

# ATA Summer School: General FAQ (frequently asked questions)

Fe's changes: general: might need a bit more sorting/restructuring to be in a logical order

## 0. Checklist

Quick reference: What do I need to bring with me?

- Please bring a bath towel, as they are not provided in your accommodation. Bedding *\*is\** provided.
- A laptop with an Ethernet port (or adapter). *Please let us know if you do not have a way of using a wired connection!*
- UTP cable to connect to internet in accommodation (will be provided at school)
- A travel adaptor for European plugs (240V) if necessary ([Type C/F](#))
- Some Euros if you can get some either before you arrive, otherwise there are places to exchange currency at Schiphol Airport or Amsterdam Centraal Station (main train station). Beware the rates aren't great, the easiest is to withdraw euros from ATMs if you have a card that works internationally. [Not all ATMs accept credit cards in the Netherlands. \[is this true? Am I remembering correctly?\]](#)
- Light rain jacket and umbrella: Amsterdam can be quite rainy and windy even in summer!
- Bathing suit, if desired: at the same time, it can get very hot and there are beaches. We may visit one as part of the weekend activity.

## 1. Technical Requirements

Please ensure that you have completed the following before arriving. If you have any problems, or would like more information then please contact:

[advancingtheoastro@gmail.com](mailto:advancingtheoastro@gmail.com)

### 1. Computers:

You need to bring a laptop with an ethernet port (or appropriate adapter) in order to connect to a network we will provide during the summer school. *If you do not have such a laptop please let us know ASAP!*

You will need to bring a UTP cable to connect to the internet in your accommodation but we will provide cables for the school.

### 2. Travel adaptors

In the Netherlands the power plugs and sockets are of type C and F. The standard voltage is 230 V and the standard frequency is 50 Hz. Remember to bring a travel adapter for the sockets, we cannot provide them! You may also buy travel adaptors at the airport however, please note that the selection at the airport maybe very limited.

### 3. Software

Installation instructions will follow shortly.

## 2. On Arrival

Please make sure that you have entered the information about your flight arrival and flight number in this table:

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1XUnmulF3HBaQa\\_jA2ut2ecMjaA12W6p7MXfWC9GsKQ4/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1XUnmulF3HBaQa_jA2ut2ecMjaA12W6p7MXfWC9GsKQ4/edit?usp=sharing)

When you arrive at Schiphol Airport you will first go through a passport control line if you come from outside the EU, and afterwards the baggage claim area. Upon exiting baggage claim please stay near the area, and look for a member of the ATA LOC (local organizing committee) holding an '**Advancing Theoretical Astrophysics**' sign and [possibly?] wearing yellow car vests.

*We will be forming groups of you to travel together, by arrival times. We will send the pickup times soon by email!*

*We will meet you at the Meeting point that can be found here: [map] Follow the signs from arrival to the meeting point or follow the signs towards the train station and follow the signs to the meeting point from there. It is approximately 5 minutes walk from the arrivals hall to the meeting point.*

The ATA committee member will then take you, and other students who arrive at a similar time to a taxi and escort you to your accommodation. When you reach your accommodation you will be provided with your keys and a welcome pack.

**I'm arriving outside of official "check-in" times, what should I do?**

**Note:** if you are arriving before check-in starts at 15:00 on Saturday (i.e., arriving at Schiphol before 13:00), unfortunately we cannot get your keys or enter the building until then. Thus we recommend you stay at Schiphol (where there are many shops, restaurants, a

supermarket and even places to lie down and sleep) until the first pickup time at ~14:30. Alternately you can find your own way into town by train, leave your bags in a locker at Centraal Station and walk around, but then you will need to find your own way to the housing. *Please let us know if you would prefer to do that, rather than wait at Schiphol so we don't wait for you unnecessarily!*

Otherwise the instructions are the same as above, we will get your keys for the housing and give them to you. *[When/how? - I am collecting the keys earlier in the day for all the students who will arrive when the RA is not there- at least that is the plan]*

