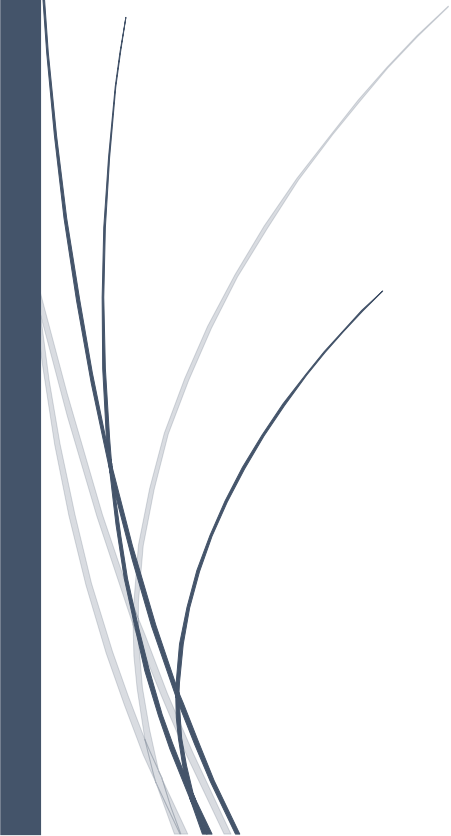


Dutch Grammar

Extracted from
duolingo.com



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Grammar: The Dutch Alphabet & Pronunciation

Content

1. The Dutch alphabet
2. Dutch pronunciation
3. Vowels and Diphthongs
4. Consonants

1. The Dutch alphabet

Our modern Dutch alphabet simply consists of the 26 letters of the 'ISO basic Latin alphabet'. We have about five vowels and twenty-one consonants. Whereas the letter **E/e** is the most frequently used letter in our language, the letters **Q** and **X** are used least frequently.

Here you can find two introductory videos, [part 1](#) and [part 2](#).

So, the Dutch alphabet has 26 letters - just like in English. In fact, you don't have to learn any new letters! Hurrah!

2. Dutch pronunciation

However, as with any new language, there are going to be quite a few differences and peculiarities in pronunciation. Some letters are simply

pronounced differently, and there can be combinations that may throw you for a loop. Don't worry, we're here to help!

3.Vowels and Diphthongs

The way Dutch vowels sound depends on whether they are in open or closed syllables.

A syllable is closed if it is in a consonant sandwich (e.g. "bed") and open if not (e.g. "ga").

Instead of trying to explain the English equivalents of each vowel sound, it may be easier to check out [this website](#).

In Dutch, in addition to the vowels "a", "e", "i", "o", "u", and "y", there are a number of diphthongs.

- **"oe"** sounds like the "oo" in "tooth"
- **"eu"** sounds like the "ay" in day with rounded lips, or like the "eu" in the French word "feu"
- **"ei/ij"**: these sounds are like a combination of "eh" and "ee", similar to the "ay" in "day"
- **"ui"** is tricky, but can be described as a short "a" sound followed by a "u" sound. It is difficult to explain and understand in words, so listening and practicing to the audio in the link below can help.
- **"uw"** is a long Dutch "u" sound with a slight "w" sound
- **"ou"** and **"au"** sound similar to the "ou" in "loud"
- **"aai"** sounds like a long "a" sound followed by a long "i"
- **"eeuw"** long "e" sound followed by the "uw" diphthong from above
- **"ooi"** long "o" sound followed by a long "i"
- **"oei"** combination of "oe" and "ie" ("**ie**" is pronounced the same as a long "i")
- **"ieuw"** long "ie" followed by "uw"

Here is a link to some [audio for diphthongs](#)

4. Consonants

The consonants in Dutch – b, c, d, f, g, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, v, w, x, z – are not too different from the consonants in English. You also have “ch”, “ck”, “ng”, “nj”, “sch”, “sj” and “tj”.

The major differences are the “g”, “j”, “r”, and “w”.

“g”

The “g” sound is not found in English. It sounds akin to coughing up a loogie, but I’d like to think it’s quite a bit more elegant.

The sound is made when air passes through an opening made in the back of the throat where the tongue and uvula (the dangly thing in the back of your mouth) meet. This is around the same area where your tongue and the roof of your mouth meet when making the English “g” sound.

If you are familiar with German pronunciation, the Dutch “g” sound is like the “ch” sound in the word “Dach”.

Check out this great [video](#) for an explanation.

In some foreign words, the “g” is pronounced as it is in the language the word was borrowed from.

“j”

The “j” sound in Dutch is straightforward – it is essentially the “y” sound as in the English word “you”. . “r”

Then there’s the “r” in Dutch. There are several ways of pronouncing it. How should you pronounce it?

The first option is to roll your “r” using the tip of your tongue. Some people even just tap it instead of doing a sustained roll.

Another option is a more guttural “r”, once again using the uvula as with the “g” sound. It can be quite difficult to roll your r’s using this method, but with a lot of practice it can be learned.

Both of these “r” sounds come at the beginning or middle of words and sometimes at the end, but a lot of Dutch people pronounce the “r” kind of like an American “r” at the end of a word.

For a live clarification, check out [another video](#) from the same helpful Youtube user.

“w”

The Dutch “w” is not pronounced exactly like “w” in English, nor like a “v” sound.

The “w” in Dutch is actually called a “labiodental approximant” (oooh fancy!).

It is a bit like pronouncing the English “w” while having your teeth in lips in the same position as when pronouncing the English consonant “v”.

[Video explanation](#)

Consonant combos!

A quick explanation of “ch”, “ck”, “ng”, “nj”, “sch”, “sj” and “tj”.

- **“ch”** is pronounced like the Dutch “g”
- **“ck”** is pronounced as a “k” sound
- **“ng”** is like the “ng” in the English “sing”
- **“nj”** is kind of like the “n” in “onion” or for you language buffs out there like the Spanish “ñ”
- **“sch”** is often a combination of “s” and “ch” (as a “g” sound), but can also be pronounced as an “s” at the end of a word, for example “fantastisch”
- **“sj”** is pronounced like the English “sh” sound
- **“tj”** is pronounced like the English “ch” sound, but softer

Grammar: Dutch Spelling

Content

1. Dutch spelling: intro
2. Open and closed syllables
3. Writing consonants

4. Capitalization
5. Diacritics

1. Dutch spelling

The Dutch spelling system is actually pretty logical. I'm not just trying to ease your mind here; there are actually a lot of concrete rules. So sit back and breathe deep. We can do this.

2. Open and closed syllables

The length of the vowels in a word are determined by the type of syllable. The syllable can be open or closed. As explained before in the pronunciation section, a closed syllable is essentially a consonant sandwich, where the vowel is the delicious meat/cheese/mustard. In a closed syllable the vowel is short. In an open syllable, which doesn't have that second slice of bread, the vowel is pronounced long, just as the toppings on your sandwich will inevitably spill out if you don't have a second slice of bread.

Now, how does this look with regards to the spelling?

Short vowels

Here are some examples of words with **closed** syllables, where the vowels are **short**:

- het **bed** (the bed)
- **tof** (great)
- ik **ka**m (I comb)

The vowel length is usually preserved after inflexion, which means that in order for the vowel to remain short, a change in spelling has to occur:

- in the plural: "het bed" becomes "de **bed-den**"
- adjective declination: "tof" becomes "**tof-fe**"
- verb conjugation: "(ik) kam" becomes "(wij) **ka-men**"

The dashes show the separation of the syllables.

This happens because otherwise the first syllable will remain open and be pronounced as a long vowel (which can lead to differences in meaning, or using an entirely nonexistent word).

Long vowels

Here are some examples of words with **open** syllables, where the vowels are **long**.

- de **v**ader (the father)
- de **l**epel (the spoon)

If the syllable is open then the vowel only has to be written once, but things change when the syllable is closed, but the vowel is **still** long:

- de **ma**an (the moon)
- **g**root (big)
- ik **ne**em (I take)

Since the vowel has to be distinguished as being long, it has to be written twice. **This is for long vowels in closed syllables.**

This also affects the formation of the plural, adjective declination and verb conjugation:

- plural: “de maan” becomes “de **ma**-nen”
- adjective declination: “groot” becomes “**gro**-te”
- verb conjugation: “(ik) neem” becomes “(wij) **ne**-men”

There are some words where an open syllable = doubled vowel:

- de **thee** (the tea)
- de **zee** (the sea)
- **tw**ee (two)

Diphthongs

Diphthongs never change in respect to whether a syllable is open or closed.

- de **deur** -> de **deuren**

- de vrouw -> de vrouwen

3. Writing consonants

Some consonants undergo a change when a word is conjugated or inflected in some way.

The letters **v** and **z** are never at the end of a syllable and thus never at the end of a word. They are instead replaced by **f** and **s** respectively:

v -> f

- schrijven (open syllable; “to write”) -> schrijf (closed syllable)
- leven (to live) -> leeff

z -> s

- lezen (open syllable; “to read”) -> leess (closed syllable)
- verliezen (to lose) -> verliess

For words that end in **f** or **s** it usually reverses:

- lieff (kind) -> lieve
- het huiss (the house) -> huizen

Words never end in double consonants!

4. Capitalization

Most words in Dutch are not capitalized.

The following are cases in which they *are*:

- at the beginning of a sentence
- for proper nouns

Unlike in English, the names of the weekdays, months, seasons, and cardinal directions are **not** capitalized.

If a sentence begins with a word with an apostrophe, the second word is capitalized:

- **'s Morgens** drink ik water.

Both letters in the diphthong “ij” must be capitalized if the situation calls for it:

- **IJs** is koud.

5. Diacritics

There are some diacritics in Dutch that are used in certain situations. There's are tremas, accent marks, and apostrophes.

The trema

A trema is used to denote the separate pronunciation of two consecutive vowels. The trema is put on the vowel with which the a new syllable begins.

- België
- asteroïde
- gecreëerd
- geïnteresseerd

The accent

Accents can be used to help understand the meaning of a word in a certain context.

- Ik ben voor haar gekomen. (I came for her.)
- Ik ben **vóór** haar gekomen. (I came before her.)

Apostrophes

An apostrophe is used in the following cases:

- to textually represent spoken language in which something is left out
 - M'n oma draagt klompen. (m'n = mijn)
- as part of the abbreviation of the genitive form **des**
 - **'s** morgens - (“des morgens”)

- for the plural of nouns that end in a vowel (where the long vowel must be conserved)
 - auto -> auto's
- for marking possession for words ending in an "s" or a vowel
 - **Frans'** boek
 - **Maria's** jurk
- plural form of words that consist of one letter or a short combination of letters
 - twee **b's**
 - de **wc's**

Grammar: Dutch plural nouns

Content

1. Plurals with **-en**
2. Plurals with **-s**
3. Plurals with **-eren**
4. Other plural forms

Forming the plural in Dutch

There are quite a number of ways of forming the Plural in Dutch, so here is an explanation to help you understand exactly how it works.

Plurals with **-en**

The plural ending **-en** is the most common plural ending in Dutch. You first get a taste of it in **Basics 2** with words like "vrouwen" ("vrouw" in the singular) and "mannen" ("man" in the singular).

If you've read the thread about [Dutch spelling](#) you now know that a word like "man" becomes "mannen" due to a spelling rule.

This is to be noted when adding the plural ending **-en**:

- de kat (cat) + **-en** = de k**at**ten
- de maan (moon) + **-en** = de ma**an**en
- de man (man) + **-en** = de ma**nn**en

Other spelling rules, such as **f -> v** and **s -> z**, must also be observed:

f ->v

- de brief**f** (letter)-> brie**ve**n
- het bedrij**f** (company) -> bedrij**ve**n

s -> z

- de prijs**s** (price) -> prij**z**en
- het huis**s** (house) -> hui**z**en

However, there are some exceptions where these changes don't occur.

For the following words:

- de dans**s** (dance) -> dansen
- de kaars**s** (candle) -> kaarsen
- de kans**s** (chance) -> kansen
- de mens**s** (human) -> mensen
- de prins**s** (prince) -> prinsen
- de wens**s** (wish) -> wensen

For loanwords ending in **-graaf** and **-soof**:

- de fotogra**af** (photographer) -> fotogra**fen**
- de filoso**of** (philosopher) -> filoso**fen**

There are also nouns that have a short vowel in the singular get a long vowel after **-en** is added:

- het bad (bath) -> baden
- het bedrag (amount) -> bedragen
- de dag (day) -> dagen
- het dak (roof) -> daken
- het gat (hole) -> gaten

In other words, the vowel sound changes.

For these words:

- het lid (member) -> leden
- het schip (ship) -> schepen
- de stad (city) -> steden

And for words ending in **-heid**:

- de mogelijk**heid** (possibility) -> mogelijk**heden**

If a noun ends in **-ee** or a stressed **-ie**, a **trema** is added:

- het idee**ee** (idea) -> ideeën
- de kopie**ie** (copy) -> kopieën

Note: If there is no stress on the **-ie**, the plural is formed by adding an **-s** ending.

Plurals with -s

There are also a number of nouns that end with **-s** in the plural, because they either end a certain way or are borrowed words.

The following nouns get the ending **-s** in the plural:

- Nouns with two or more syllables ending on an unstressed **-el**, **-em**, **-en**, **-er**, **-erd**, **-aar**, **-aard**, and all diminutives:
 - de taf**el** (table) -> tafels
 - het mod**em** (modem) -> modems
 - de jong**en** (boy) -> jongens
 - de vader**er** (father) -> vaders
 - de stommer**erd** (dummy) -> stommerds
 - de adela**ar** (eagle) -> adelaars
 - de lui**aard** (sloth) -> luiaards
- Most loanwords that end in a consonant, which also end in **s** in the language of origin:
 - de film (film/movie) -> films
 - de computer (computer) -> computers
 - de roman (novel) -> romans
- Nouns ending in an unstressed **-ie**:
 - de familie**ie** (family) -> families
 - de organisat**ie** (organization) -> organisaties
 - Exceptions to this are “de bacterie” (bacteria) -> “bacteriën” and “de porie” (pore) -> “poriën”

The ending **'s** (apostrophe **s**) is added to words ending in **-a**, **-i**, **-o**, **-u** or **-y**. This is necessary because otherwise the vowel length would change (think of the spelling rules):

- de firma**a** (firm) -> firma's
- de taxi**i** (taxi) -> taxi's
- de auto**o** (car) -> auto's
- de paraplu**u** (umbrella) -> paraplu's
- de baby**y** (baby) -> baby's

Plurals with -eren

A small number of nouns end in **-eren** in the plural:

- het ei (egg) -> eieren
- het kind (child) -> kinderen
- het blad (sheet/leaf) -> bladeren (leaves (on a tree)) **or** bladen (sheets (of paper))

Other plural forms

Here are some other plural forms for some common words:

- het album (album) -> albums
- de catalogus (catalog) -> catalogi
- de crisis (crisis) -> crises
- de cursus (course) -> cursussen
- de koe (cow) -> koeien
- het museum (museum) -> musea (or museums)

Grammar: De/Het/Een

The 3 articles

In Dutch, there are three articles: **een** (= 'a(n)'), the indefinite article, and the definite articles **de** and **het** (= 'the').

We use **de** for **singular masculine** or **feminine** nouns and **het** with singular neuter nouns. We tend to refer to these nouns as either **de words** or **het words**. For plural nouns, we always use **de**.

Examples:

- The woman = De vrouw

- The man = De man
- The child = Het kind
- The men/women/children = De mannen/vrouwen/kinderen

Dutch speakers actually never tend to think about the gender of words. Rather than knowing whether a word is originally feminine or masculine, the only distinction that has to be remembered is the difference between the **de words** and **het words**. This is because whether or not we're dealing with a **de** word or **het** word has grammatical consequences (in terms of possessives, question words, demonstratives, adjectives and even relative pronouns). This is why when you learn a new noun, it is very important that you memorize whether it is a **de** or **het word**.

