutch license plate: once the RDW approves your car, you will get a license number certificate (within 5 days). With that certificate, you can request to have a Dutch license plate manufactured at a plate manufacturer. Check more details [here](#).
- Obtain obligatory car insurance (WA). You can find more information here: [Car Insurance in the Netherlands](#).
- Research the parking possibilities in your neighborhood: you might have to apply for a parking permit if street parking is paid in your neighborhood. You can find more information here: [Parking and Parking Regulations in the Netherlands](#) and [ANWB: Parking](#).