### **My flight was delayed, what should I do?**

If you experience a delay, please WhatsApp or call Gibwa at the number provided in the email about arrival groups. Then we will let you know the new plan. *Please ensure that we have your flight number so that we can track the arrival times of the planes.*

### **Money**

The currency in the Netherlands is the Euro (EUR, €). If possible we suggest bringing some Euros with you. If you are unable to do this you can exchange foreign currency for Euros at a number of currency exchange counters at Schipol airport (there are currency exchange counters, e.g. GWK Travelex and ABN AMRO foreign exchange. before and after customs at the airport). You can exchange foreign cash or use a bank card\*\* to take out euros from these counters, or an ATM. Please note that currency exchange counters in the airport may charge more commission compared to those in your home country. *[Same as above do ATMs accept credit cards in NL? I think some do but I am sure the fee is high and you are likely to be charged by your credit card for 1. Taking cash out and 2. Taking cash out in a foreign currency.]*

There are also Foreign exchange counters in central Amsterdam for example GWK Travelex, which is located inside the central train station 'Amsterdam Centraal'.

\*\*Foreign exchange counters will only accept major bank cards e.g. Visa, Mastercard, Maestro systems

If you are unable to do the above then please contact [advancingtheoastro@gmail.com](mailto:advancingtheoastro@gmail.com) for possible alternative options.

## **3. Housing FAQs**

### **Where will I be staying?**

You should have received your confirmation of housing after completing the procedure with DeKey, and thus should know your address/room number and the name of the building you have been assigned to. [Please contact us IMMEDIATELY IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A HOUSING CONFIRMATION!](#)

Your room will be in one of the following two student housing areas:

**Zuiderzeeweg**

Address: Zuiderzeeweg 64-96, 1095 KG Amsterdam

For information about your building see:

<https://dekeyshortstay.guestcompass.nl/zuiderzeeweg/>

Click 'Accommodation info' for information about connecting to the internet, garbage disposal, bike storage and more.

OR

**Weesperstraat**

Address: Weesperstraat 9, 1018 DN Amsterdam

For information about your building see:

<https://dekeyshortstay.guestcompass.nl/weesperstraat/> Click 'Accommodation info' for information about connecting to the internet, garbage disposal, bike storage and more.

**What is in my welcome pack?**

You will be given a welcome pack when you arrive at your building. The welcome pack will include:

- Disposable plates and cutlery
- 1 roll of toilet paper
- 1 Garbage bag
- Bedding set: Duvet and duvet cover, pillow and pillowcase, mattress cover

Please note that you can keep all the bedding set if you wish.

## **What is in my room and building?**

### **Weesperstraat:**

Bedroom with bed, chair, desk and sink. Wardrobe or clothes horse. Bookshelves. Bedside lamp, ceiling lamp.

Bedding is included (pillow, duvet, pillow cases and duvet cover).

Shared hallway kitchens with cupboards, fridge and freezers and cooking facilities (cooker/stove and microwave), bathrooms and toilets.

A cleaning cloth will be provided.

### **Zuiderzeeweg:**

Room with bed, chair, desk, sink. Wardrobe or clothes horse. Bookshelves. Bedside lamp, ceiling lamp. Kitchenette (with fridge and cooking facilities) and bathroom/toilet. Wardrobe or clothes horse. Bookshelves. Bedside lamp, ceiling lamp.

Bedding is included (pillow, duvet, pillow cases and duvet cover).

A cleaning cloth will be provided.

## **What is not provided in my room?**

- Please note **Towels are not provided**. Please bring one with you.
- Stereo equipment /television sets are not provided.
- Cables for internet, power, adaptors are not provided
- Kitchen equipment (pots, pans, cutlery, etc.) may be provided in your kitchen, however this is not guaranteed. We suggest a few places below where you can buy cooking utensils if you need them.