Rules for helping you remember when to use 'de' or 'het'

These are rules which may help you remember which article to use, but unfortunately there are tons of exceptions to these rules as well:

De-words:

1. About 75% of the words have the article **de** and about 25% of the words are thus **het** words.
2. 'De' is always used for the **plural**
3. 'De' is always used for **professions**: 'de kok' (the chef), 'de bewaker' (the guard)
4. 'De' tends to be used for **people with an identified gender**, such as: 'de vader' (the father), 'de dochter' (the daughter).
5. 'De' is also used for **vegetables, fruits, trees and plants, names of mountains and rivers**
6. Furthermore, 'de' is also used for **the words ending with -ie,- ij, -heid, -teit,-a, -nis, -st, -schap, -de, -te, -iek, -ica, -theek, -iteit, -tuur, -stuur, -sis, -xis, -tis, -ade, -ide, -ode, -ude, -age, -ine, -se, -ea, -esse**
7. Finally, 'de' is used **for written-out numbers and letters**: 'de drie' (the three); 'de a' (the a).

Het-words

1. 'Het' is always used for a **diminutive**
2. 'Het' is also always used for **words consisting of two syllables and starting with be-, ge-, ver-, ont-**
3. 'Het' is always used **for languages, names of metals, words ending with -isme, -ment and for words derived from verbs.**
4. 'Het' is used **for names of compass points**: 'het noorden' (the North).
5. 'Het' is also used for **the gerund**: 'het zwemmen' (swimming), 'het dansen' (dancing), etc.
6. 'Het' is used for **names of sports and games**: 'het schaken' (chess), 'het voetbal' (football)

From discussions:

Isn't "het" also used for nouns that were created from verbs? Het eten, het drinken, het schaken, het zwemmen...

Yes, that's the gerund

Further practise

<http://www.memrise.com/course/356041/dutch-duolingo-de-or-het-vocabulary/>

We use 'hij' for **de words** and 'het' (as a pronoun) and 'hij' for **het words**, unless when a **de word** has a clear feminine grammatical gender (because then 'zij' will be used).

1. "Ik eet de appel. Hij is rood." = I eat the apple. It is red.
2. "Ik zie het paard. (Hij/)Het eet gras." = I see the horse. It eats grass.
3. "Hij aait de hond. Hij houdt daarvan." = He pets the dog. It likes that.
4. "Zij opent het slot. (Hij/)Het is open." = She opens the lock. It is open.

Beware: 'Hij' is not really correct for referring to **het words** also (one would, f.i., not refer to 'het water', an abstract entity, as 'hij'....). However,

it **is** featured in spoken Dutch. If you want to be safe, I would only use **het** for referring to **het words**. :)

Insights from this [pronoun thread](#) may be of interest (especially the anecdote about the Flemish use of 'zij' for addressing concepts and words that are in NL Dutch considered to be gender neutral).

An example where you have to refer to "zij":

1. "De regering neemt maatregelen. Zij moet haar burgers beschermen." = The government takes measures. It must protect its citizens.
2. "De Tweede Kamer heeft haar besluit genomen. Zij zullen wapens gebruiken." = The house of representatives has taken its decision. It will use weapons.

Briefly said, one also refers to "zij" in special occasions and old Dutch words. So, not only the Flemish refer to "zij". Dutch do it as well.

[Wikipedia](#) explains how it works. In standard (northern) Dutch, *hij* has replaced *zij* except for words that have natural gender. Milk doesn't have natural gender, so it's referred to as *hij*. Only Flemish still uses *zij* as generally as German does, so Flemish still has three genders.

- Standard Dutch as taught in this course: *Dat is melk, hij is wit.*
- Flemish: *Dat is melk, zij is wit.*
- Both variants: *Dat is een man, hij is oud. Dat is een vrouw, zij is oud. Dat is een meisje, het is jong. Dat is een appel, hij is rood.*

The only pointers I can give you are that:

1. young animals are usually 'het' words
2. animals with a recognized gender, say 'de merrie' (= the mare), 'de reu' (= the male dog), tend to be 'de' words
3. as in all cases, the majority of these words are also 'de' words

The most likely reason for 'kind' having the 'het' article is that 'child', in itself, does not have an identified gender and can thus either be a girl or a boy. Hence it is seen as a neuter.

The information I've given above really consists of guidelines only though. You may also want to see 'het kind' as an exception to the rule that people receive a 'de' article. In some cases, we just don't know why, but our use of 'het' for child does coincide with the German 'Das Kind'. :)

It might be better to not mention "-schap" for "de". Het landschap, het waterschap, het schap in de supermarkt.

The gerund may receive the article 'het' when:

1. it it is the subject of the sentence.
2. the gerund is used in the genitive and dative cases (for/of swimming; for/of dancing/etc)
3. it comes after certain prepositions (in/tijdens/bij/over/door).

The exception for *het* words is *really* tricky. It only applies if there is *no* definite article or demonstrative. In particular, when the definite article *het* is there, reminding you of the exception, it doesn't apply.

- het zware bord
- een zwaar bord

Nederlands (English below)

Je gebruikt het voornaamwoord "het" als onderwerp van het werkwoord "zijn" (en in mindere mate met de werkwoorden "worden", "blijven", "blijken" en "lijken" voor alle zelfstandig naamwoorden en personen

1. wanneer het gezegde een zelfstandig naamwoord bevat.

2. wanneer het gezegde een bijvoeglijk naamwoord bevat dat als zelfstandig naamwoord gebruikt wordt (geen bijvoeglijk naamwoord op zich).

English (hieronder staan voorbeelden)

You use the pronoun "het" as the subject of the verb "zijn" (and less frequently with the verbs "worden", "blijven", "blijken" and "lijken") for all nouns and persons

1. when the predicate (the part that follows after the conjugated verb) contains a noun.
2. when the predicate contains an adjective used as a noun (so not just an adjective).

Bijvoorbeeld (for example):

- De familieleden zijn aardig (the family members are friendly)
- Zij zijn aardig (they are kind)
- Het zijn aardige familieleden (they are kind family members)
- "Ze/zij zijn aardige mensen" can be used as well.

Nog een (another one).

- De bomen zijn groen (the trees are green)
- Ze zijn groen (they are green)
- Het zijn groene bomen (they are green trees)
- Het zijn groene (they are green ones)

Laatste voorbeeld (final example)

- De auto is snel (the car is fast)
- Hij is snel (it is fast)
- Het is een snelle auto (it is a fast car)
- Het is een snelle (it is a fast one)

Feel free to give feedback when you have questions or when you think my explanation should be adjusted.

Geef gerust commentaar wanneer je vragen hebt of vindt dat mijn uitleg aangepast moet worden.

The following type of words use "**de**":

- **Words that describe a certain state and have an adjective at its core, for example:** blijdschap (happiness), dronkenschap (drunkenness), zwangerschap (pregnancy).
- **Collective names, for example:** broederschap (brotherhood).
- **Words that are derived from verbs, such as:** wetenschap (science/knowledge), weddenschap (bet), nalatenschap (legacy).

Words that use "**het**":

- **Words that indicate a certain status or function:** dichterschap (being a poet), pausschap (being a pope), burgerschap (being a citizen). The first part of these words indicate a person or a function.
- **Organisations:** genootschap (society, as in 'secret society'), vennootschap (a type of company/a firm).

"**Landschap**" is indeed an exception. This is because it derived from the word "**graafschap**", meaning a 'county' (a piece of land owned by a count (or an earl)). And since the word **graaf** is a certain status or a function, it falls in the 'het'-category.

de or het

https://www.memrise.com/join/?skip_onboarding=/course/356041/dutch-duolingo-de-or-het-vocabulary/

Grammar: Adjectives

Content

1. Adjectives and definite articles (het/de)
2. Adjectives and indefinite articles (een)
3. Adjectives with no article
4. Predicate adjectives
5. Unchanging adjectives
6. Adjectives used on their own

Oh dear. All these articles to remember and now we have to figure out how they affect adjectives??

Don't worry dear users. Here is an explanation for you that might just help.

Adjectives and definite articles

If an adjective comes before a noun with a definite article ("de" or "het"), it usually gets the ending **-e**.

With a definite article		
	de hond	het huis
Singular	de grote hond	het grote huis
Plural	de grote honden	de grote huizen

An **-e** is also added if there is a demonstrative or possessive pronoun instead of a definite article

- **deze** oude hond - this old dog
- **dit** oude huis - this old house
- **mijn** oude hond - my old dog
- **mijn** oude huis - my old house

Adjectives and indefinite articles

If the indefinite article "**een**" comes before a **het-word** in the singular, then the adjective *does not* get the **-e** ending.

If it comes before a **de-word**, it *does* get the ending.

With an indefinite article		
	de hond	het huis
Singular	een oude hond	een oud huis
Plural	oude honden	oude huizen

The following words act like "een" in that the adjective does not get an ending when preceded by them and if the noun being described is a **het-word**:

- **geen**: Dat is geen groot huis. (That is not a big house.)
- **elk**: Elk zwart pak is duur. (Every black suit is expensive.)

- **genoeg**: Wij hebben genoeg koud water. (We have enough cold water.)
- **ieder**: Ieder klein meisje draagt een rok. (Every little girl is wearing a skirt.)
- **veel**: Ik koop veel lekker bier. (I am buying a lot of tasty beer.)
- **wat**: Zij eet wat nieuw brood. (She is eating some new bread.)
- **weinig**: De kinderen eten weinig vers fruit. (The children do not eat much fresh fruit.)
- **welk**: Welk oud boek leest hij? (Which old book is he reading?)
- **zo'n**: Dat is zo'n groot dier! (That is such a big animal!)
- **zulk**: Ze hebben altijd zulk lekker brood. (They always have such tasty bread.)

Adjectives with no article

If **no article** at all comes before a **het-word**, then the adjective does *not* get the **-e** ending either.

If **no article** comes before a **de-word**, it *does* get the ending.

No article

(het) water
koud water

(de) koffie
lekkere koffie

Predicate adjectives

Put simply, predicate adjectives are adjectives that follow a linking verb like “to be” that describe the subject.

The adjective “green” in “The ball is green.” is a predicate adjective.

In Dutch, predicate adjectives don't get any ending.

- Het huis is **groot**.
- De hond is **groot**.
- De honden zijn **duur**.

Unchanging adjectives

Some adjectives don't get any ending.

These include:

+adjectives ending in **-en** (this includes participles of verbs acting as adjectives **that end in -en**) + **eigen**: mijn eigen hond (my own dog) + **tevreden**: de tevreden katten (the satisfied cats) + **gebroken**: de gebroken lamp (the broken lamp) + **open**: het open boek (the open book) + **opgewonden**: de opgewonden kinderen (the excited children)

- Material adjectives with **-en**
 - **gouden**: de gouden spiegel (the golden mirror)
 - **houten**: de houten stoel (the wooden chair)
 - **zilveren**: het zilveren kettinkje (the silver necklace)
- And a few without **-en**
 - **plastic**: een plastic zak (a plastic bag)
 - **rubber**: een rubber schoen (a rubber shoe)
- Adjectives ending in **-a** or an unstressed **-e**
 - **prima**: een prima kans (an excellent opportunity)
 - **roze**: een roze jurk (a pink dress)
- Adjectives with ordinal numbers in the first part
 - **tweedehands**: een tweedehands auto (a second-hand car)
 - **derderangs**: derderangs producten (third-rate products)

rechter (right) and **linker** (left) are not inflected:

- de **rechter** table (the right table)
- de **linker** foto (the left photo)

NOTE: if the fact that a noun is “left” or “right” is considered a fixed attribute, then “linker” and “rechter” are usually connected to the noun.

- de linkerhand (the left hand)
- de rechterkant (the right side)

Adjectives used on their own

It is also possible to use adjectives independently, which means that they don't have to be used in direct association with a noun.

There are two instances where this occurs:

- the adjective can be used as a noun itself if the noun it refers to has already been mentioned:

Welke hoed wil je hebben, **de rode** of **de witte**? (Which hat do you want, the red one or the white one?)

- if the adjective is used in combination with the words **iets** (something), **niets** (nothing), **veel** (much), **wat** (something), **allerlei** (all kinds of), **wat voor** (what kind of), **genoeg** (enough), or **weinig** (not much/little), then an **-s** is added to the end.

Ik heb iets **leuks** gekocht. (I bought something nice).

Hij heeft ons veel **interessants** verteld. (He told us a lot of interesting things.)

From discussions:

The adjective does not get the -e ending: - if it is predicate adjective, - if [het-word in singular] is indefinite, not concrete (no article or before sg het-word is een, geen, ieder,...)

In all other cases the adjective get the -e ending.

Dutch words are either common or neuter. Common words have 'de' as the definitive article, while neuter words have 'het' as the definitive article. Plural words always have 'de' however. (de man -> de mannen; het meisje -> de meisjes) To simplify it: most adjectives before a noun get an -e attached to it, except when it is a singular neuter noun with an indefinite article (een mooi meisje)

The difference between "ik heb veel boeken" and "ik heb vele boeken" is very subtle. with 'veel boeken' you refer to the many books as a whole, while with 'vele boeken' there's more emphasis on the individual books. However in everyday speech the difference is not that important.

After a possessive, an adjective always gets the -e, just like after a definite article.

- Een nieuw boek
- Het nieuwe boek
- Mijn nieuwe boek

Basically it depends on whether the sentence points towards a specific book (*the book, this book, my book, etc.*) or a random book (*a book, etc.*).

If the adjective does not precede the noun, you leave the adjective as it is (De jurk is klein, Het paard is klein). If the adjective DOES precede the noun, you generally add -e on the end (De kleine jurk, Het kleine paard). The exception to this, is when it is a neuter noun, and it is also preceded by the indefinite article (Een klein paard, NOT Een kleine paard, as paard is neuter (HET paard)).

Non-neuter nouns do not observe this (Een kleine jurk).

I hope I explained it well enough (If I made a mistake, can somebody correct me?)

Source: <https://www.duolingo.com/skill/dn/Adjective-Basics>

http://www.dutchgrammar.com/_word_docs/Adjectiva_Wim_Voortman.doc

Pronouns

In Dutch, some pronouns have different forms:

Ik - 'k *

Jij - je

Hij - 'ie *

Zij - ze

Wij - we

Mij - me

*These forms are not so much unstressed, but are used like unstressed pronouns.

As you can see, you'd mostly just replace the "-ij" ending with "-e".

When to use which form can be tricky sometimes. The difference between these to is that the stressed ones grab more attention to the fact that it is them that do the action, and it is very important to note that it is them. If you'd use the unstressed ones, it doesn't really matter that that is the person doing the action. Some examples:

We gaan morgen wandelen [We are going for a walk tomorrow] (It doesn't matter that we are the ones doing the action, the important part is that there's going to be someone taking a walk tomorrow.)

Waarom zwemmen ze nooit in de rivier? [Why don't they ever swim in the river?] (It is important to note that they NEVER swim, not that THEY don't swim)

Waarom moet jij altijd weer die vaas breken? [Why do you have to always break the vase] (It's you breaking the vase, not your little brother, and I really want to make clear that YOU always break stuff]

What if we'd change from unstressed to stressed and vice versa?

1st example: WE are going for a walk, not you because we don't like you

2nd example: Why do they never swim in the river, but we do? Maybe the water is polluted and we always swim in nasty water, and perhaps even get sick?

3rd example: This example is a little tricky, imagine that in the first form, your mother is really mad at you and gives you an entire speech about how bad it is to break the vase, and with the unstressed pronoun she could be in a hurry because she's late for work, and in all the chaos you suddenly break the precious thing, she quickly turns to you and ask why you always break it and then says: "Okay, I'll deal with the vase when I'm back from work. Bye!"

You can see that in some cases, the sentence's meaning changes a bit, and sometimes it doesn't really matter and changes because of the situation. If you're really unsure of which one to use, most of the time we use the unstressed pronouns.

Grammar: Jij vs. Je / Zij vs. Ze / Wij vs. We

As the title suggests, this grammar explanation thread concerns the difference (in use) between **marked** and **unmarked pronouns**. This is really about the difference in Dutch between the **pronouns that receive emphasis**, and **those that do not**.

