



TIPS & TRICKS

FOR LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT (AT HOME)



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Amsteltaal! In this document you will find useful information and tips to stimulate your child's language development at home. It is important that children are surrounded by an environment rich in language, both at home and at school.

The information and tips are intended to support multilingual families in stimulating language development at home if the parents themselves do not have (good) knowledge of the Dutch language. The document contains information relevant to different stages and age groups of children. It is important not to overwhelm children with too much information or practice language too intensively. This is particularly important in the first weeks your child is at Amsteltaal, as children already have to process a lot of new information during this period. On a socio-emotional level, it can then be stressful if children are also under pressure at home. It is important that the child first feels comfortable and happy before engaging in learning a new language and acquiring knowledge.

GENERAL INFORMATION ON MULTILINGUALISM

To learn the Dutch language well, mastering the mother tongue (or home language) is an important basis. To further this process, it is important to continue speaking the mother tongue at home. Knowledge of one's own culture, grammar and ways of communicating play an essential role here.

Speaking Dutch with your children at home, if you do not master this language well, has a negative impact on the learning process of the new language. The brain processes languages according to certain patterns, and when the new language is spoken by someone for whom it is not the mother tongue, the brain stores the language incorrectly.



Bilingualism or multilingualism is learned in stages. Children go through one or more phases, depending on the context, communication partners and opportunities provided by the teacher. We usually call the observation and listening phase the receptive phase. Your child may be quieter for a period when learning a new language. In fact, children learn a new language by listening and observing. So then they may be quieter for a period of three months on average.

LEARNING A NEW LANGUAGE

Your child attends Amsteltaal to learn Dutch. To encourage language development at home too, we advise you to do the following:

1. Talk to your child as much as possible.
2. Do not force your child to learn.
3. Provide a language-rich environment.
4. Read books with your child and/or read to them.
5. Make use of media.

1. TALK TO YOUR CHILD AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE

Talking to your child a lot will make it easier for your child to talk and understand what others are saying. Do this in your mother tongue or the language you understand and speak best. A large vocabulary and being able to make nice, long sentences in one's own language help when learning a new language. So your child will learn Dutch more easily if he or she speaks and understands the home language well. For example: if your child can name colours in the home language or if your child knows 'collective names' such as insects, means of transport or body parts, your child will remember them more easily in Dutch.

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- At Amsteltaal, the content of our education is divided into different themes. Every two to four weeks, we cover a new theme in which we teach vocabulary related to the topic in question. Discuss these themes and topics with your child in your own language/ in the home language. Ask your child about the new words learnt and the topic under discussion at school. This will help them explore the topics in their mother tongue and make more sense of them.
- Think carefully about a number of things beforehand, for example: does father or mother always speak a certain language (e.g. mother always speaks English and father always speaks French). Or do you speak a certain language in certain situations? For example, on the way to school/at school Dutch and at home or with family always the home language.
- Always use one language in a conversation. It is normal if your child sometimes mixes up languages.
- Talk to your child a lot (from birth!). Say what you see or do: dressing, eating, washing, shopping, etc.
- Invite your child to speak for themselves. Ask questions: "Why do you like this?", "How could it be that...?".

- Play with your child, they will learn to speak at an earlier stage. Choose activities you enjoy together: singing a song, reading a book, playing football, doing puzzles, drawing, etc. While playing, you can say what you see and ask questions and make connections ("It's autumn, the leaves are falling from the tree").
- Repeat the sentence correctly if your child makes a mistake. Then the child will learn the correct sentence faster.

2. DO NOT FORCE YOUR CHILD TO LEARN

Every child has their own way of learning. The important thing is that learning remains fun. It is important that your child notices your interest in the new language and also that you yourself dare to speak in the new language.

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- Talk to your child about different languages and ask how your child feels about this.
- Show that you think it is important for your child to learn Dutch, but also that you think it is important to speak the home language.
- Does your child say words in Dutch? Show that you are happy and proud.
- Dare to talk in Dutch yourself, for example to the teacher. You are allowed to make mistakes!
- Show that speaking Dutch is fun, let your child tell a story in Dutch.

3. PROVIDE A LANGUAGE-RICH ENVIRONMENT

By providing a language-rich environment, your child will increase his vocabulary faster and practice more Dutch. Social interaction with Dutch-speaking people is very important here. It is also a way to get to know Dutch culture and become part of Dutch society.