## **Where can I buy pots and pans/cooking utensils if I need them?**

There are many places to buy reasonably priced cooking utensils if you need them:

- HEMA (e.g. HEMA at Nieuwendijk 174-176, 1012 MT Amsterdam, though there are many of these stores in Amsterdam.) [\[Is it possible to add opening times for all of these options? Avergae HEMA opening, and markets are not always through whole day??\]](#)
- Waterlooplein Market (Waterlooplein market at Waterlooplein 2, 1011 NZ Amsterdam <https://waterlooplein.amsterdam/>). This is an outdoors market where many booths sell various household items.
- Albert Cuypmarkt (Albert Cuypstraat, 1073 BL Amsterdam). Amsterdam's most famous street market. An outdoor market selling a large variety of items from luggage and cooking equipment to freshly made stroopwafels and lots of fresh food!
- Dappermarkt (Dapperstraat 279, 1093 BS Amsterdam). Outdoor market with 200 stalls selling a large variety of items including speciality foods.
- Blokker (e.g. Blokker at Jodenbreestraat 19, 1011 NH Amsterdam, though there are many of these stores in Amsterdam.)

### **Can I drink the tap water in my room/building?**

Yes! The Netherlands has the safest and cleanest tap water in Europe. We will be giving you a water bottle to use throughout the school.

### **Connecting to the Internet in your building**

- You have a wired connection to the internet in your room at both Zuiderzeeweg and Weesperstraat. **You will need to bring a UTP cable with you.**
- Common areas in Zuiderzeeweg will have WiFi available. However, many people may be using the WiFi this and if so it may be slower than the connection in your room.
- Instructions on how to connect to the internet can be found at:  
**Zuiderzeeweg:** [https://dekeyshortstay.guestcompass.nl/internet\\_1\\_2/](https://dekeyshortstay.guestcompass.nl/internet_1_2/)  
**Weesperstraat:** [https://dekeyshortstay.guestcompass.nl/internet\\_1\\_6/](https://dekeyshortstay.guestcompass.nl/internet_1_6/)

### **What facilities are provided in my building?**

Laundry facilities are located in each building. Wash cycles will cost between €1 and €3. You will need to collect a card from the building Resident Assistant (RA) to use the machines.

[\[Provide more info: what is RA, how/when to find?\]](#)

### **What facilities are not provided in my building?**

- There are no restaurant / catering facilities in our buildings.
- There are no receptionists present in the buildings.

### **Safety of the buildings and of the Netherlands**

- The crime rate of the Netherlands is very low. As long as you take appropriate security precautions (do not leave windows open if you are not at home, lock your doors) there should not be any problems
- In the Netherlands it is very rare to experience any mugging, the most common crime, especially in Amsterdam, is pickpocketing. Make sure you keep your bags & valuables secure when traveling.
- It is safe for women to travel alone, even when it is dark. Please do use appropriate caution and don't walk through abandoned alleyways.
- If you experience any form of problems, including sexual or racial harassment please contact the LOC immediately who will help you with the next steps. If possible record any incidents. We do NOT expect any problems though.

### **Can I smoke in the building?**

All public areas in the building are non smoking, including shared kitchens and other shared facilities such as common rooms. All shared rooms are non-smoking. Contact your building RA for more information, but probably you can only smoke outside on the street.

### **Checking out of your room**

**You must check out by 11am on Saturday 27 July!**

Please leave your room in a clean and tidy state.

### **My return flight departs after 11am, can I leave my luggage somewhere?**

Yes, once you have checked out of your accommodation you can leave your luggage at 'Amsterdam Centraal' Station, where there are (pay) lockers that suitcases can be stored in. Please go to any of the information desks in the station for more information.

## **4. Food and dining**

### **Places to eat at Science Park**

[Add opening times for these, cafeteria has weird opening times during summer!]

The cafeteria at Science Park 904 (located on the ground floor) does not accept cash. You will receive a voucher for lunch daily.

Polder (cafe and restaurant) ([google maps](#))

Cafe De Oerknal (bar and restaurant in the sports centre next to Science Park 904)

### **Places to eat near your accommodation**

There are many places to eat at in central Amsterdam, ranging from fast food to nice restaurants and all nationalities.