The marked and unmarked pronouns

Thusly, we have several pronouns which have a marked/stressed and a standard, unmarked form. These are the ones we're talking about:

English version	Dutch (unstressed/unmarked)	Dutch (stressed/marked)
You	Je	Jij
She	Ze	Zij
It (for <i>het</i> words)	Het	Dit, dat (dem.)
It (for <i>de</i> words)	Hij	Deze, die (dem.)
We	We	Wij
They (for people)	Ze	Zij
They (for things)	ze	Deze, die (dem.)

As you may have guessed, the Ik (= I), Hij (= he), and Jullie (= You, plural) forms do not have both a marked and an unmarked version.

When we, the Dutch, feel like emphasizing an inanimate entity, a 'thing', which we address with 'het' or 'hij' (it) and 'ze' (they), then we choose to use a demonstrative pronoun.

Anecdote: Interestingly, there's a difference between the Dutch spoken in the Netherlands and that spoken in Flanders (Flemish) in this respect. Flemish, in fact, uses 'ze' for the inanimate feminine nouns. In contrast, in the Netherlands, inanimate entities, or things, are not described as being feminine and generally approached with either the 'it' pronoun or the masculine 'hij'.

So when do we use marked pronouns?

Yes, this distinction between different pronouns is not for naught. It actually has a function. We use marked pronouns when we want to **emphasize** the pronoun. Generally speaking, you'll use one version or the other depending on the situation you are in. However, in speech there are cases in which an unmarked pronoun fits better than a marked pronoun, and vice versa. You'll get a feeling for this by learning the language. Also remember not to stress an unmarked pronoun and note this: we use unmarked pronouns more frequently than their marked versions.

How do we emphasize the pronoun?

1. Obviously, we first use the right version: zij, or ze, wij, or we, and jij, or je.
2. However, when we give emphasis to the pronoun we **increase our pitch**
3. We also tend to **increase our volume**, ever so slightly
4. In addition, the word is also pronounced 'longer' (its duration is stretched in comparison to that of the unmarked pronoun). Thus, in contrast, when you're using an unmarked pronoun, you should emphasize another part of the sentence (instead of the pronoun).

Examples

1. Jij vs. Je (marked vs. Unmarked)

“**Jij** moet dat doen.” = “**You** have to do that” (that's you, and not me!)

“**Je** moet dat doen.” = “You have to do that” (in order to...)

2. Zij vs. Ze (marked vs. Unmarked)

“**Zij** wil vandaag zwemmen.” = “**She** wants to swim today.”
(but I don’t....)

“**Ze** wil vandaag zwemmen.” = “She wants to swim today.”

3. Dat vs. Het (marked vs. Unmarked)

“**Dat** klopt niet.” = “**That** is not correct”. (something specific is incorrect).

“**Het** klopt niet.” = “**It** is not correct”. (something in general is incorrect).

4. Deze/die vs. Hij (marked vs. Unmarked)

“**Deze geeft licht**” = “**This one** gives light”.

“**Hij** geeft licht” = “**It** gives light.

5. Wij vs. we (marked vs. Unmarked)

“**Wij** komen niet.” = “**We** are not coming.” (but the others are...)

“**We** komen niet.” = “We are not coming.”

6. Zij vs. Ze (marked vs. Unmarked)

“**Zij** luisteren nooit naar ons.” = “**They** never listen to us.”
(talking about a group in specific)

“**Ze** luisteren nooit naar ons.” = “They never listen to us.”
(talking about some group in general)

7. Deze/die vs. Ze (inanimate entities/things)

“**Deze** horen daar niet bij.” = “**These ones** do not belong with that.”

“**Ze** horen daar niet bij.” = “**They** do not belong with that.”

It is very frequent in Dutch. The fact that one of the pronouns is marked and the other unmarked is useful in poetic contexts, in literature and other cases of written Dutch and when you want to get a specific message (with emphasis) across in a conversational context (also for the sake of clarity).

Generally speaking, however, in spoken Dutch we sometimes use one of the two because of their (un)marked nature, but (I personally have to admit that) we also just use either form, without giving it much thought. Whereas the distinction is certainly there and at times very useful, in practice it often disappears (it being of no concern) and these personal pronouns are used interchangeably. :)

I'm a native speaker so I rarely put much conscious thought into my use of marked vs. unmarked pronouns. I only really think about which pronoun I use when I want to get a specific message across, which emphasizes a particular individual. For instance: "**Zij** heeft dat gedaan" (= **she** has done it (it wasn't me)). This happens about less than once a week. :)

In sum: Yes, marked pronouns are used **very** frequently. Even though the distinction can be usefully used for clarification purposes and the use of one pronoun over the other does make a difference (in certain situations), the marked and unmarked pronouns are also very much used interchangeably.

dit en dat: this and that

deze en die: these and those (but die also has other meanings)

In general, when referring to a de-word or plural, "deze" is this and "die" is that. In general, when referring to a het-word or something unspecified, "Dit" is this and "dat" is that. Deze and dit can refer to something with a nearby point of origin. Die and dat are further away.

Obviously there are exceptions as we all know by now there are for everything in Dutch but I hope this helped and if you have any questions just ask.

From discussions:

[johaquila](#)

This may be the conventional way of explaining the difference, but it appears to me that at least for *jij/je*, *zij/ze*, *wij/we* it is misleading. For example, Google Books has almost twice as many hits for "wij zijn" as for "we zijn". This wouldn't make sense if *wij* were just the stressed/emphasised/marked version of *we*. Stressed, emphasised and marked are relatively precise linguistic terms which in the majority of uses of *wij* obviously don't apply.

There is what I consider a much clearer explanation [here](#), in German, from a native Dutch speaker. She refers to the variants as **full** and **reduced** and explains that the full version can be either stressed or unstressed, but the reduced version can only be used when the pronoun is unstressed. She

also explains that there is a bias towards the full forms in the written language and towards the reduced forms in the spoken language.

This is completely logical as the reduced versions are what comes out naturally when you pronounce the full versions sloppily. This helps to predict/remember some usage distinctions that would otherwise be arbitrary:

- Why can't the reduced versions be stressed? - Because stress is incompatible with sloppy pronunciation.
- Why can the full versions be unstressed? - Because careful pronunciation doesn't imply stress.
- Why is there a preference for the full versions in writing, and an extremely strong one in older literature? - Because the full versions can be thought of (or at least were once thought of) as 'more correct' in the same fuzzy sense in which some native English speakers think of *it is* as 'more correct' than *it's*.
- Why can some of the reduced versions also stand for more than one pronoun? - Because sloppy pronunciation can make two different words such as *jij* and *jouw* sound the same.

PS: When I came back to add a reference to some linguistic literature, I found that someone has downvoted this comment without commenting. I think that's bad form. If I am wrong I would love to get an explanation *why* I am wrong. It's hard to learn from a downvote.

I don't know how to search for literature on Dutch linguistics systematically. Here are quotations from what I found with my unsystematic search:

- Marlies van der Velde, *The asymmetry of Dutch weak pronouns*. This paper is only about *object* pronouns. (The present post by Laviniae is about subject pronouns.) Still it's interesting to note the terminology she uses: "Dutch has two series of pronouns: a series of full forms (strong pronouns) and a series of reduced forms. The status of these reduced forms is the subject of some debate."
- Frank van Eynde, *On the notion 'minor preposition'*. "Like French and Italian, Dutch has two types of personal pronouns: the full or tonic ones and the reduced ones [...]. The most conspicuous difference between the two types is a phonological one: while the full pronouns can be stressed, the reduced ones cannot. [...] Next to the phonological and syntactic differences there is also a semantic one. Whereas the full pronouns are always used as the argument of some predicate, be it a verb, a preposition or an adjective, the reduced ones can also be used in positions which are not assigned any

semantic role. In other words, the reduced forms may have semantically vacuous uses, whereas the full forms are always referential."

To sum this up, linguists refer to the two kinds of pronouns as *full* and *reduced*, or as *major* and *minor*, and it appears they have good reasons for this choice of terminology.

(same user)

- I am quite unhappy about your 'marked'/'unmarked' terminology. Where does it come from?

'Marked' has a (somewhat) precise linguistic definition, see e.g. the Wikipedia article on [markedness](#). Your doubtless correct statement that the full/major/tonic pronouns are used very frequently, even though the reduced/minor pronouns are often preferred, basically contradicts your terminology. If something is very frequent it can't be marked.

The definition of markedness depends on context. To say that *jij* is marked in a specific context and *je* is unmarked in that context implies that one would expect *je* to be used, and if someone uses *jij* instead people consciously take note of the fact. This may be true in many contexts, but there are frequent contexts in which either is perfectly normal, and there are also frequent contexts in which *jij* is not only unmarked but is in fact required, since *je* isn't just marked but is outright wrong. Nobody chooses *je* when they want to stress it. Even when not stressing the first word in "Jij met je eeuwige gezeur", nobody would replace it by *je*. And, I suppose (this is the only example I made up on my own), nobody would reply to the question "Wie ben ik?" by saying *je* rather than *jij*.

Je being so reduced in applicability in comparison to *jij*, **if** there is an objective measure of markedness (i.e. independent of context), then it seems to be *je* that is marked, and *jij* that is unmarked, because *jij* is a normal full pronoun like those in most Indoeuropean languages, whereas there are special rules for when *je* is allowed.

The 'emphasized'/'unemphasized' terminology isn't better, either, since very often *jij* is not actually emphasized at all.

Grammar: The Possessive pronouns in Dutch

1. An overview of the pronouns, pronouns and adjectives of possession

Pronouns (English)	Pronouns (Dutch)	English indirect object pronouns	Dutch indirect object pronouns	English possessive adjectives	Dutch possessive adjectives	English possessive pronouns I	Dutch possessive pronouns I
I	ik	me	mij/me	my	mijn	mine	van mij
you (singular)	jij/je/u (formal)	you (singular)	jou/u (formal)	your	jouw/je/uw (formal)	yours	van jou/van u
he	hij	him	hem	his	zijn	his	van hem
she	zij/ze	her	haar	her	haar	hers	van haar
it	het	it	het	its	zijn	its	van hem
we	wij	us	ons	our	ons/onze	ours	van ons
you (plural)	jullie	you (plural)	jullie	your	jullie	yours	van jullie
they	zij/ze	them	hen	their	hun	theirs	van hun

When you don't want to repeat the noun you possess, you can also use the possessive pronouns included below. Mind that depending on the gender and article used for the noun, you use 'de' or 'het' and that there is no such form for 'jullie':

English possessive pronouns II	Dutch possessive pronouns II
mine	de/het mijne
yours (singular)	de/het jouwe/uwe
his	de/het zijne
hers	de/het hare
its	de/het zijne
ours	de/het onze
yours (plural)	X
theirs	de/het hunne

Example sentences of the different possessive pronoun forms:

1. It is mine - Het is van mij/Het is de mijne

2. The car is yours – De auto is van jou/De auto is van jullie/De auto is de jouwe
3. The pants are ours – De broek is van ons/De broek is de onze.

2. The Dutch ['s] form

Another way in which you can indicate possession in Dutch, like the 's form in English, is by adding -s to the end of proper names and members of the family. If there will be pronunciation issues, the [s] will receive a ['] in front. If pronunciation is no issue, the -s is simply stuck to the end of the name/noun:

1. John's book – Jans boek
2. Grandma's car – oma's auto

In Dutch, in more colloquial speech it is also possible to use the unstressed forms of the possessive adjectives instead of the -s form. The unstressed forms of the possessive adjectives are as follows:

- mijn = m'n
- jouw = je
- zijn = z'n
- haar = d'r
- ons = ons
- jullie = je
- hun = hun

Examples:

1. John's book – Jan zijn/z'n boek
2. Grandma's car – Oma haar/d'r aut

From Discussions:

for the 3rd person singular neuter gender, we see "ervan" and "hiervan" in the same tips & notes section,

"You use *je* to avoid saying *jullie* twice in a row. For example: I give you your books - *Ik geef jullie jullie boeken* - *Ik geef jullie je boeken*", but this information is not given here. We only see "*jullie*" as 2nd person possessive adjective.

Is it *van hen* or *van hun*? In the tips and notes it says *van hen* but here it says *van hun*.

'van hun' is wrong, it has to be 'van hen'

Officially it is VAN HEN, but locally, like in Amsterdam, people say: VAN HUN

Object Pronouns

Dutch has two different object pronoun types: stressed and unstressed. The stressed is used for emphasis. The full table:

English	Dutch (unstressed)	Dutch (stressed)
me	me	mij
you (singular)	je	jou
you (formal)	u	u
him/her/it	hem/haar/het	hem/haar/-*
us	ons	ons
you (plural)	jullie	jullie
them (persons)	ze	hun/hen**
them (inanimate)	ze	-*

*For the stressed 'it' and inanimate 'them', Dutch uses the Demonstrative pronouns, explained in another skill.

**After a preposition or as the direct object, you use *hen*. As the indirect object, you use *hun*. When in doubt, it's easiest and always correct to use the unstressed *ze*

From Discussions:

The indefinite pronoun **men** may be translated into English as "one", "they", "you", "people," or sometimes with a passive construction. The main idea is that of action performed by an unspecified agent or agents. The focus of attention is the activity and not the agent, and so the agent need not be identified. *Men* always requires a verb in the third person singular:

1. Men zegt dat zij een grote zangeres is = They say she is a great singer.
2. Men heeft hem erg bewonderd = He was greatly admired.
3. Men moet dieven met dieven vangen = It takes a thief to catch a thief (One must catch thieves with thieves).

In the spoken language it is more common to use **je** (you) or **ze** (they) as the subject of this type of sentence. In this respect, Dutch and English usage are quite similar:

1. Ze zeggen dat het mooi weer blijft = They say the weather will stay nice.
2. Je kunt nooit weten of... = You can never tell/know if...

As in English, Dutch has no specific "you" or "they" in mind in such statements.

I also studied/practised indefinite pronouns (alles/alle, iedereen, iets, niemand, niets, sommige, enkele, een paar, verschillende, vers... something, elke

genoeg, iedereen, iemand, iets, men

niemand, niets, wat, veel, weinige

alle, sommige, alles, verscheidene, verschillende

paar, elke, enige, enkele, iedere

Comment added by [staalman](#):

I just looked up and it turns out my explanation was incomplete at the minimum and probably even partly wrong. In fact, It's more complicated than I expected myself... :) In short - yes, in short - , the rules are:

A. Use the «personal pronoun» 'hen'

- directly after a preposition, e.g.: "Ik geef aan hen het boek" - "I give (to) them the book"
- as a direct object (lijdend voorwerp), e.g. : "Hij ontslaat hen" - "He fires them."

B. Use the «personal pronoun» 'hun'

- as an indirect object (meewerkend voorwerp) when NOT preceded by a preposition, e.g.: "Ik geef hun het boek" - "I give [to] them the book"

In other words: both Dutch sentences have identical semantics.

And now, to confuse you further, 'hun' can also be a «possessive pronoun», e.g. "Dat zijn hun fietsen" - "Those are their bikes"

Coming back to my example, the conclusion must be: it wasn't a good one, because:

1. it mixes personal pronouns with possessive pronouns, and (therefore)
2. it should read: "Ik geef HUN «indirect object» hun «possessive pronoun» fietsen terug"=

"Ik geef AAN «preposition» HEN «to be used right after a preposition» hun «possessive pronoun» fietsen terug"= "I return them their bikes".

Last but not least, here's actually a huge list of verbs (see source below) that go with either 'hen' or 'hun' as well.