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- Make contact with Dutch-speaking people such as your neighbours, acquaintances or other connections.
- Make (play) arrangements with Dutch-speaking children.
- Regular attendance or membership of a sports club, dance class or other activity ensures regular interaction with Dutch-speaking children. For sports offers in Amstelveen, you can check out, for example:
<https://amstelveensport.nl/vind-je-sport-amstelveen/sport-voor-jongeren-in-amstelveen/>
or
https://www.amstelveen.nl/in-amstelveen/publicatie/sport_sportaanbod-in-amstelveen
- You can look up each month on <https://www.mijnamstelveen.nl/agenda/> what activities or events there are in Amstelveen. It is a fun way to meet new people and surround yourself with Dutch-speaking people.
- Get to know the culture: learn about Dutch traditions, norms and values. You can find information on the internet, including at https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultuur_van_Nederland
- Learn general vocabulary: There are a few words or phrases you can learn and try to use in everyday interactions with your children. Make sure you then pronounce them properly and clearly.
- The organisation Wereldbuur has projects specifically to encourage learning the Dutch language. One such project is the Taalvijver. De Taalvijver is for primary school pupils to practise and improve the Dutch language. Language coaches help improve

vocabulary, read together, play language games and do language exercises. This is possible at various locations, mostly on Wednesday afternoons. For more information: <https://www.wereldbuur.nu/english-version.html>

4. READ BOOKS WITH YOUR CHILD AND/OR READ TO THEM

Proficiency in the mother tongue is an important basis for successful learning of a new language. Therefore, encouraging reading or reading aloud in the mother tongue and promoting reading skills is important. It not only stimulates language development, but also appeals to other areas such as imagination, creativity and social-emotional development. Did you know: the vocabulary of children who read for at least 15 minutes a day can grow by 1,000 new words a year! (kinderboekenambassadeur.nl)

LIBRARY

In the Netherlands, young people up to the age of 18 can join the library for free. Many libraries also organize all kinds of activities for young and old, such as reading mornings for children. Libraries nowadays also have a large collection of foreign-language books, so probably also in your mother tongue.

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- Make your child a member of the library and go here with your child to pick out books.
- Also borrow picture books and 'search books'. These books are not so 'linguistic' and you can look at them together with your child. You can talk about them, tell each other stories or ask questions about them.

BEGINNING LITERACY (0 - 6 YEARS)

Beginning literacy is the growing understanding children develop regarding reading and writing before they learn it. In the early years, it is very important to introduce and encourage reading. This can be done by reading aloud a lot and/or reading together. Young children are extra stimulated by fun picture books and the story itself. This captures the children's imagination, increasing their interest in books. This is an effective way to make reading a part of their lives.

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- The organisation Wereldbuur has a project called the VoorleesExpress. It consists of a group of volunteers who come to your home to read to your children. In doing so, they encourage language development. For more information, please visit <https://www.wereldbuur.nu/de-voorleesexpress.html>. Registration for the VoorleesExpress is via Amsteltaal: ib@amsteltaal.nl.
- Stichting de VoorleesExpress has created a website where picture books can be found for young children in different languages. You can see these on the site: <https://prentenboekeninalletalen.nl/>
- At <https://ririro.com/nl/> you will find stories in many different languages for different ages. The stories can be read, listened to, downloaded and printed online and cover a wide range of topics, including animals, fantasy, science, history, various cultures and much more.

LITERACY (6+)

For children who can already read, the focus is on maintaining an interest in reading. If your child already understands some Dutch and can already read (a little), you can offer your child Dutch books in addition to books in the home language.

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- Give your child Dutch books aimed at slightly younger readers than your child's age (about 2 to 4 years younger). Books for younger children often have more visual support and short, simple sentences, making them easier to read and understand.
- The library in Amstelveen has monthly events (starting from age 2 and up) on the topic of reading and integrating the Dutch language at home. For more information, please visit: <https://amstelland.op-shop.nl/>.



Every year, the Amstelland library holds a parents' meeting for the parents of Amsteltaal. On the parents' page of our website, you can find the information given during this meeting.

5. MAKE USE OF MEDIA

Using different media promotes language development. Below, we list apps and television programmes you can watch. For television programmes, as with books: choose a programme aimed at a younger age than your child's age. It speaks more slowly and uses shorter sentences, making it easier to understand.

APPS

Leeftijd/ Age:	4+ year	12+ year
Taal/ Language	Lingo Deer 	Memrise 
	Duolingo 	Babbel 
	Monstertaal 	Nederlands Leren 
	Babelar 	
	Kinderen Nederlands Leren 	
	Falou 	
Geletterdheid/ Literacy	Online Bibliotheek 	Wozzol (vocabulary) 
	Letterschool 	

	Boekstart 	
	Letters en klanken 	

TELEVISION PROGRAMMES (MOSTLY ALSO AVAILABLE ON YOUTUBE)

0 - 6 jaar	6 - 9 jaar	9 - 12 jaar
Het zandkasteel	Zapp NPO3 (TV)	Jeugdjournaal
Bing	Jeugdjournaal	schooltv.nl
Sesamstraat	Schooltv.nl	Hetklokhuis.nl (TV)
Buurman & Buurman	Het Klokhuis.nl (TV)	npostart.nl (TV)
Nijntje		
Juf Roos		
Dirk scheele		
Schooltv.nl		
Dropje		
Peppa Big		