Directions to central Amsterdam from Zuiderzeeweg- (see [google maps](#))

Directions to central Amsterdam from Weesperstraat - (see [google maps](#))

**Please note that you cannot smoke inside restaurants. If you wish to smoke at a restaurant then you must sit at a table outside.**

**We suggest a few places to eat here:**

There are many cheap restaurants, mostly Asian but not entirely, in the "Chinatown" area along Zeedijk street, a few minutes walk from Centraal Station.

Foodhallen (Bellamyplein 51, 1053 AT Amsterdam) - Large variety of food from many different countries, vegan and vegetarian options. Please note that during the weekends it can be very busy here. There is also a new food hall in the Magnaplaaza near Dam Square.

Burger Bar (*Warmoesstraat 21, 1012 HT Amsterdam*) - Gourmet burgers

Wok to go (*Damstraat 22, 1012 JM Amsterdam*) - Chinese fast food



India Roti Room (*Eerste Oosterparkstraat 67-71, 1091 GW Amsterdam*) - Indian (/Surinamese) restaurant

Kilimanjaro (*Rapenburgerplein 6, 1011 VB Amsterdam*) - Ethiopian restaurant

Eatmosfera (*Korte Reguliersdwarsstraat 8, 1017 BH Amsterdam*) - Italian restaurant

Sampurna (*Singel 498, 1017 AX Amsterdam*) - Indonesian restaurant, expensive

Cafe van Beeren (*Nieuwendijk 129, 1012 MD Amsterdam*) - Snacks & drinks

Pancakes Amsterdam Central (*Prins Hendrikkade 48, 1012 AC Amsterdam*) Traditional dutch pancakes. Very short walk from Amsterdam centraal station.

The pancake bakery (*Prinsengracht 191, 1015 DS Amsterdam*) - Traditional dutch pancakes. Choose from 77 different pancakes!

Maoz Falafel: vegetarian/vegan fast food, found throughout the city

You will also find many general fast food places- e.g. McDonald's and Burger King.

## **Supermarkets**

(Please note some supermarkets may not accept Visa or Mastercard, most supermarkets do not accept credit cards. A list of cards that can be used is usually located near the till, if in doubt ask the cashier.)

Albert Heijn (does not accept Visa or Mastercard but does accept major debit cards e.g. Maestro)

Jumbo (accepts most major debit cards e.g. Visa, Mastercard, Maestro and in some stores American Express. Also accepts credit cards.)

Marqt (does not accept cash, but does accept credit cards)

Spar (there is a Spar located next to science park ([see on google maps](#)))

Dirk van den Broek

Vomar

Aldi

Lidl

### **Lunch and snacks**

During the summer school, lunch will be provided daily at the University's canteen. You will be given lunch voucher and can choose food and drinks in the canteen up to the value of the token each day.

Two coffee breaks are scheduled every day. Hot drinks and light snacks will be provided.

Some evenings (when indicated on the schedule) dinner will be provided as part of the school program.

### **Most important Laws & emergency information in the Netherlands**

- You are required to carry your ID at all times.
- No smoking of legal drugs in public areas; Legal drugs are only allowed in authorised coffee shops (usually where you can purchase them): Cannabis [not in Maastricht], mushrooms; both are illegal in public! Do not bring any drugs to the school!!
- In case of an emergency you can call 112, which is connected to the Police, the Ambulance, as well as Fire Brigade
- On the first Monday of every month at 12:00 noon emergency sirens are tested nationwide. Do not be alarmed. In the event of hearing the emergency siren at any other time, turn on your television or radio and tune in to a local station for further information, or use the internet.
- Waste is usually sorted, with recyclable materials separated from general waste. You will usually see bins specifically for recyclable plastic, paper, cartons and general waste (metal items e.g. drink cans, go into general waste).

### **Smoking in the Netherlands**

Smoking (standard tobacco cigarettes) is not allowed in public areas/buildings e.g. restaurants, bars/pubs, shops, public transport (trains, busses, trams and the metro), inside train/metro stations and in University buildings. If you wish to smoke, please make sure you do so outside.