OMG... didn't know it was that bad... ;)

Source: <https://onzetaal.nl/taaladvies/advies/hun-hen>

Grammar: The Dutch Personal Pronouns (Subject vs. Object)

Content

1. The personal pronouns in their subject forms
2. The uses of the subject personal pronouns
3. The personal pronouns in their object forms
4. The uses of the object personal pronouns

1. The personal pronouns in their subject forms

In Dutch, we use (what many Dutch grammarians conventionally refer to as) both stressed and unstressed personal pronouns (of which you can find a more in-depth explanation and discussion [here](#)). Anyways, we use both of these forms in spoken and written Dutch. It's been said that the unstressed pronouns are used more frequently than the stressed variants, but don't quote dear Team Dutch on that... Below you can find a table which includes the stressed and unstressed forms, or 'full' and 'reduced' forms (as some linguists prefer, see [this](#) discussion), of the personal pronouns:

	Stressed/full	unstressed/reduced
singular		
I	ik	'k
you	jij u	je -
he	hij	ie
she	zij	ze
it	het /ɜ/	't, het /ə/
Plural		
we	wij	we
you	jullie	-
they	zij/ze	ze

Beware that the short forms **'k**, **ie** are (generally speaking) not used in writing.

2. The uses of the subject personal pronouns

1. As is the case in English, the second person singular and the third person plural can denote an indefinite pronoun and in our case, these are the **je** and **ze** pronouns.

“Dat doe je toch niet!” = “You/One shouldn't do that!”

“Ze zeggen van wel.” = “They say so.”

2. On the one hand, some personal pronouns are suited for addressing the people that we know well. These are **jij**, **je** and

jullie. People you would address with this form could be: family, friends, coworkers and kids.

3. On the other hand, we also have the formal personal pronoun **u**. We tend to use this pronoun when we intend to be polite (yes, really) and when addressing strangers. In formal contexts, this pronoun can be used for addressing **one** person or **multiple individuals** (in this sense, you could also regard **u** as the formal form of 'jullie', but 'u' is not used in this way very often).

“Gaat u mee?” = “Will you go with/along?”

4. Lastly, when you are referring to an inanimate object, say a 'thing' or an 'idea', we use the pronoun **'het'** or **'hij'**. When you refer to a **het word** as a **subject**, you use **het**, and when referring to a **de word** as a **subject**, you use **hij**.

“Waar is het boek?” “Het ligt op de tafel.” = “Where is the book?” “It is on the table.”

“Waar staat de vaas?” “Hij staat in de hoek.” = “Where is the vase?” “It is in the corner.”

3. The personal pronouns in their object forms

	Stressed/full	unstressed/reduced
singular		
me	mij	me
you	jou u	je -
him her it	hem haar het /ɜ/	'm 'r/d'r 't, het /ə/
Plural		
us	ons	-
you	jullie	-
them	hen hun	ze

In this case, beware that the short forms **'m**, **'r/ 'dr** and **'t** are (generally speaking) not used in writing.

4. The uses of the object personal pronouns

1. When it comes to referring to **things, ideas** or **inanimate objects**, we use **het** and **hem**. Again, when the word concerned is a **het word**, we use **het**. When it is a **de word**, we use **hem**.

“Heb je het lied gehoord?” “Nee, ik heb het niet gehoord.” = “Have you heard the song?” “No, I have not heard it.”

“Heb je de deur gesloten?” “Ja, ik heb hem gesloten.” = “Have you closed the door?” “Yes, I have closed it.”

2. The personal pronoun in the object form **hen** means **‘them’** and constitutes either the **direct object** in a sentence or is used after a preposition. **It also** refers to people**.

“Jij hebt hen gezien?” = “You have seen them?”

“Ik geef het boek aan hen.” = “I give the book to them.”

3. Now, **hun** also means **‘them’** and this personal pronoun in the object form is used as an **indirect object** and one **without a preposition**. Likewise, **hun** also refers to people.

“Ik geef hun het boek.” = “I give the book to them.”

4. (Very) formal contexts excluded, **ze** (= them) can also be used instead of **hen** and **hun**, it referring to **people, animals** or **objects**. It is also used **after a preposition**.

“Wij hebben ze gezien.” = “We have seen them.”

“Jullie geven ze eten?” = “You give them food?”

“Ik doe dit niet voor ze.” = “I do not do this for them.”

Simple Present

Tips and notes

d, t, dt?

Perhaps the most difficult thing for native Dutch speakers, is to put a -t at the end of a verb at the right time.

Especially when the verb stem ends with a -d, as is the case with houden (the stem is, of course, houd-). You will often hear natives talking about the -dt ending, but in truth this ending does not exist: if you simply follow the conjugation rules it's just stem + t.

As a refresher, the verb conjugation table for the present:

Pronoun	Conjugation	Example
Ik	[stem]	Ik drink (I drink)
Jij	[stem] + t	Jij drinkt (You drink)
Hij/Zij/Het	[stem] + t	Hij drinkt (He drinks)
U	[stem] + t	U drinkt (You drink)
Wij	Infinitive	Wij drinken (We drink)
Jullie	Infinitive	Jullie drinken (You drink)
Zij	Infinitive	Zij drinken (They drink)

Now let's replace drinken with houden:

Pronoun	Conjugation	Example
Ik	[stem]	Ik houd
Jij	[stem] + t	Jij houdt
Hij/Zij/Het	[stem] + t	Hij houdt
U	[stem] + t	U houdt
Wij	Infinitive	Wij houden
Jullie	Infinitive	Jullie houden
Zij	Infinitive	Zij houden

Another difficulty with this arises in sentences which are questions. In particular, the problem-or rather, confusion- is with the second and third person singular, jij and hij. The rules are as follows:

- In a question where the second person singular je/jij is directly after the verb, the verb does not get a -t
- The third person singular hij/zij/het always gets -t

So, at first sight you might say *Houdt je vader van mij?* "Does your father love me?", is incorrect; after all, *je* is after the verb, so it should not get a -t. However, *je* is not the second person singular here; it's the possessive. The subject, *je vader*, can be replaced with *hij*: *Houdt hij van mij?* and the rule is that the third person singular always gets the -t.

There are some more d/t/dt difficulties in other verb tenses, but those are for another skill!

From discussions:

Yes *willen*, *zullen*, *mogen*, *kunnen* and *zijn* are exceptions to the -t ending for third person singular. In colloquial use the -t is also dropped for *jij wil*, but officially it should be *jij wilt*.

Grammar: The Dutch present simple

Content

1. The conjugation of verbs in the present tense (present simple)
2. The irregular verbs in the present tense (present simple)
3. Functions of the present simple

1. The conjugation of verbs in the present tense (present simple)

Regular	Irregular
Lopen (= to walk)	Kunnen (= to be able to/can)
Ik loop	Ik kan
Jij/Je/U loopt	Jij/Je/U kunt
Hij/Zij/Het loopt	Hij/Zij/Het kan
Wij/We lopen	Wij/We kunnen
Jullie lopen	Jullie kunnen
Zij/Ze lopen	Zij/Ze kunnen

How does the conjugation of the **regular** verbs in the present tense work?

1. The first person singular is formed by the **stem of the infinitive - 'en'**.
2. The second person singular receives the suffix **-t**, added to the stem. However, if the personal pronoun comes after the conjugated verb, inversion occurs and this suffix is dropped.

Example: "Loop jij vandaag niet?" = "Are you not walking today?"

3. For the plural forms, the first, second and third person, **-en** or in some cases **-n** is added to the stem of the word. As a student of Dutch, this is where you'll catch a break: these forms are all simply the same as the infinitive!

2. The irregular verbs in the present tense (present simple)

These are the verbs which are conjugated irregularly in the present tense (present simple):

1. hebben = to have
2. kunnen = to be able to/can
3. mogen = may/to be allowed to
4. willen = to want

5. zijn = to be
6. zullen = will

Of these irregular verbs, *zijn* (to be) and *hebben* (= to have) are used the most frequently and feature as both auxiliary and main verbs. These are the conjugations of the two verbs:

Hebben (= to have)	Zijn (= to be)
Ik heb	Ik ben
Jij/Je/U hebt	Jij/Je/U bent
Hij/Zij/Het heeft	Hij/Zij/Het is
Wij/We hebben	Wij/We zijn
Jullie hebben	Jullie zijn
Zij/Ze hebben	Zij/Ze zijn

Note!: "U heeft" is also an accepted, a correct, conjugation of 'hebben'. Thus, for the formal you form, the formal second person singular, both **heeft** and **hebt** can be used. I am not putting this in the scheme above because it is easier to learn 'u hebt' as the standard form conjugation, 'u' being a second person singular pronoun. However, in principle, **both forms are ok and can be used.**

3. Functions of the present simple

1. First, we use the present simple when an action or event is taking place right at this moment, **now**. For example: "Hij leert Nederlands." (= He is studying Dutch). This individual is said to be studying right now.
2. When an action or event is going to take place in the future. Note that therefore the present simple can also be used in some of the cases that English uses the future tense. Example: "Morgen eten wij kaas." (= Tomorrow we are going to be eating cheese).
3. When a general truth is put forward. For instance: "Nederlanders dragen klompen" (= The Dutch wear clogs).

From discussions:

Both **u hebt** and **u heeft** are correct forms.

This means that when you're speaking or writing Dutch, using either form is fine.

U hebt is a frequently used form and may make more sense to learners, since 'u' is a second person singular we are talking about. Yet, **u heeft** is a little bit more common. :)

The fact that both forms can be used for 'u' probably has something to do with the origins of the pronoun 'u', for which there are two theories ([Dutch source](#)). It may either have something to do with the cases that Dutch used to have centuries ago, or with 'u' being derived from 'Uwe Edelheid' ('You noble one').

Those are the only verbs with an irregular simple present conjugation. :)

These also tend to be the verbs that are irregularly conjugated in other tenses.

There may be other verbs which have exceptions in their conjugation, but those I'd have to search for. For now, these verbs are the only irregular ones which really need to be learned. :)

Grammar: "niet" and "geen"

Negation

In Dutch, you use the words "niet" and "geen" when negating things.

"geen"

"geen" is used to negate a noun that, if not negated, would be preceded by "een".

- Is dat een koe? - Nee, dat is **geen** koe.

- (Is that a cow? - No, that is not a cow.)

It can also negate nouns that aren't preceded by any article, like some nouns in the plural and uncountable nouns.

- Hebben jullie boeken? - Nee, we hebben **geen** boeken. + (Do you have books? - No, we don't have books.)

"niet"

"niet" is essentially used in all other situations:

- to negate verbs, thoughts, adjectives and any other sentence elements that aren't nouns:
 - Ik ren **niet**. - I do not run.
 - Ik **niet**. - Not me.
 - Hij is **niet** zo oud. - He is not that old.
- to negate nouns preceded by a **definite** article or possessive pronoun:
 - Nee, dat is **niet** mijn boek. - No, that is not my book.
 - Nee, hij was **niet** de burgemeester. - No, he was not the mayor.

Where does "niet" go in a sentence?

It depends on what you are negating. If you're trying to negate something particular like an adverb or adjective, then it's best to put "niet" right before it.

- Mijn rok is **niet** geel. - My skirt is not yellow.
- Ik eet **niet** altijd vis. - I do not always eat fish.

In most other cases, "niet" comes after the "middle part" of the sentence - where you usually have the **time, manner and place**.

- Ik heb hem gisteren (time) **niet** gezien. - I did not see him yesterday.
- Ik heb door het lawaai (manner) **niet** kunnen slapen. - I could not sleep due to the noise.

Put "niet" here, and you will likely be right.

Despite the "place" usually being in the middle part of a sentence, "niet" usually comes before it when it indicates a direction.

- Wij gaan **niet** naar huis. - We are not going home.

However, if you put "niet" in front of the **time, manner and place**, then you are stressing that it was not **then** that I did it (but later), that it was not **there** that I did it (but here), or I didn't do it like **that** (but like this).

- Hij gaat **niet** vandaag naar de maan, maar morgen. - He is not going to the moon today, but tomorrow.
- Wij gaan **niet** met jullie, maar met hen. - We are not going with you, but with them.

Exercises

Here are some exercises that may help you with negation in Dutch:

- <http://dutch.tolearnfree.com/free-dutch-lessons/free-dutch-exercise-68356.php>
- <http://dutch.tolearnfree.com/free-dutch-lessons/free-dutch-exercise-41973.php>
- <http://dutch.tolearnfree.com/free-dutch-lessons/free-dutch-exercise-86981.php>

From discussions:

A trick that I use is that you use "geen" when you can use "no" in English

With the examples that you used:

- Nee, dat is geen koe.
- No, that is no cow
- Hebben jullie boeken? - Nee, we hebben geen boeken. + (Do you have books? - No, we have no books.)

On the other side, you cannot use it for I do *no* run , or "i no run". Or *no me* -> "not me".

Am I wrong? English is not my mother tongue , but using this trick (so I am not 100% sure) but that is what it looked like to me.

"Noch.. noch" is Dutch for "neither...nor". It is used to summate negations. "Ik eet noch peren, noch appels, noch druiven, noch etc." -> "I eat neither pears, nor apples, nor grapes, nor ... etc." This is barely used anymore and considered old fashioned in everyday speech. However, you might still find it in written text and official speech.

"Geen...of" (literally: "not a...or") is what you will hear people say in conversations "dit is geen stoel of tafel" -> "this is neither a chair, nor a table". The example in the second paragraph would nowadays be translated as "Ik eet geen peren (of) appels of druiven".

There is not a real difference, but mind that choosing either construction does affect a sentence. You could say: "noch de jonges, noch de meisjes zijn blij" -> "neither the boys, nor the girls are happy". But it would become "geen (van de) jongens of meisjes zijn blij" -> "no(ne of) boys or girls are happy". As in English both sentences have a similar meaning, which is slightly changed by using or omitting the articles.

Het is niet een belangrijke markt.

Translation: It is not an important market.

shouldn't it be "geen" here?

No, you can use both. In cases where you can replace '*geen*' with '*een*', you can also replace it with '*niet een*'.

Questions

There are two types of questions, both in English and in Dutch: open and closed.

Closed questions

Closed questions can only be answered with 'yes' (ja) or 'no' (nee).

Example:

Does he work? -Yes

Is she ill? -No

What you'll notice about English closed questions, is that they are often formed with an auxiliary verb like 'to do'.

Example:

He works - Does he work?

I kiss her - Do I kiss her?

Other times, English applies something called inversion.

Example:

I will leave - Will I leave?

We have done that - Have we done that?

Dutch only applies inversion to form closed questions. Example:

Jullie zijn klaar - You are done

Zijn jullie klaar? - Are you done?

Jij zwemt - You swim

Zwem jij? - Do you swim?

Open questions

Open questions normally start with a so-called interrogative pronoun like:

'who' (wie)

'what' (wat)

'where' (waar) etc.

Example:

Wie is dat? - Who is that?

Wat doe je? - What are you doing?

Waar kom je vandaan? - Where are you from?

Dutch adverbs

Adverbs say something about a verb, an adjective or another adverb. Adverbs only have one form.

- -*Duo kan **goed** zwemmen* - 'Duo can swim **well**'.
- -*Duo is een **heel** goede zanger* - 'Duo is a **very** good singer.'
- -*Duo zingt **behoorlijk** goed* - 'Duo sings **rather** well.'

When adjectives function as adverbs, they are not inflected:

- -*Kristine heeft **mooi** gezongen* - 'Kristine has sung **beautifully**.'
- -*Luis heeft vandaag **hard** gewerkt* - 'Luis has worked **hard** today.'

Adverbs of place

These are:

- *-hier* ('here')
- *-daar* ('there')
- *-links(af)* ('(to the) left')
- *-rechts(af)* ('(to the) right')
- *-uit* ('from')
- *-ergens* ('somewhere')

*Wonen zij **hier**?* - 'Do they live **here**?'
.

Adverbs of time

The adjectives of time:

- *-nu* ('now')
- *-toen* ('then')
- *-morgen* ('tomorrow')
- *-soms* ('sometimes')
- *-daarna* ('afterwards')
- *-dan* ('then')
- *-vaak* ('often')

*Het is **nu** mooi weer* - 'The weather is nice **now**.'

Note! In an affirmative clause, an adverb of time mostly comes before an adverb of place.

*Hij was **gisteren hier*** - 'He was **here yesterday**'
.

Connecting adverbs

Some adverbs are used to connect two parts. They are:

- *-daarom* ('so/therefore')
- *-daardoor* ('therefore/consequently')

*Hij snoept heel veel, **daardoor** wordt hij erg dik* - 'He eats a lot of sweets, **therefore** he is getting very fat.'

