

# Differences between The Netherlands and the USA

From **A** to **Z** .....

**Auto (car):** Americans never use a bicycle (or walk) like we do. They use a car (always).



Hmmmmmmmm.....

**Belasting (tax):** our BTW 19% (yours is 9%), consumer goods are twice as expensive in the Netherlands than they are in the States (together with a low \$ makes import out of the States very profitable)

**Criminaliteit (crime):** 'small' crimes are less common in the States. Never leave your bicycle without chaining it to a fence. You own a scooter? Use two chains. Removable car radios are a novelty in the US (in the Netherlands a must). But know this: murder is less common in our country.

**Dik (fat):** At every corner of a street a McDonalds, Burger King, KFC or what so ever. The temptation to eat is very high. In Holland you go to a restaurant to celebrate, in the US you go visit them just to eat.



Sorry!

**Eten (food):** Portions are gigantic. For us Dutchmen visiting your country this means: order a small Caesar salad and it will be as big as our full-meal-salad. In the Netherlands it is not done to ask for a doggy bag. We simply finish our meal in the restaurant.

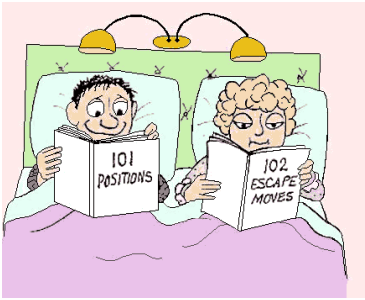
**Fooi (tip):** Tips aren't necessary but they are polite. Wages are sufficient to pay all bills. So just leave some euros behind but don't border about the 15 to 20% rule. Who do you tip? The same kind of jobs like you do back in the States.

**Gallon (liter):** A gallon is about 4 liters. One liter of petrol (benzine) costs € 1.74. Convert this to the costs of a gallon in \$!!

**Huizen (houses):** Houses are made of bricks or concrete. To be honest: our kitchens are more beautiful than yours.

**Indeling (lay out):** Houses have a different lay out. Using the front door you don't enter the living room but a hallway. Downstairs has two rooms: a living room and a dining room. Upstairs are the sleeping rooms. That's all.

**Jokes (grapjes):** For sure our humour is different than yours. Want to know the difference: just come to the Netherlands and try! Don't be scared by the jokes about sex: they are just to laugh and don't mean anything else!



**Kinderen (kids):** Restaurants do have special (little) meals and a good restaurant maybe has an coloring sheet. That's all. We are not used to the way American restaurants treats children. (often we see them like a burden taking them with us to a restaurant.....)

**Law Suit (rechtzaak):** Law suits less common in the Netherlands the way they are in the States. In case you make a stupid mistake someone will call you names or maybe you get a written warning but that's it. This doesn't mean you are allowed to do whatever you like. To control the society the police will deal with problems (not lawyers).

**Maateenheid (metric system):** miles are 'kilometers'. Square foot is 'vierkante meter'. Gallons are 'liters'. Fahrenheit is Celsius. Foot is 'centimeters'. Everything is different (and for sure difficult) It will drive you nuts.



The grey colored countries use the metric system

**Naakt (nude):** sex on television is no problem. A nipple seems to be normal. In your opinion our opinion towards nudity seems to be very liberal. For us it is just normal. But know this: commercials about Viagra won't be seen at our television.

**Omgangsvormen (interrelation):** Americans are much more polite. We never compliment people we don't know. Americans invite you to dinner the first second they see you. We never invite strangers. But in case we do invite a friend to come to eat with us, it is very impolite not to show up. And be aware: come in time, showing up too late is not done!!!

**Politie (police):** In case you think a police man (or woman) is wrong doing what they do to you just start arguing. It will be accepted as long as you won't make it personal towards the officer. A joke won't harm your wallet. A police officer is never alone, never. Unless it is a motorcycle officer.



Maybe this isn't a good idea, even in the Netherlands.

Q..... pffff

**Rellen (riots):** Soccer, our National sport, is dangerous. Real dangerous to visit! Leaf your children at home. Go with friends. Don't mingle with supporters from the opponents. Expect huge amounts of policemen. Be prepared towards riots: fights between hooligans are 'normal'. Just stay away and watch the games on television. And if you do visit a game: just expect the game, no big show starting the game, no national anthem, no half time show and after the game you just go home!

**Stoplicht (traffic light):** Red means STOP. Also in case you are intended to go right. Never cross a red light it will cost you € 220.- !

**Taxi's (taxi's):** In the US a taxi is yellow, old, worn out and ugly. In case you prefer a better one you order a town-car. Not good enough: call for a stretched limo. In the Netherlands a taxi is a taxi.: brand new, well maintained, clean and usually a BMW or a Mercedes Benz.

**Uiterlijk (looks):** Sneakers are comfortable to wear so why bother about shoes to look good in a suit? A car? We buy a beautiful car, in the States it has to be practical so that's why we don't use pick-ups and you do. The difference between rich and poor is less obvious in the States (although I think in real the gap is much bigger than it is in the Netherlands).



**Volkslied (national anthem):** In the US everyone will rise, put his/her hand on his/her heart and sings along the National Anthem. It is performed before every game and during many other occasions. Americans are very proud hearing (or singing) the anthem. Our National Anthem has 15 strophes!!. Many of us aren't able to complete the first one.....

**Water (water):** We have plenty of it. Huge parts of our country is below sea level. But we aren't hurting as much by it than the USA is. We are far ahead in water management simply by knowing if we don't do this we won't have our country anymore.....

X ....

Y....

**Zebra (zebra):** Actually all traffic stops!! At least in case you use them in the States. Children playing in the street means: slowing down. At least in case you in the States.....

Hope it was fun reading the A to Z. It was cynical but it is ooo so true