## 5. Sim cards

### I would like to buy a sim card

Here are a few of the phone sim cards that you can buy online. You can use the address for the University of Amsterdam's Science Park as the delivery address if you purchase a sim card online:

Your name % API Secretariat  
University of Amsterdam  
Postbus 94249  
1090 GE Amsterdam

If you wish to order a sim card online please order at least~4 days before arriving, so that they reach the University before you arrive.

### Purchasing sim cards at the airport

There is also a Lyca mobile and/or Lebara mobile kiosk/vending machine available at the airport, where you can purchase a sim card.

### Purchasing sim cards Online:

#### **Vodafone prepaid 1GB**

€10  
unlimited texting  
10 minutes calling time  
valid all over Europe for 30 days

#### **Vodafone prepaid 2GB**

€15  
unlimited texting  
20 minutes calling time  
valid all over Europe for 30 days

#### **Vodafone prepaid 3GB**

€20  
unlimited texting  
30 minutes calling time  
valid all over Europe for 30 days

**KPN**

€12,50  
1GB data including  
4G connection speed  
€10 calling credit.

**KPN**

€12,50  
unlimited data  
3G connection speed  
€10 calling credit.

**T Mobile Netherlands**

sim card €5  
€10 credit (online registration)  
1,25GB = €10  
2GB = €15  
100 minutes calling = €5  
Valid for 1 month all across Europe

**Telfort Prepaid**

sim card €5  
€10 credit (online registration)  
1GB data package = €14 (so you need to add €4 credit extra)  
no calling or texting included  
75 minutes calling = €4  
valid for 31 days all across Europe

**Albert Heijn (easy to find)**

2GB = €15  
Standard 3G network  
4G network = €2,50  
75 minutes calling = €4  
valid for 31 days

**Youfone**

Website in Dutch  
V1: 10GB + 50 minutes/texts €10  
V2: 6GB + unlimited calls/texts €11  
V3: 3GB + unlimited calls/texts €10

## **Biking in Amsterdam: General rules/safety**

Amsterdam is the city of bikes, with dedicated cycle paths all over the city. As Amsterdam is one of the most bike-friendly cities in the world, there are many, many cyclists- for your safety, and that of other cyclists, it is important that you follow the following rules:

1. It is not mandatory to wear a bike helmet in Amsterdam, in fact you will find that the majority of people do not wear them. It is your choice if you want to wear a helmet or not. If you would like to wear a bike helmet then you can rent one at: .....
2. Follow the road rules- make sure you stop at traffic lights, do not cycle on pedestrian paths or motorways. Do not cycle through a red light. At every road junction there will be special traffic lights for cyclists, the lights are shaped like bikes, and they are located on poles next to the bike lanes. These traffic lights signal when a cyclist should stop to let traffic pass (red), and when it is your right of way and cars should stop for you (green). Follow these signals and do not cycle through any red lights.
3. Stay in your lane: In The Netherlands you cycle on the right hand side of the cycle path. Bike symbols, and sometimes arrows, are painted on the cycle paths telling you which direction to cycle in. If the painted bike is upside down when you look at it, then you are in the wrong lane. (Cars also drive on the right hand side of the roads- so if in doubt check which way the cars are going! Try to stay to the very right of your bike lane unless overtaking.
4. Use lights at night! You must turn on your front and back bike lights when cycling at night, it is the law.
5. Signal, signal signal! Always signal before turning by pointing your hand in the direction you are intending to go.
6. Do not stop in cycle lanes unexpectedly! There will normally be people cycling behind you so it is important that you do not stop in the middle of the cycle path without warning. If you need to stop then keep to the very right of the your cycle lane, signal right and make sure no one is behind you before you slow down and stop, then move your bike off the cycle lane.
7. Beware of other vehicles in the cycle lanes: Scooters and low powered motorcycles can also use the cycle lanes. They may travel faster than you so make sure that you move to the very right of your lane to let them pass when you hear them. Often cars turning into side streets/turning at traffic lights will have to cross the cycle lanes. If you have right of way, cars should stop and let you pass. However this does not always happen

(especially on the side streets), so if you see a car waiting to cross into your cycle lane then be cautious, slow down a bit to make sure the car will wait for you to pass.