Other common adverbs

There are some other, common adverbs:

- *-ook* ('also')
- *-niet* ('not')
- *-bijna* ('almost')
- *-erg* ('very')
- *-misschien* ('perhaps')
- *-helemaal* ('totally')
- *-heel* ('very')

*Ga je **ook** naar het feest?* - 'Are you **also** going to the party?'

Grammar: Dutch numbers

Below you can find an overview of the Dutch names of the **cardinal numbers**.

0	nul	11	elf	30	dertig
1	een (één)	12	twaalf	31	eenendertig
2	twee	13	dertien	40	veertig
3	drie	14	veertien	50	vijftig
4	vier	15	vijftien	60	zestig
5	vijf	16	zestien	70	zeventig
6	zes	17	zeventien	80	tachtig
7	zeven	18	achttien	90	negentig
8	acht	19	negentien	100	honderd
9	negen	20	twintig	1000	duizend
10	tien	21	eenentwintig	1.000.000	een miljoen

Pointers & Rules

1. From **21 upwards**, you pronounce the numbers by first saying the units (the single numbers) and then the tens. These units and tens are joined together by **en**, the conjunction.

Examples: "drieëntwintig" (23) (which features an **ë** to aid pronunciation); "vijfenzestig" (65); "vierentachtig" (84); "achtennegentig" (98).

1. The Dutch actually do not use a decimal point but a **decimal comma**. Thus, you may come across: 2,4%; 1,5 (one and a half); 6,8 (6.8 in English); etcetera.
2. After the number or quantity you've provided, the following selection of words occurs in its singular form: "centimeter" (centimeter), "meter" (meter), "kilometer" (kilometer), "kilo" (kilo), "liter" (liter), "gram" (gram), "jaar" (year), "uur" (hour) and "euro(cent)" (euro(cent)).

Examples:

1. "Mag ik drie kilo, alsjeblieft?" = "Can I have three kilos, please?"
2. "Dit insect is vier centimeter lang." = "This insect is four centimeters long."
3. "Hier woon ik al zes jaar." = "I've already been living here for six years."

Ordinal numbers

First: the numbers up to **19**. These particular numbers are formed by simply attaching **-de** to the cardinal number.

"tweede" (second), "derde" (third), "tiende" (tenth), "achttiende" (eighteenth) etcetera. Exceptions to this rule are "eerste" (first); "derde" (third) and "achtste" (eighth)

The ordinal numbers of **20** and higher receive **-ste** as a suffix.

"Het is de dertigste vandaag." = "It is the thirtieth today."

"Hij is de achtentwintigste man." = "He is the twenty-eighth man."

From discussions:

a more thorough explanation on number order higher than 100. Here is what I found useful

Some remarks Units are combined with tens by means of -en- [ən] or [ɛn] 'and', in reverse order compared to English: *twintig + vier = vierentwintig*. The higher powers of ten, however, are added in 'normal' order, and with optional use of -en-: *honderd + negen = honderd(en)negen*, *achthonderd + zestig + twee = achthonderd(en)tweeënzestig*; *zesduizend + dertig + negen = zesduizend(en)negenendertig*; etc.

Complex numbers between 10 and 99 are typically written as one word, higher ones will usually get a space or two for clarity's sake: *vierduizendachthonderd(en)éénentwintig* becomes *vierduizend achthonderd (en) éénentwintig*.

Numbers like 6,200 can be pronounced in two different ways: either as *tweeënzestighonderd* ('sixty-two hundred') or as *zesduizend tweehonderd* ('six thousand two hundred'). The same goes when these numbers also contain tens and / or units: 3,266 *tweeëndertighonderd zesenzestig* or *drieduizend tweehonderd zesenzestig*.

When indicating years, the word *honderd* may be left out, as in English: 1999 *negentienhonderd negenennegentig* or *negentien negenennegentig*. No such practice has developed yet for the year 2000 and upwards: this might change in the future, but at present people usually say *tweeduizend acht* for 2008. The pronunciation **twintig acht*, although it is sometimes used, still sounds a bit awkward.

Ordinals are formed with -de or -ste.

Honderd and *duizend* are never preceded by an indefinite article as in English, but *miljoen*, *miljard* etc. typically are.

Mind the irregular cardinals *dertien* / -tig (not *drietien* / -tig), *veertien* (not *viertien* / -tig), *tachtig* (not *achtig*), and the ordinals *eerste* (not *eende* or *eenste*) and *derde* (not *driede*).

Taken from: <http://www.omniglot.com/language/numbers/dutch.htm>

Grammar: The Dutch Prepositions

Content

1. Prepositions: introduction
2. Short overview of the most important prepositions
3. Prepositions of place
4. Prepositions of movement
5. Prepositions of time

1. Prepositions: introduction

Prepositions are short words which indicate **a relation** between different words in a sentence. This can be a relation of **place** (Where?), of **direction** (Where to?) and of **time** (When?)

Examples of prepositions:

1. Where? - Het glas staat **op** de tafel). = The glass is **on** the table.
2. Where to? - Zij fietsten van Parijs **naar** Lyon. = They cycled **from** Paris **to** Lyon.
3. When? - De school opent **om** 9 uur 's morgens. = The school opens **at** 9 am.

Unfortunately, learning prepositions is never an easy task. However, learning prepositions by means of an example sentence usually helps.

2. Short overview of the most important prepositions

Overview of most important prepositions			
Dutch	English	Dutch	English
Aan	To, on, at	Om	At
Achter	Behind	Onder	Under
Beneden	Below	Op	On
Bij	Near, with	Over	Across, about
Binnen	Within, in	Per	By, per
Boven	Above	Sinds	Since
Buiten	Outside	Tegen	Against
Door	through	Tijdens	During
In	In(to)	Tot	Until
Langs	Along	Tussen	Between
Met	With	Uit	From, out of
Na	After	Van	From, of
Naar	To	Voor	Before, in front of
Naast	Next to	Zonder	without

Source: Grammaticawijzer 'Dutch Grammar at a Glance', IntertaaL.

3. Prepositions of place



On this image you can see a part of the Duolingo world. You can say something about the places of certain things, building, Duo and even the mountains. For example:

- The Eiffeltower **is** in the valley - De Eiffeltoren staat **in** de vallei.
- The Eiffeltower is **next to** the river - De Eiffeltoren staat **naast** de rivier.
- The Atomium is **between** the bench and the mountain - Het Atomium staat **tussen** het bankje en de berg (in).

- Duo the owl is **opposite** the Atomium - Duo de uil staat **tegenover** het Atomium.
- The Brandenburger Tor is **at the foot of** the mountain - De Brandenburger Tor staat aan de voet van de berg.
- Duo de owl is **on the top of** the mountain - Duo de uil staat **bovenop** de berg.
- The bench is **in front of** the Atomium - Het bankje staat **voor** het Atomium.
- The mountain is **behind** the Atomium - De berg is **achter** het Atomium.
- There is nobody **on** the grass - Er staat niemand **op** het gras.
- Duo the owl is **near** the flying lingots - Duo de uil is **dichtbij/vlakbij** de vliegende lingots.
- The lingots are flying **above** the mountain - De lingots vliegen **boven** de berg
- The landscape is **below** the sky - Het landschap ligt **onder** de lucht.

The most important prepositions of place are:

Overview of the place prepositions			
English	Dutch	English	Dutch
in	In	between	tussen
at	op/bij/aan	next to	naast
on	op	beside	naast
above	boven	behind	achter
below	onder	near	vlakbij
under	onder	in front of	voor
with	met	on top of	bovenop
opposite	tegenover	by	bij
over	over		

4. Prepositions of movement

The table below includes an overview of the prepositions of movement:

Preposition	Meaning	Example
over	across/over	"Je kunt hier de straat over steken." "You can go across the road here." "De man fietst over de brug." "The man is biking over the bridge."
door...heen	through	"De pijl gaat door de cirkel heen ". "The arrow goes through the circle".
naar binnen	into	"De vrouw loopt het huis binnen ". "The woman walks into the house."
uit	out of	"De vis springt uit het water". "The fish is jumping out of the water".
uit	from	"Kom jij uit Canada?". "Are you from Canada".
langs	past	"De auto rijdt langs de vrachtwagen." "The car drives past the truck".
rond	round	"De satelliet vliegt rond de aarde". "The satellite goes round the earth".
naar	towards	"We rijden naar de zee". "We are driving towards the sea".
naar	to	"We gaan naar Engeland met de veerboot." "We're going to England by ferry."
op	onto	"De hond springt op de stoel." "The dog jumped onto the armchair."
van...af	off	"De man valt van het gebouw af ". "The man is falling off the building".
onder	under	"Het vliegtuig vliegt onder de wolken". "The plane is flying under the clouds."

5. Prepositions of time

There are two types of prepositions for denoting a **relation in time**. There are the prepositions which indicate an **established time** (think of hours, days, months, years or parts thereof) and prepositions which indicate a **period** instead.

At an established time

Preposition	Meaning	Example
op	On a day	Het feest is op zaterdag. (The party is on Saturday).
om	At a point in time	Ik moet om zeven uur opstaan. (I have to get up at seven o'clock).
in	During certain parts of the day (morning, afternoon, evening), months, years and seasons	Bomen verliezen hun bladeren in de herfst. (Trees lose their leaves in Autumn).

During a period of time

Preposition	Example	Meaning
sinds	"Wij kamperen hier al sinds vrijdag"	"We have already been camping here since Friday."
voor	"Wij gaan voor drie weken op vakantie."	"We will go on holiday for three weeks."
van – tot	"Ik moet werken van negen tot vijf." & "Hij zwemt van augustus tot september."	"I have to work from nine until five." & "He swims from August until September." (starting at a certain point in time and ending at a certain point in time, in hours, months, years, etc.)
tijdens	" Tijdens het middageten kijken ze televisie."	"They are watching TV during lunch."
binnen	"Ik moet dit opstel binnen drie dagen af hebben".	"I have to finish this paper within three days"

Extra

[Flashcards](#)

[Prepositions visualized by means of images](#)

From discussions:

'Dichtbij' is a bit farther away than 'vlakbij'. The translation could be 'closeby' and 'nearby'.

What on earth is 'Er'?

Er is a weird little word. Sometimes it could be left out of a sentence and it's still make sense, at other times leaving it out could instantly make it nonsense. Often it's combined with other words. To a non-Dutch person, *er* might seem random and all over the place.

However, there is logic to the seeming randomness of *er*. The word has **five** different purposes:

1. Expressing location as an unstressed form of *daar*
2. Replacing *hem/het* or *ze* , combining *er* with a preposition
3. Expressing possession like 'of it' or 'of them'
4. Pointing to an undefined and unspecific subject, putting *er* at the start of a sentence
5. Being used as a subject

That list might not have cleared up much confusion, so each is explained in a little bit more detail below.

Er as unstressed *daar*

When you want to say 'there' but not put stress on it like you would do with *daar*, you instead say *er*

Examples:

'I go there.'

Emphasis on 'there': *Ik ga daar heen.*

No emphasis: *Ik ga er heen.*

Replacing *hem/het* or *ze*

Er replaces *het*, *hem* and *ze* ('them') when they are preceded by a preposition and they refer to something inanimate. In such a replacement, the preposition gets attached to the end of *er*. Example:

Ik sta erop. ('I stand on it.')

Expressing possession

This type is basically the same as the previous type. When in English you say 'of it' or 'of them' (as in 'I have three of them'), you can say *ervan* in Dutch. However, you can leave off *van*. Including it isn't incorrect, but often sounds odd. The example sentence 'I have three of them' would thus be *Ik heb er drie*.

Pointing to an unspecified subject

This one is put at the start of sentences. It seems extra, but often isn't really. Don't feel bad if you make mistakes with this one; language experts can't really agree on whether it's compulsory, and there aren't really any clear rules for it. It's more like a feeling. However, there is a guideline:

If the subject is unspecified and undefined, in other words it could be anyone, you add *er* at the start of the sentence. For example, 'Some woman leaves' would become *Er gaat een vrouw weg*. 'Some woman' could be any woman.

You do *not* add this *er* when the subject:

- -refers to a general category
- -is part of a general statement or rule
- -is undefined, but specific

In questions, this *er* can sometimes be compulsory. This is in the case of interrogative pronouns, like *wie*, *welk*, *wat*. 'What could happen?' would become *Wat kan er gebeuren?*

Er can get more complicated than this, but these are the basics. Good luck!

Separable verbs and reflexive pronouns

Consider these two verbs:

1. **Om**kleden -- *to change/put clothing on*

"Ik moet me nog *omkleden*" -- I've still got to change (clothes).

1. **Omkleeden** -- to express/convey (to put into words)

"Ik zal er redenen mee *omkleeden*." -- I will give reasons for it.

In situations such as this you have to determine where the stress lies within the word. If the stress lies over the **prefix** then it is likely to be separable.

- The first version has stress upon **Om** --> **Separable**
- The second has stress upon **Kleden** --> **Inseparable**

This concerns *prefixes* that can also play roles as *prepositions*: 'om', 'bij', 'aan', etc. ; whereas prefixes such as 'ver', 'be', etc. are *not separable*.

However there are several **exceptions**.

This sentence utilises the first form above (Separable):

```
<pre> "Het model kleedt zich om." </pre>
```

- **Zich omkleeden** = to change one's clothes/clothing

This verb is considered a **reflexive verb** similar to **Zich voelen** (to feel) and **Zich herinneren** (to remember), for example:

```
<pre> "Ik voel me ziek." -- I feel sick "Dat herinner me niet." -- I do not remember that. </pre>
```

The **me** is a reflexive pronoun that is required when a **reflexive verb** is used *intransitively* such as the examples above. In the original sentence **zich** is the reflexive pronoun.

Example of **Zich voelen** used *transitively* (no reflexive pronoun):

```
<pre> "Ik voel meer voor Noorwegen." -- I prefer the idea of Norway; I fancy Norway more. </pre>
```

Grammar: Dutch Word Order

Content

1. General word order

2. Inversion
3. More on word order
4. Word order in main clauses
5. Word order in subclauses
6. Word order in questions

1. General word order

In a Dutch sentence, you **cannot separate** the **subject** and the **conjugated verb**.

1. Normal word order with one verb

subject + conjugated verb + the rest of the sentence

“Ik ga vandaag Nederlands leren.” = “I am going to learn Dutch today.”

2. Two verbs: conjugated verb + infinitive

subject + conjugated verb + the rest of the sentence + infinitive

“Hij moet nu de was doen.” = “He has to do the laundry now.”

3. Two verbs: conjugated verb + participle

subject + conjugated verb + the rest of the sentence + participle

“Duo heeft een fiets gekocht.” = “Duo has bought a bike.”

2. Inversion

In Dutch, a sentence may also start with something other than the subject. It may start with an adverb of time or a conjugated verb, for example. In these cases, the subject is placed after the conjugated verb. This is what we call ‘inversion’ and this is the word order we’re speaking of:

(other part of the sentence, f.i. the adverb of time) + conjugated verb + subject + the rest of the sentence

Examples:

1. "Gisteren schreef ik een boek." = "I wrote a book yesterday".
2. "Vaak ga ik zwemmen." = "I go swimming often".

We often use inversion. When we want to emphasize a certain element, we will place that element at the beginning of the sentence. We also use inversion in questions, f.i.:

1. "Komt zij vandaag?" = "Is she coming today?"
2. "Slaap jij nu?" = "Are you sleeping now?"

The word order in these questions with inversion is: **conjugated verb + subject + the rest of the sentence.**

3. More on word order

1. In Dutch, time always comes before place. This is not the case in English.

"Duo gaat morgen naar de stad Groningen." = "Duo is going to the city of Groningen tomorrow."

2. An indirect object precedes a direct object.

"Ik geef Luis een schoen." = "I give Luis a shoe."

3. However, when the indirect object is preceded by a preposition, the direct object will come first.

"Ik heb de sokken aan mijn vriendin gegeven." = "I have given the socks to my girlfriend."

4. The Dutch word for *also*, 'ook', comes after the conjugated verb. There can also be other words in between the conjugated verb and 'ook'. 'Ook' can even come first in a sentence.

"Wij komen ook!" = "We are coming also!" "Ook zij zingen!" = "They are singing as well!"

4. Word order in main clauses

Two main clauses are to be joined together by means of a **coordinating conjunction**, such as '**en**' (= and). In these cases there is **no inversion**.

For example:

1. "Ik kijk naar de eenden en zij kijkt naar de lucht" = "I am looking at the ducks and she is looking at the sky."
2. "Hij zingt en ik lach." = "He sings and I laugh."

5. Word order in subclauses

A main clause and a subclause are to be joined together by a **subordinating conjunction**. Examples of such conjunctions are '**omdat**' (= because) and **dat** (= that). In these cases the verb is put at the end of the subclause.

Examples: 1. "Ik zwem vandaag niet omdat ik mijn badpak niet heb." = "I am not swimming today because I do not have my bathing suit". 2. "Hij lacht niet omdat hij pijn heeft." = "He does not laugh because he is in pain."

If the subclause precedes the main clause, inversion takes place in the main clause. For example: "Omdat ik niet mee wil, ga ik niet." (= "Because I do not want to go along, I am not going.").

If a subclause has more verbs, then they are all placed at the end of the clause. For instance: "Hij vertelt dat hij altijd goed geluisterd heeft." (= "He says that he has always listened well."). It is important to realize that the order of the auxiliary verb and the participle at the end of the sentence is interchangeable. Thus, the following sentence is correct as well: "Hij vertelt dat hij altijd goed heeft geluisterd."

When there are more verbs in the subclause, the main verb gets put at the very end. Thus, you'll get the following sentences:

"De vrouw vraagt of je morgen haar broer kunt bellen." = "The woman asks if you can call her brother tomorrow." "Zij weet niet of de vrouw morgen wel kan komen." = "She does not know whether the woman can really come tomorrow."

6. Word order in questions

When it comes to questions, **inversion always occurs**. In a closed question, a question that can be answered with either yes or no, the sentence begins with the conjugated verb. For example:

1. "Eet u vaak sla?" = "Do you eat lettuce often?"
2. "Gaan jullie naar de bioscoop?" = "Are you going to the cinema?"

Beware: In questions, if there's a conjugated verb in the second person singular, the verb does not receive a **-t**, though this is the case in regular verb conjugations. See, for example:

1. "Jij **hebt** een mooie fiets." = "You have a pretty bike."
2. "**Heb** jij een mooie fiets?" = "Do you have a pretty bike?"

In open questions, which require more than a yes or no answer, the question will start with a question word.

Examples:

1. "Waar woont u?" = "Where do you live?"
2. "Wat doe jij?" = "What are you doing?"

Beware: at times, the question word is the subject of the clause instead. In these cases, no inversion takes place and you may find a sentence like this: "Wie doet dat?": "Who is doing that?"

From discussions:

I would also recommend the Word order part of "Dutch Grammar". It's only 69 pages long, you know ;) <http://www.dutchgrammar.com/en/?n=WordOrder.00>

TMP - Time Manner Place :)

The conjunctive adverbs **echter** and **evenwel** are identical in meaning. Their position in the sentence is not very flexible. They usually follow the verb. If placed at the beginning of the sentence, they have to be separated by a comma. Examples:

Erik heeft de trein gemist. Dat is echter (evenwel) geen probleem.

Erik missed the train. That is, however, no problem.

A less preferable alternative: **Echter, dat is geen probleem.**

Conjunctions

Conjunctions connect two sentences or phrases. There are coordinating and subordinating conjunctions.

Coordinating conjunctions

A coordinating conjunction links two language elements such as two words or word groups, two main clauses or two subordinate clauses. The two elements are considered to be of equal importance.

These are words like *en, of, maar, dus* and *want*.

The word order in both sentences or phrases being connected does not change:

Ik drink water, maar zij drinkt melk. Ik draag een jas, want het is koud. Het is koud, dus ik draag een jas.

Subordinating conjunctions

A subordinating conjunction introduces a subordinate clause and links it with the main part of the sentence. Subordinating **conjunctions** have various **functions**!

- -contrast: *hoewel*
- -cause: *omdat, doordat, aangezien*
- -consequence: *zodat, waardoor*
- -condition: *als, indien, tenzij, mits*
- -time: *terwijl, zodra, wanneer, totdat, voordat*
- -providing a subclause as an object: *dat, of*

The **word order** for subordinating conjunctions **does change**:

Het boek is duur, omdat het oud is.

As you can see here, the **main verb of the subordinating (second) clause** is always moved to **the end**.

If the subordinating clause is placed before the main clause (for emphasis), then the main clause will be inverted; that is, the subject and the verb will switch places.

Omdat het oud is, is het boek duur.

Clauses that follow a coordinating conjunction (like *want*, *of* or *dus*) can never be moved to the beginning of the sentence.

Continuous

In Dutch, the continuous is not as common as it is in English, but it's still fairly common. There are six ways of making a continuous:

- -The most common way is to start with a form of *zijn*, followed by *aan* and then a *gerund* (verb used as a noun). 'He is writing' would become *Hij is aan het schrijven*.
- -A dramatic, very uncommon way is to use a form of *zijn* with the present participle. So to dramatically say 'He is writing', you could say *Hij is schrijvende*.
- -You can also use a verb expressing a physical position followed by the infinitive. This means that another way of saying 'He is writing', is *Hij zit te schrijven*. Now you have specified that he is sitting down while writing. If you want to say that he is standing while writing, you would say *Hij staat te schrijven*.
- -Another uncommon method is using a form of *zijn*, followed by *bezig met* and the *gerund*. With 'He is writing', this creates *Hij is bezig met schrijven*. The more literal English translation of this sentence would be 'He is busy writing'.
- -A very uncommon method is similar to the above, but instead of *met* followed by the *gerund*, you use the full infinitive starting with *te*. So, for 'He is writing' we now get *Hij is bezig te schrijven*.
- -Finally we have a special form which means the subject is away to do the activity. It is made with a form of *zijn* followed by the infinitive. So if you want to imply that he has gone away to write, you can say *Hij is schrijven*.

Dutch Grammar] Aan Het - The Continuous Aspect

Hoi!

Hoe gaat het met jullie? ^_^ I haven't been here in ages, I took my learning elsewhere I'm afraid, but I'd like to still come here and write articles, since my Dutch has much progressed. **Also, just to get it clear, I KNOW there is a lesson in this. This is to teach people either not up to that yet, or to go a bit more in depth and provide reference**

My friend, who alongside woordenboeken, is one of my main sources of help for Dutch, taught me a new thing, called the continuous aspect, using aan het.

The continuous aspect puts emphasis on the fact that the action is being performed *now*. It translates pretty much the same as the simple present tense, but more emphasis.

One comparison is:

- Hij eet een appel **(Simple Present NL)**
- Hij is een appel aan het eten **(Continuous Aspect NL)**
- He eats an apple. **(Simple Present EN)**
- He is eating an apple. **(Continuous Aspect EN)**

Also, it is one way to say something in the future.

-I'm swimming in Belgium on Tuesday. **(EN)**

-Ik ben op Dinsdag in België aan het zwemmen. **(NL)**

To define the continuous aspect, it is for: *describing something which is happening at the exact moment of speech or describing an event which is planned in the future*, both shown in above examples.

Right, let's talk about forming the aan het aspect now!

A simple word order for this would be:



S = Subject. 'Ik' 'Hij' etc.

Z = Zijn. Give the correct conjugation of zijn in accordance to the subject. So, so far you should have, 'Ik ben', 'Het is', 'Zij zijn' etc.

T = Time. If you want to say something like 'I am racing on Tuesday' then you need to say the time here. 'op Dinsdag', 'morgen' for example. Look up time phrases if needed.

M = Manner. [Good description here.](#)

P = Place. Not too hard to understand. This is where you put the place of the SUBJECT.

C = Continuous. Just write 'aan het' here.

V = Verbs. This is where you put the other verbs than zijn. Ik ben een appel aan het *eten*. Wij zijn in België aan het *rennen*.

And that is how you use the continuous aspect in Dutch! I hope I helped some of you! Here are some quick examples to help you.

Ik ben op Dinsdag in België aan het zwemmen. I am swimming in Belgium on Tuesday.

Wij zijn naar Amsterdam aan het rennen. We are running to Amsterdam (right now!).

Je bent Nederlands aan het spreken. You are speaking Dutch (right now!).

I really hope I helped someone here c: *Please feel free to ask anything!*

From discussions:

- Although this grammar overview is total correct, you should know that in fact the whole 'aan het'-construction is not right. It's true that we use it to describe "right now"-actions, but actually we just should use the present simple there.

Just keep in mind: when you're hanging out with friends: use as much times 'aan het' as you want. But in formal, especially written, conversations/texts: try not to do so.

- I made and wrote that word order chart, but there is an extended one at dutchgrammar.com that will give you a much more indepth outlook on it c;

Ik ben een windmolen aan het ontwerpen: sentence structure

S Finite Object Non finite (continuous form)

- Ik **ben** [object here] aan het **ontwerpen**.

You would need to place the object (windmolen), following its article (een), after the *finite* verb (ben).

More info regarding the Present tense 'aan het' continuous:

The formula for the **present tense** is:

zijn + aan het + infinitive of verb specifying the action

- Zijn: auxiliary verb (copula; 'to be') used to form this continuous form -- compare to English conjugation of verb 'to be': "I *am* going ... " ; "We *are* sleeping ... "

- Aan: preposition meaning **at** in this context.

- Het: definite article (i.e. the).

- Infinitive: unconjugated form of verb specifying the action.

As nouns are technically required to be preceded by an article (e.g. de, het, een, etc.) thus, the verb **infinitive** in the 'aan het' continuous formation is actually a noun! But don't let this confuse you. :)

Grammar: Zijn/Zitten/Liggen/Staan

Content

1. Introduction: 'to be'
2. Zijn
3. Liggen
4. Staàn
5. Zitten
6. Exploring the subtleties: some examples
7. A note on literal translations

1. Introduction: 'to be'

In Dutch, something cannot just be somewhere. It is either lying, standing or sitting somewhere. The glass you are drinking from is **standing** on a table and the cat is **lying** on the floor.

Thus, in Dutch, the verb 'to be' may receive **either one of the four translations**:

1. 'zijn' (= to be)
2. 'zitten' (= to sit)
3. 'staan' (= to stand)
4. 'liggen' (= to lie).

How do we decide how to translate 'to be'?

Below you can first find a short and quick explanation, after which the differences between the verb uses are more thoroughly explained.



2. Zijn

First of all, you translate 'to be' with the verb 'zijn' in sentences like these:

- "Zij zijn mooi." = They are pretty.
- "We zijn er niet." = We are not there.
- "Het feest is morgen." = The party is tomorrow.

There it is used to describe a quality, a state, existence or specify a time. One thing it is **not** typically used for is describing the location of something. For that we can use the verbs "zitten", "liggen" or "staan", as explained below.

There are, of course, some exceptions. 'Zijn' is used to describe the location of:

1. an event.
2. a person or animal that is not explicitly standing, sitting or lying down.

Examples:

- "Het festival is in België." = The festival is in Belgium.
- "De bruiloft was in die kerk." = The wedding was in that church.
- "Ik ben in Duitsland." = I am in Germany.

- “Mijn zoon is vandaag in Amsterdam.” = My son is in Amsterdam today.

3. Liggen

The verb ‘liggen’ (= to lie) is used to describe the location of:

1. an object that is actually **lying down** on its side. If an object has no ‘preferred’ upwards-facing direction (and thus no side), then the object can be in any position where it is wider than it is tall.
2. a geographical area or feature, such as a country, mountain, city, river, field, etc.
3. a person or animal that is explicitly lying down (see below).

Examples:

- “Het boek ligt op de tafel.” = The book is (lying) on the table.
- “De handdoeken liggen op de grond.” = The towels are (lying) on the ground.
- “Nederland ligt ten noorden van Frankrijk.” = The Netherlands lies north of France
- “Die stad ligt in België.” = That city is in Belgium.

4. Staan

The verb ‘staan’ (= to stand) is used to describe the location of:

1. an object that is not lying down but standing in an upright position.
2. an object that is resting on legs or wheels, such as a table or a car.
3. text or images. These are always described as ‘standing’ on whatever surface they are written/drawn/printed/painted/displayed.
4. a person or (certain kind of) animal that is explicitly standing (see below).

Examples:

- “De lamp staat in de hoek.” = The lamp is (standing) in the corner.
- “De auto staat in die straat.” = The car is (standing/parked) in that street.
- “De woorden staan op de muur.” = The words are (written) on the wall.
- “Mijn foto staat in de krant.” = My photo is (printed) in the newspaper.

5. Zitten

The verb ‘zitten’ (= to sit) is used to describe the location of:

1. an object or a person that is located inside of something else, such as a building, a room or a box.
2. a person or an animal that is explicitly sitting down (see below).

Examples:

- “De kikker zit in de koffer.” = The frog is in(side) the suitcase.
- “De jongens zitten in de klas.” = The boys are in class.
- “Er zit koffie in het kopje.” = There is coffee in the cup.

6. Exploring the subtleties: some examples

A coaster

When is something standing in an **upright position**, and does this really apply to very small, round, shaped objects like coasters as well? Yes, even coasters **'stand'** on a table when you are viewing them in a vertical position (as do ashtrays, plates, bowls and cups).

A ball

But what if we are dealing with a small ball? Because the ball has a spherical shape, we Dutch (and perhaps you too) **feel** that the ball is **lying** somewhere.

A box vs. a die/dice

...you didn't think it was that simple, did you now? Even the **size** of an object determines which verb we use. Whereas a box of 1 by 1 meter may **stand** on a platform, a die or dice is never standing anywhere. A die/dice **lies** somewhere, be it on the floor, below the couch, etcetera.

Let's kick this up a notch...

What do you think will happen if this box falls on the ground? Is it lying on the ground? Yes, the big box is lying on the ground **if it fell**. If you **put it there**, then it is **standing** on the ground. **You always have to know why an object is located somewhere!** What is the meaning of the placement of the object? Why is it there? If the object is there, usually by **coincidence** or **pure chance**, then it is (usually) lying there. If not, then it can be **sitting** there really, but let's return to this later....

Buildings

Buildings either stand or lie, depending on their proportions. Most buildings that you would encounter in a city are described as **standing**: houses, office buildings, skyscrapers, churches and pretty much anything else that is higher than it is wide. On the other hand, when describing a building as **lying** it evokes images of vast sprawling mansions or palaces. Large complexes of buildings, like monasteries, train stations, universities or some museums can all be said to be **lying**. The same is true for buildings that implicitly include some amount of land around them, such as farms, mansions or castles.

People

A human being can stand, lie or sit somewhere. However, these verbs all give a different meaning to someone's location. For instance, when we use the verb 'to sit', we sometimes refer to a person 1) being stuck somewhere or 2) doing something secretive/mysterious:

1. "Hij zit in de gevangenis." = He is (stuck) in prison.
2. "Zij zit in de kelder." = She is in the basement.

This is a very subtle difference in meaning and you can get away with using 'to sit' in these instances, but this difference is good to know, regardless (right?). Then, when we use 'to lie' in sentences like those below, the impression is given that the person is dead or in a non-active physical state (sick or sleeping or just...being a couch potato...).

1. "Hij ligt in de slaapkamer." = He lies in the bedroom.
2. "Ze ligt in de woonkamer." = She lies in the living room.

If in Dutch you simply want to explain that someone is (present) somewhere, you are better off using the word 'zijn'.

Objects

When we're dealing with objects, we always have to ask ourselves why it is located there. When we are talking about a closet, we refer to it **standing** somewhere. After all, a closet is pretty vertical right? However, if we are throwing this closet out of the window, we can say that the closet is **lying** on the patio.

Animals

Deciding which 'to be' verb to use for animals is more straightforward. I won't go into the verbs used for insects and fish here, because this really doesn't fit into this basic yet elaborate explanation (different, specific rules apply as well).