8. Be careful around tram lines: There are many trams in Amsterdam that move along rails in the roads. If you are cycling always make sure you cycle over these lanes at an angle (e.g.) 90 degrees, so that your wheels do not get stuck in them. Also make sure there are no trams coming (or taxi's which often drive the same route as the tram) when you cross the tram lines.
9. Mind pedestrians who are in the cycle lanes, use your bell! Sometimes pedestrians must walk across cycle lanes in order to cross the road. If you don't think they have seen you cycling towards them, or if they walk into the cycle lane without paying attention then ring your bell to alert them. This is especially essential if cycling in central Amsterdam, where the streets can be very busy and people often wander into cycle lanes.
10. If you need to answer your phone or check a map then keep to the very right of your cycle lane and check that no one is behind you when you stop. Move your bike off the cycle path before checking your phone/map.
11. The cycle paths can be very busy during rush hour (8am - 9 am and 5pm - 6pm). Be extra cautious when you cycle during this time.

You may see people breaking the rules listed above, but don't copy them! Cycle safely.

## **6. Travel:**

The summer school will take place at the University of Amsterdam's Science park. The address is:

**Science Park 904  
1098 XH Amsterdam**

### **Bikes**

We rented bikes for those who requested them. The bikes will be located at your accommodation, so you will get the keys when you arrive and a volunteer from the organization will bike with you the first day.

Each bike comes with two locks, one for the back wheel and a large chain. Amsterdam is famous for bike theft so it is very important that you lock your bike carefully. We will show you how, but basically you need to *a/ways* put the chain both through the front wheel and the bike frame, and lock it to something. [\[What happens in case of theft concerning that we're renting them?\]](#)

## **Public transport**

If you did not request a bike then you will be given an OV travel card to use on public transport. The OV travel card will allow you to travel on the trains, metro, trams and busses. The card will be loaded with enough money to get you to/from the school every day, if you want to use it more than that, you will need to add money to it.

### **How to use your OV card:**

**Train/metro:** hold your OV travel card against the card reader at the gates to enter the platform. Once you have arrived at your final stop you must hold your travel card against the card reader at the gates again, the money for your trip will then be automatically deducted from your travel card. *If you do not check out, you will be charged 4€ for metro, 20€ for train! Also note that if you want to use the train, for this reason you will need to have at least a balance of 20€ or the card will not let you check in!*

(Please note, if you are switching between the train and the metro by simply moving from e.g. platform 1 to platform 2 in the same station then you must place your OV card on the readers located on the platform to change your mode of transport from e.g. train to metro, [as these are operated by different companies.](#))

**Bus/tram-** once you enter the bus/tram hold your travel card against the card reader as you enter the bus/tram. Once you have arrived at your stop hold your travel card to the card reader near the exit to check out. [It will make a beeping sound to show you it has checked in/out successfully.](#) The fare will then automatically be deducted from your travel card. If you do not check out, you will be automatically charged 4€.

## **5. Travelling to Science Park**

**Address: Science Park904  
1098 XH Amsterdam**

**Bike:** On the first day a member of the ATA committee will cycle with you to show you the route from and to your accommodation to science park.

**Zuiderzeeweg** - it will take ~10 minutes to cycle to science park ([google map route](#))

**Weesperstraat** - it will take ~17 minutes to cycle to science park ([google map route](#))

**Public transport:** On the first day a member of the ATA committee will travel with you on public transport to show you the route from and to your accommodation to science park.

**Zuiderzeeweg** - it will take ~24 minutes to get to science park if using public transport ([google map route](#))

**Weesperstraat** - it will take ~28 minutes to get to science park if using public transport ([google map route](#))