Animals who are clearly 'vertical' **stand** and those animals which are close to the ground or **sitting** on something, underneath something, etcetera. Thus, a rabbit is not standing in the garden, but a flamingo is (unless he is sitting down!). The flamingo may sit inside the basement. He may lie in the basement when he is dead. If the flamingo is simply hurt, you should refrain from saying that he is lying in the basement (for the time being).

7. A note on literal translations

It is often the case that 'standing', 'lying' and 'sitting' are perfectly appropriate verbs to describe a location in English. Indeed, these literal translation are accepted on Duolingo most of the time. But you will probably have noticed that the recommended translation is usually the verb 'to be'. Why is that? It is a matter of emphasis.

When the Dutch say that a building is 'standing' in the city, there is no emphasis on the verb 'staan'. The meaning that it might convey, perhaps that the building is rather tall, is far less important than the location. But in Dutch, one would need to use 'standing' or 'lying', because "Het gebouw **is** in de stad" is simply unnatural and awkward.

That is why it is good (and even encouraged) to translate all these verbs as 'to be' when describing a location. A literal translation would often introduce more emphasis on the position of the object, an emphasis that is not present in Dutch.

Special thanks to [Kai.E](#) & [Simius](#) for their help gathering all this grammar information together. (;

Te+infinitive

Sometimes, auxiliary verbs cannot be followed by just the infinitive, but need the preposition *te* first. This can happen in several situations:

- *-Hangen, liggen, lopen, staan* and *zitten* in a continuous are formed with *te* followed by the infinitive.
- -The 'verbable' is created with *zijn, blijven* or *vallen* followed by *te*.
- -The words *durven, hebben, hoeven* and *komen* don't have much in common, but they are all followed by *te*. For *hebben* this isn't always the case; when it means owning something, it can be used without *te*. For *komen*, *te* is only necessary when it is in the sense of something being about to happen.
- -Short subclauses always have *te+infinitive*.

From facebook discussions:

Henri De Cagny said: "You use only *te* the same way you would use the word *to* in english when you give extra informations about a verb.

Hij durft dat niet te vragen (he does not dare to ask)
Ik probeer kalm te blijven (I try to stay calm)

And when you do two activities at the same time :

Ik loop te bellen (I am walking and calling)

Don't use the "te" with the 6 modal verbs + *gaan, blijven* and *komen*

Om + Te :

***To express a goal**

Ik ga vanavond naar de bioscoop met mijn vrienden om een film te kijken.

***To give extra info about a noun or an adjective :**

Het is een moeilijk woord om uit te spreken (It is a difficult word to pronounce)

Waarom is het moeilijk om dit te vertellen? (why is it difficult to tell this).

So regarding the translation of the english word to, you have to check whether the extra info is referring to a verb or to a noun or an adjective

Demonstrative pronouns

The demonstrative pronoun always points to something or someone and usually gives some emphasis. It can be used both dependent and independent.

The **dependent** demonstrative pronoun always has that which it points to in the same sentence. Example:

Ik wil dit boek (niet dat boek). - 'I want this book (not that one).'

The **independent** demonstrative pronoun points to something which has been mentioned before or which is already known in some other way. Example:

Die is van mij. - 'That one is mine.'

Imperative

Dutch uses the present tense of the first person singular for the imperative. An exception is the imperative of *zijn* ('to be'), which uses *wees* (1st pers. sing. of *wezen*), which is an old-fashioned form of *zijn*.

For a more polite imperative, you use the present tense of the formal *u*. This form is officially also used when addressing multiple people, but hardly anyone ever actually does; the normal imperative is used instead.

An exception is when the 'command' is given in a general sense, like 'No smoking'. In this case we simply use the infinitive: *Niet roken*.

Modal verbs

Modal verbs are used to indicate *how* an action is performed, in other words whether it's voluntary, permitted, etc. The following table lists the modal verbs:

Dutch	English
Blijven	<i>to keep, to stay</i>
Gaan	<i>to go</i>
Komen	<i>to come</i>
Kunnen	<i>to be able</i>
Moeten	<i>to have to</i>
Mogen	<i>to be allowed</i>
Willen	<i>to want</i>
Zullen	<i>(to) will</i>

Reading the clock: half to or half past?

The Dutch read the clock as follows:

- 6:00 - Zes uur
- 6:15 - Kwart over zes
- 6:30 - Half **zeven**
- 6:45 - Kwart voor zeven

In other words, *half zeven* means half an hour **to** seven, not past seven. This is especially confusing for the British, who refer to 7:30 as "half seven".

's

When in English you say "in the morning", or "at night" etc., you could literally translate it to *in de ochtend* or *in de nacht*. However, Dutch has a more common and shorter way of saying it: *'s ochtends* or *'s avonds*.

The 's is short for *des*, which is an old Dutch word meaning *van de* or *in de*. In time it was shortened to just 's. So, while in old Dutch it would be *des ochtends* or *des nachts*, we now say *'s ochtends* or *'s nachts*.

Capitalization

When **'s morgens** or anything else starting with 's is at the start of the sentence, something interesting happens with the capitalization. You might expect the 's to become 'S; however, that is not the case, as the "s" is actually the end of a word (see the explanation above). Instead, the capital skips to the next word: *'s Morgens*.

Capitals in dates

In English, days of the week and months of the year always start with a capital. Dutch doesn't do this. So while in English you say "It is the first Monday of July," in Dutch you say *Het is de eerste maandag van juli*.

Er vs. (T)here

Tips and notes

What on earth is 'Er'?

Er is a weird little word. Sometimes it could be left out of a sentence and it's still make sense, at other times leaving it out could instantly make it nonsense. Often it's combined with other words. To a non-Dutch person, *er* might seem random and all over the place.

However, there is logic to the seeming randomness of *er*. The word has **five** different purposes:

1. Expressing location as an unstressed form of *daar*
2. Replacing *hem/het* or *ze*, combining *er* with a preposition
3. Expressing possession like 'of it' or 'of them'
4. Pointing to an undefined and unspecific subject, putting *er* at the start of a sentence
5. Being used as a subject

That list might not have cleared up much confusion, so each is explained in a little bit more detail below.

Er as unstressed *daar*

When you want to say 'there' but not put stress on it like you would do with *daar*, you instead say *er*

Examples:

'I go there.'

Emphasis on 'there': *Ik ga daar heen.*

No emphasis: *Ik ga er heen.*

Replacing *hem/het* or *ze*

Er replaces *het*, *hem* and *ze* ('them') when they are preceded by a preposition and they refer to something inanimate. In such a replacement, the preposition gets attached to the end of *er*. Example:

Ik sta erop. ('I stand on it.')

Expressing possession

This type is basically the same as the previous type. When in English you say 'of it' or 'of them' (as in 'I have three of them'), you can say *ervan* in Dutch. However, you can leave off *van*. Including it isn't incorrect, but often sounds odd. The example sentence 'I have three of them' would thus be *Ik heb er drie.*

Pointing to an unspecific subject

This one is put at the start of sentences. It seems extra, but often isn't really. Don't feel bad if you make mistakes with this one; language experts can't really agree on whether it's compulsory, and there aren't really any clear rules for it. It's more like a feeling. However, there is a guideline:

If the subject is unspecific and undefined, in other words it could be anyone, you add *er* at the start of the sentence. For example, 'Some woman leaves' would become *Er gaat een vrouw weg*. 'Some woman' could be any woman.

You do *not* add this *er* when the subject:

- -refers to a general category
- -is part of a general statement or rule
- -is undefined, but specific

In questions, this *er* can sometimes be compulsory. This is in the case of interrogative pronouns, like *wie*, *welk*, *wat*. 'What could happen?' would become *Wat kan er gebeuren?*

Er can get more complicated than this, but these are the basics. Good luck!

Grammar: Present perfect

Content

1. Introduction
2. Past participle: regular verbs
3. Past participle: irregular verbs
4. Hebben or zijn?

Don't let the name fool you: the "present perfect" tense is all about the past. In English, the present perfect tense is formed using the auxiliary verb "to have" and a past participle.

For example:

- I **have** eaten.

In Dutch, this tense is also formed using the Dutch counterpart of the verb "to have", namely **hebben**, but you also use the verb **zijn** (to be). You then use the past participle of the verb having the action that is being done in the past.

Dutch			English	
ik	heb	gewerkt	I have	worked
jij/je	hebt	gewerkt	you have	worked
u	heeft	gewerkt	you (formal) have	worked
hij/zij/het	heeft	gewerkt	he/she/it has	worked
wij	hebben	gewerkt	we have	worked
jullie	hebben	gewerkt	you (plural) have	worked
zij	hebben	gewerkt	they have	worked

Past participle: regular verbs

As with the simple past tense, the past participle of regular verbs is formed using the stem as a base (infinitive without **-en**).

If one of the voiceless consonants **-t**, **-k**, **-f**, **-s**, **-ch**, or **-p** (helpful mnemonic: **'t kofschip**) is at the end of the stem, the prefix **ge-** is added to the front, and **-t** is added to the end.

To simplify things, you can think of the “stem” as the “ik-form”. (i.e. ik **werk**, ik **speel**, etc.)

If “ik-form” ends in a voiceless consonant: **ge-** + “ik-form” + **-t** = past participle

Stem ends in	Infinitive	ik-form (stem)	Present perfect	English
-t	zetten	zet	ik heb gezet	to set
-k	werken	werk	ik heb gewerkt	to work
-f	blaffen	blaf	ik heb geblaft	to bark
-s	missen	mis	ik heb gemist	to miss
-ch	juichen	juich	ik heb gejuicht	to cheer
-p	schoppen	schop	ik heb geschopt	to kick

In all other cases, the participle ends in **-d**:

If “ik-form ends in anything else **ge-** + “ik-form” + **-d** = past participle

- **wonen** - Waar heb jij **gewoond**? (Where did you live?)
- **leren** - Wij hebben veel **geleerd**. (We have learned a lot.)

NOTE: If the “ik-form” already ends in **-d** or **-t**, no additional **d/t** is added!

- ik zet - ik heb gezet
- ik antwoord - ik heb geantwoord

ANOTHER NOTE: Verbs having stems ending in **-v** or **-z** get a **-d** ending for the past participle!

- leven -> ik leef -> ik heb geleefd
- verhuizen -> ik verhuis -> ik ben verhuisd

The participle does not get the **ge-** prefix if it begins with any of the following unstressed prefixes:

Prefix	Infinitive	Present perfect	English
be-	betalen	ik heb betaald	to pay
er-	erkennen	ik heb erkend	to recognize/admit
ge-	gebeuren	het is gebeurd	to happen
her-	herhalen	ik heb herhaald	to repeat
ont-	ontmoeten	ik heb ontmoet	to meet
ver-	vertellen	ik heb verteld	to tell

Achtung German learners/speakers - unlike in German, the **end** of a verb does not determine whether the prefix **ge-** is added:

- studeren - ik heb **gestudeerd** (ich habe studiert - I have studied)
- proberen - ik heb **geprobeerd** (ich habe probiert - I have tried)

Past participle: irregular verbs

Some past participles are formed irregularly.

They often undergo a vowel change:

Infinitive:	zijn	hebben	schrijven	lezen
Participle:	geweest	gehad	geschreven	gelezen

You can find a list of irregular Dutch verbs [here](#).

Hebben or zijn?

As stated at the beginning, both **hebben** and **zijn** are used for the perfect tense. However, **hebben** is used in most cases.

- Zij **heeft** niet **geluisterd**. (She did not listen.)
- Ik **heb** het mes **gebruikt**. (I have used the knife.)

A certain number of verbs are always conjugated using **zijn**:

- Some irregular verbs such as **blijven** and **zijn**:
 - Ik **ben** thuis **gebleven**. (I have stayed home.)
 - Ik **ben** ziek **geweest**. (I have been sick.)
- Verbs that do not involve an object and indicate a change in condition:
 - **worden** (to become) - Ik **ben** oud **geworden**. (I have become old.)
 - **komen** (to come) - Ik **ben** niet **gekomen**.

NOTE: There are some exceptions where verbs that **do** involve an object still use "zijn".

These are: *beginnen*, *kwijtraken*, *naderen* and *tegenkomen*

Verbs of motion can use either **hebben** or **zijn** depending on the situation. If the emphasis is on the action, then the verb **hebben** is used. If the destination or direction should be emphasized, then the verb **zijn** is used.

fietsen	direction	Wij zijn naar het strand gefietst.	We have biked to the beach.
	action	Zij heeft in Amsterdam gefietst	She has biked in Amsterdam.
zwemmen	direction	Ik ben naar Frankrijk gezwommen.	I swam to France.
	action	Mijn hond heeft in het water gezwommen.	My dog swam in the water.

Achtung German learners/speakers - in contrast to German, the following Dutch verbs use **zijn** (bold: Dutch; italics: German; plain: English):

- **afnemen** - *abnehmen* - to decrease
- **beginnen** - *beginnen* - to begin
- **bevallen** - *gefallen* - to be pleasing
- **eindigen** - *enden* - to end
- **ophouden** - *aufhören* - to stop
- **stoppen** - *aufhören, anhalten* - to stop
- **toenemen** - *zunehmen* - to increase
- **trouwen** - *heiraten* - to marry

Present perfect

Past participle

Before we look at the present perfect, an explanation of the past participle is in order. The past participle is used for the perfect tense. To make the past participle, first you take the stem of the verb. You then add the prefix **ge-** in front of it, and after the stem you put either a **-t** or a **-d** (for a weak verb) or **-en** (for a strong verb). Most verbs get the **-d** ending, except those whose stem ends in **ch, f, k, p, s** or **t** (there are a few more, but those are highly uncommon). A word that could help you to remember these is the word '**t kofschip**'. Words ending in a consonant of that word require a **t**. If the stem already ends in a **d** or **t**, it does not get another one added to it.

There are some types of words which do not get the prefix **ge-**: words which start with **be-, er-, ge-, her-, ont-** or **ver-**. There are a few exceptions in the group of words starting with **her-**, but those are very rare.

Present Perfect

The present perfect is created with a form of *hebben* or *zijn*, followed by the past participle. *Zijn* is uncommon, and there are even a few for which both are correct.

An example of the present perfect conjugation:

Person	Present Perfect	Translation
Ik	heb gekookt	<i>I have cooked</i>
Jij	hebt gekookt	<i>You have cooked</i>
U	heeft gekookt	<i>You have cooked</i>
Hij/Zij/Het	heeft gekookt	<i>He/She/It has cooked</i>
Wij	hebben gekookt	<i>We have cooked</i>
Jullie	hebben gekookt	<i>You have cooked</i>
Zij	hebben gekookt	<i>They have cooked</i>

Passive

The passive voice is used to describe actions from the point of view of the **object** of the verb: "I am being seen." or "The book has been read". This way, the subject (the person who is seeing me, or who has read the book) is eliminated from the sentence.

In Dutch the passive is constructed using the past participle (also used in the present perfect) and an auxiliary verb. There are two different auxiliary verbs used in the Dutch passive: *worden* for the **dynamical** passive voice and *zijn* for the **stative** passive voice. This distinction does not really exist in English, but it roughly corresponds to the different tenses, as explained below.

Worden (lesson 1)

The **dynamical** passive voice is constructed with the auxiliary verb *worden*, to describe **ongoing actions**. In the present tense, this refers to things that are going on right now, that will happen in the near future, or that happen repeatedly. In English this often translates to the continuous aspect. For example:

- *Het boek wordt gelezen.* - "The book is being read."
- *Ik word gezien.* - "I am being seen."

- *De maaltijd wordt gekookt.* - "The meal is being cooked."

But in some cases, especially recurring events or general truths, the present simple works as well:

- *Het boek wordt vaak gelezen.* - "The book is read often."

In English one can also use the informal "get"-construction for the dynamical passive voice:

- *Het boek wordt gelezen.* - "The book gets/is getting read."

Note: The subject, who performs the action, can still be added to the sentence using the preposition *door*.

- *Het boek wordt door mij gelezen.* - "The book is being read by me."

Zijn (lesson 2)

The **stative** passive voice is constructed with the auxiliary verb *zijn*, to describe the **state** of things after something has been done to them. This corresponds to the perfect aspect: the action has been completed, it lies in the past. There are several ways to translate this to English, the most natural one being the present perfect progressive:

- *Het boek is gelezen.* - "The book has been read."
- *Ik ben gezien.* - "I have been seen."
- *De maaltijd is gekookt.* - "The meal has been cooked."

However, it is also possible to use the past simple, or in some cases, the present:

- *Het boek is gelezen.* - "The book was read."
- *Het is gedaan.* - "It is done."

The Impersonal Passive Voice (lesson 3)

Unlike English, Dutch can also use the passive voice with intransitive verbs: verbs that do not have an object. In this case, the place of the object is taken by that versatile and infuriating little word, *er*. The advantage is that one can use a verb to describe an action without any subject **or** object. The disadvantage is that there is simply no good way to translate this construction literally into English. For example:

- *Er wordt gelopen.*

This means that someone, somewhere, is walking. Who and where should be derived from context, the sentence only states that walking is what is happening. The best we can do in English is to use the gerund (a noun created from a verb with the suffix "-ing"):

- *Er wordt gelopen.* - "There is walking (going on)."

Another option is to introduce an undetermined subject:

- "Somebody is walking."
- "People are walking."

In other cases, it might be best to completely change the structure of the sentence.

The impersonal passive voice is used a lot in Dutch, and finding an English translation is always awkward. It can be used both with *worden* and with *zijn* as an auxiliary. If you are confused, do not be afraid to use the hints.

From discussions:

"Er is veel gelachen, gezongen en gedanst."
(<https://www.duolingo.com/comment/4397990>)

Translation: There has been much laughing, singing and dancing.

Somebody asked "Seems to be totally random if the english translation is in the present "there is..." or the past "there's been...". Is it some ruled i don't understand or is it faults in the solutions?", to which Simius replied:

“That is a good question. This is a complicated construction with no direct analogue in English, which is why there might be some inconsistency. It is known as the [impersonal passive voice](#). If you scroll to the "Dutch" section in that link, there are some examples with approximate English translations, typically using the [gerund](#).

The Dutch passive voice can have two different auxiliary verbs: "worden" (*to become*) and "zijn" (*to be*). These are used to distinguish between the [dynamic and stative passive forms](#), a distinction that is not usually made in English. Here are some examples, with (IMO) the best translations.

- Er is gelachen - there has been laughing (*stative: at some point in the past, somebody laughed.*)
- Er wordt gelachen - there is laughing (*dynamic: somebody is laughing now.*)
- Er werd gelachen - there was laughing (*dynamic, past: somebody was laughing at a certain time.*)

The last possibility "er was gelachen" is not normally used. As you can see, the differences are subtle. Still, I hope this clarifies things somewhat, let me know if you have further questions.”

Further on, he recommended checking the following link:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Impersonal_passive_voice

Grammar: The Dutch past simple

1. The conjugation

Below you can find the Dutch past simple, or the imperfect, conjugation forms:

Stem + -te(n)	Stem + -de(n)
Lachen (= to laugh)	Bellen (= to call)
Ik lachte	Ik belde
Jij/Je/U lachte	Jij/Je/U belde
Hij/Zij/Het lachte	Hij/Zij/Het belde
Wij/We lachten	Wij/We belden
Jullie lachten	Jullie belden
Zij/Ze lachten	Zij/Ze belden

As the conjugation table above may indicate, the past simple conjugations of the Dutch verbs have two main variants: the stem + -te(n) verbs and stem + -de(n) verbs. Whereas the singular verb conjugation forms end with -te or -de, the plural verb conjugation forms end with -ten or -den.

When does a verb end with -te(n)/-de(n)?

- If the stem's last letter is one of the consonants of the word 't *kofschip*, so a **t, k, f, s, ch** or **p**, then the verb will be conjugated with **-te(n)**.
- If the stem's last letter is **another consonant** (so not one of those listed above), the verb will be conjugated with **-de(n)**

The most important **irregular verbs** in the past simple are **hebben (to have)** and **zijn (to be)**. Below you can find their past simple conjugations:

Zijn (= to be)	Hebben (= to have)
Ik was	Ik had
Jij/Je/U was	Jij/Je/U had
Hij/Zij/Het was	Hij/Zij/Het had
Wij/We waren	Wij/We hadden
Jullie waren	Jullie hadden
Zij/Ze waren	Zij/Ze hadden

As you may have noticed, these verb conjugations really also only have two forms, depending on whether the subject is singular or plural: **was** (singular) vs. **waren** (plural) and **had** (singular) vs. **hadden** (plural).

Other verbs which are irregular in the past simple tense are, for example:

1. brengen - bracht: to bring - brought
2. komen - kwam: to come - came
3. moeten - moest: to have to - had to
4. weten - wist: to know - knew

There is also a large group of verbs in which undergo a vowel change for the past simple, such as:

1. zingen - zong: to sing - sang
2. bidden - bad: to pray - prayed

2. The Dutch Past Simple

1. Unsurprisingly, the Dutch past simple is used for describing **events** which have taken place in the **past** or a **previous situation**.
2. This tense is also used in the narration of a **series of actions, events or situations** which have taken place in the **past**.
3. It is used when we are talking about **habits or actions, events and situations** that have been **repeated** or taken place **multiple times**, in the **past**.
4. Lastly, the past simple can also be used for expressing an **unreal condition in the present or future**.

Example: "Als ik een zoon **had**, **was** ik een moeder." = "If I had a son, I would be a mother."

Useful to know: The adverb '**toen**' usually introduces the past simple.

Examples:

1. Toen ging ik naar school = I went to school (back) then.
2. Toen deed hij dat = He did that (back) then.

Simple Past

The simple past is used for events that happened in the past. For regular verbs, there are two possible suffixes for the simple past: **-te(n)** and **-de(n)**. Irregular verbs are more difficult and don't really have a common method - these need to be memorized.

Whether you need to use **-te(n)** or **-de(n)** depends on the ending of the stem. Remember the rules for **-t** and **-d** in the past participle? The same rule applies here: words whose stem end in **ch, f, k, p, s or t** get **-te(n)**, everything else gets **-de(n)** (some exceptions exist, naturally).

-te(n)	-de(n)	Irregular
Ik kookte	Ik speelde	Ik was
Jij kookte	Jij speelde	Jij was
U kookte	U speelde	U was
Hij/Zij/Het kookte	Hij/Zij/Het speelde	Hij/Zij/Het was
Wij kookten	Wij speelden	Wij waren
Jullie kookten	Jullie speelden	Jullie waren
Zij kookten	Zij speelden	Zij waren

The simple past is usually interchangeable with the present perfect; the difference in meaning is rather unclear and in many cases you can simply use both.

Added after uploading:

Passive voice in the simple past

The passive voice in the past is created the same as the present passive, with the one difference that instead of the present tense *worden*, we use its past tense: *werden*.

The Future Tense

Tips and notes

Future

The future tense can be formed in two ways in Dutch:

1. *gaan* + infinitive, meaning "to go"
2. *zullen* + infinitive, meaning "shall" or "will"

These two can also be used together, just like in English.

Zullen + infinitive is used in the following cases:

1. when saying something will likely take place
2. when emphasizing that something will definitely happen
3. to promise or propose something

The conjugation:

Person	Future	Translation
Ik	zal schrijven	<i>I will write</i>
Jij	zal/zult* schrijven	<i>You will write</i>
U	zal/zult* schrijven	<i>You will write (formal)</i>
Hij/Zij/Het	zal schrijven	<i>He/She/It will write</i>
Wij	zullen schrijven	<i>We will write</i>
Jullie	zullen schrijven	<i>You will write (plural)</i>
Zij	zullen schrijven	<i>They will write</i>

*Both *zal* and *zult* are correct, but *zal* is considered informal.

Gaan + infinitive is used as follows:

1. when expressing an intended action
2. when something is going to take place, without expressing probability

Person	Future	Translation
Ik	ga schrijven	<i>I am going to write</i>
Jij	gaat schrijven	<i>You are going to write</i>
U	gaat schrijven	<i>You are going to write (formal)</i>
Hij/Zij/Het	gaat schrijven	<i>He/She/It is going to write</i>

Person	Future	Translation
Wij	gaan schrijven	<i>We are going to write</i>
Jullie	gaan schrijven	<i>You are going to write (plural)</i>
Zij	gaan schrijven	<i>They are going to write</i>

Future Perfect

Tips and notes

In Dutch, we hardly ever use the future perfect; we more naturally choose the present perfect instead. It is used to say something will have been completed in the future. It is made with *zullen* "shall/will", followed by the past participle and then *hebben* or *zijn*.

An example conjugation table:

Person	Future Per.	Translation
Ik	zal geschreven hebben	<i>I will have written</i>
Jij	zal/zult geschreven hebben	<i>You will have written</i>
U	zal/zult geschreven hebben	<i>You will have written (formal)</i>
Hij/Zij/Het	zal geschreven hebben	<i>He/She/It will have written</i>
Wij	zullen geschreven hebben	<i>We will have written</i>
Jullie	zullen geschreven hebben	<i>*You will have written (plural)</i>
Zij	zullen geschreven hebben	<i>They will have written</i>

Comparative and Superlative

Tips and notes

De trappen van vergelijking

The "steps of comparison", as they are referred to in Dutch, are used to turn an adjective (*good*) into a comparative (*better*) or a superlative (*best*). These are formed by adding suffixes to the adjective, much like in English. This process is mostly regular, with a few important exceptions.

Comparative

The comparative, as the name implies, compares the properties of two objects, or of the same object in different situations or at different times. In

English, the comparative is sometimes created with the adverb *more*. That is not the case in Dutch, where it is usually constructed by adding the suffix **-er** or **-ere**, following the standard rules for adjectives about the **-e** at the end. As usual, the consonant at the end of the adjective's stem might double or change, as a result of the Dutch spelling rules. If the stem ends on the letter **r**, then the suffix becomes **-der** or **-dere**, to make pronunciation easier. Some examples are below:

- De snell**ere** jongen - *The faster boy*
- Een nog snell**er** meisje - *An even faster girl*
- Het meisje is snell**er** dan de jongen. - *The girl is faster than the boy.*
- Duurd**ere** wijn - *More expensive wine*

Superlative

The highest step is the superlative, which compares an object with all other objects, or with all other situations or points in time. Again, Dutch does not normally use the adverb *most*, but adds the suffix **-st** or **-ste**. Like in English, the superlative must always follow a definite article (*de* or *het*).

- De snel**ste** jongen - *The fastest boy*
- De duur**ste** wijn - *The most expensive wine*
- De jongen is **het snelst**. - *The boy is the fastest.*

Note that even though *jongen* is a **de**-word, the superlative in that last sentence becomes *het snelst*. The reason is that it is a predicate adjective (it comes after the noun), which does not reflect the gender (*de/het*) of the noun. However, it is also allowed to say:

- De jongen is **de snelste**. - *The boy is the fastest.*

In this case it is implied that the noun *jongen* is repeated after the superlative: "De jongen is de snelste (jongen)."

Graag - Liever - Liefst

Graag is an adverb, and one of those annoying Dutch words that does not have an English equivalent. It tells you that the subject enjoys performing the action that is described by the verb, often translated as "like to" + infinitive.

Strangely enough, *graag* has a comparative and a superlative form: *liever* and *liefst*. These mean, respectively, that you prefer doing something over something else, and that you prefer it over anything else. You can translate them as "like more to" and "like best to", or by using some form of "to prefer".

The Conditional Present & Perfect

Tips and notes

Conditional

The conditional is very similar to the Future tense in how it's made. However, instead of the present tense *zullen*, we use its past tense: *zouden*. The conditional is used to refer to hypothetical situations.

Person	Conditional	Translation
Ik	zou schrijven	<i>I would write</i>
Jij	zou schrijven	<i>You would write</i>
U	zou schrijven	<i>You would write (formal)</i>
Hij/Zij/Het	zou schrijven	<i>He/She/It would write</i>
Wij	zouden schrijven	<i>We would write</i>
Jullie	zouden schrijven	<i>You would write (plural)</i>
Zij	zouden schrijven	<i>They would write</i>

The conditional perfect refers to hypothetical situations in the past, and is the same as the future perfect except again with *zouden* instead of *zullen*.

Person	Conditional Per.	Translation
Ik	zou hebben geschreven	<i>I would have written</i>
Jij	zou hebben geschreven	<i>You would have written</i>
U	zou hebben geschreven	<i>*You would have written (formal)</i>
Hij/Zij/He t	zou hebben geschreven	<i>He/She/It would have written</i>
Wij	zouden hebben geschreven	<i>We would have written</i>
Jullie	zouden hebben geschreven	<i>You would have written (plural)</i>
Zij	zouden hebben geschreven	<i>They would have written</i>

In addition to meaning "would" on its own, "zouden" can carry other meanings in combination with certain modal verbs.

"zouden" + "moeten" gives you "should".

"Je **zou moeten** slapen." = "You **should** sleep."

"zouden" + "kunnen", literally "would (+) be able to", gives you "could".

"Wij **zouden** hier **kunnen** eten." = "We **could** eat here."

Relative pronouns

Tips and notes

In English, the relative pronoun can often be left out. In Dutch, however, this is not possible; the relative pronoun is an essential part of the sentence. Each pronoun has certain rules for its usage.

Dat translates to either 'that' or 'which'. It's used in two different ways:

- -To give extra information. In this case, *dat* always follows a comma, and at the end of the bit of extra information another comma follows. Without this information, the sentence would still make sense. This *dat* translates to 'which' in English.
- -To specify the subject. You can say 'The book is gone', but this leaves it unclear which book you mean. Instead, you can say 'The book that I want is gone'. In English 'that' can be left out; in Dutch, you need *dat*.

However, when *dat* is preceded by a preposition, it turns into *waar* with the preposition as a suffix (f. i. *waardat*).

Die is identical to *dat*, but it is used to refer to people, singular common nouns and plural nouns. When referring to people and *die* is preceded by a preposition, it turns into *wie*. In English, *die* can often be translated into 'who'.

Wat is used:

- -when referring to a whole phrase
- -when referring to *alles, iets, niets* and *weinig* ('everything', 'something', 'nothing', 'a little')
- -when referring to independent pronouns or an adjective
- -when referring to the invisible 'that'

Wie is used:

- -when the pronoun *die* is preceded by a preposition. This would be translated to English as 'whom'
- -when referring to a general person. This often happens on proverbs: 'He who...' would become *wie*. A more literal translation of the English, *Hij die* is also correct, but sounds less natural.

When saying to whom something belongs (in English 'whose'), in Dutch we say *wiens*. Officially we make a distinction between masculine and feminine (and plurals); feminine should get *wier*. However, in practice we do not do this as *wier*> sounds very old-fashioned. Instead of *wiens* it is also possible to say *van wie*.

Pluperfect

Tips and notes

The pluperfect, or past perfect, is used when referring to something that happened in the past, before something else which also happened in the past. In Dutch, it's made exactly like the present perfect, except with the simple past tense of *hebben* or *zijn*.

Person	Past Perfect	Translation
Ik	had geschreven	<i>I had written</i>
Jij	had geschreven	<i>You had written</i>
U	had geschreven	<i>You had written (formal)</i>
Hij/Zij/Het	had geschreven	<i>He/She/It had written</i>
Wij	hadden geschreven	<i>We had written</i>
Jullie	hadden geschreven	<i>You had written</i>
Zij	hadden geschreven	<i>They had written</i>

Person	Past Perfect	Translation
Ik	was gevallen	<i>I had fallen</i>
Jij	was gevallen	<i>You had fallen</i>
U	was gevallen	<i>You had fallen (formal)</i>
Hij/Zij/Het	was gevallen	<i>He/She/It had fallen</i>
Wij	waren gevallen	<i>We had fallen</i>
Jullie	waren gevallen	<i>You had fallen</i>
Zij	waren gevallen	<i>They had fallen</i>