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gsb room book

The **manual** for **students** seeking
housing in **Groningen**.

Edition 2026

ARE YOU RENTING (OR LOOKING FOR) A HOME? AND IS SOMETHING NOT GOING RIGHT?

Contact our reporting hotline





Welcome to Groningen!

on behalf of the Groninger Student Union - GSB

A very warm welcome to the most amazing student city in the Netherlands! Every year, thousands of new students from all over the world come to Groningen to study and get a taste of student life. We affectionately call our city a big village. It is a green and friendly place but with all the pleasures of a big, bustling city.

However, you might have already noticed that students have to deal with a lot. The Groninger Student Union connects students from different backgrounds and we help when you run into problems. We organize actions and represent your interests at the Hanze, UG, the municipality and even nationally, together with the other local student unions.

In recent years, we have often had to speak up about the shortage of student housing and malicious practices on the housing market. With this housing guide, we hope to make you feel better prepared to start your adventure here in Groningen.

JOIN THE UNION!

Stand up for your study environment!

Join the Groninger Student Union and have your interests represented on issues such as student housing, education and welfare. Membership costs just €10 per year and helps us defend your rights!

€10
ANNUALLY

GSB.FYI/JOIN

Your to-do list



Read this booklet and join the student union



Register at the municipality

Registering yourself at your new address is mandatory and allows you to get a BSN, the Dutch national identification number. This can be done on the Groningen municipality website:

gemeente.groningen.nl



Set up DigiD

Once you have your BSN, it is time to set up your DigiD. DigiD is necessary to sort almost all government affairs. You can either do this on the website (→ ***digid.nl***) or by downloading the app.



Get insurance

You might want to get household insurance, liability insurance and health insurance while you stay in the Netherlands. Dutch health insurance is not required for international students unless you have a job or you are doing a paid internship.



Arrange healthcare

Whether you have to get Dutch health insurance or not. It is still important to quickly sign up with a GP practice! In the Netherlands almost all medical issues have to be consulted with your General Practitioner first.



Arrange utilities

At many student rooms (some) utilities are included in your rent. You might have to arrange electricity, gas, water and/or internet yourself. Be sure to do this well before moving to avoid high bills! Water is arranged by Waterbedrijf Groningen. The other utilities are available from a variety of companies.



Acquire transportation

Get a bicycle as soon as possible. It's the main mode of transport in Dutch cities! To use public transport you can simply use your bank card, but you can alternatively get an ov-chipkaart.

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Colophon

Content and design by Amanda Marley,
Andrei Maftai, Ben van Rijssen, Djawi de Boer,
Dreves van Dijk, Femke Douma, Jitske Wielers,
Ken Hesselink, Stijn Honselaar, Iris van der Pol and Jan
Bała.

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The essentials of student housing in the Netherlands

What to know first:

1. **Finding housing is your own responsibility!** Universities generally **don't** provide housing for students!
2. Students live throughout the entire city (not on-campus) in rented-out student rooms, studios and apartments.
3. No roommates, but housemates; it is uncommon to share a single room.
4. Be careful. Malicious landlords, agencies and criminals take advantage of students desperate for housing.

Private sector versus

Most student housing in Groningen is made up of privately-owned housing. Landlords range from families with a second house to large real estate companies. How much rent you pay is partly determined by regulations. For student rooms, landlords have to comply with points-based maximum rent prices (WWS). **From January 2025, providing a breakdown of those points by the landlord is mandatory for every new contract.**

For rental houses (such as studios and apartments), the government sets a limit each year for 'social rent' and 'mid-range rent'. If your rent is below one of these thresholds, regardless of your landlord, a points system determines how much rent you pay. Rents above these limits are considered 'private sector', which means the landlord gets to determine the price.

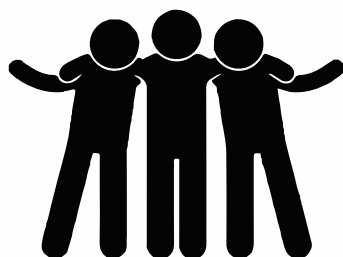
→ *Do you pay social rent? You might be eligible for rent allowance (huurtoeslag) from the government.*

A housing association (woningcorporatie) provides state-subsidized social housing for people with lower incomes. Most students fall into this group, but waiting lists vary from a few months for a single room to many years for an apartment.

You can sign up for social housing through ROOM.nl (students only) and WoningNet Groningen (also known as Groningen Huurt).



social housing



→ **Are you paying too much rent for your room?** Take the *rent check* at checkjeprijs.huurcommissie.nl.

Different Types of Rooms

Single room

The most common accommodation is a single bedroom with shared amenities. You have one room to yourself and have to share the kitchen, toilet, shower, washing machine, wifi, and sometimes a common living room. **Avg. €500 a month.**



Single room with kitchenette

These rooms tend to be slightly larger than the previous category and have their own kitchen with a sink, and space for a fridge and stove. You still share the rest of the amenities with housemates.

→ *A private shower or toilet is rare.*

Apartment / studio

In an **apartment**, everything is your own, you have your own shower, toilet, kitchen. They tend to be costly and often require an income statement. **Avg. €900 a month.**

A **studio** is a small apartment for usually one person, without a separate bedroom. These are often easier to come by. **Avg. €700 a month.**

→ *Certain apartments and studios are eligible for rent allowance.*



Don't be surprised if...

- The toilet is in the bathroom.
- The bathroom only has a shower.
- The kitchen has no oven.
- The room comes without flooring.

The '*traditional*' Dutch student house

Groningen has a rich tradition of student houses as the most common type of accommodation.

A student house is usually an ordinary residential house in which each inhabitant has their own room and shares certain amenities with housemates. Each house has its own set of house rules and traditions. Whereas in some houses everyone goes mainly about their own business, in other houses it is customary to have a "house night" once a week.

A variation to the traditional student house are high-rise student tower blocks where students living on the same floor share a kitchen and bathroom.

Some **student associations** (*studentenverenigingen*) and societies have their own student houses. You will have to become a member to be able to live there.

Yay! You have been invited to a room viewing! But what is a 'hospi'?

You responded to a room ad and it appears to be hit this time! But be aware that the method of choosing a new tenant varies. In some houses, the landlord chooses a new tenant, but it is also common for the other tenants of the house to have a say. For this purpose, it is custom to be invited to a 'hospiteer' evening ('hospi' for short). You will meet the housemates along with other people interested in living there. After the hospi, the current housemates will choose who they think is the best fit for their student house.

Finding Housing



1. Use your network!

Ask friends or acquaintances to keep an eye out for places where there will soon be a room available.

2. A lot of websites

There is not a single online platform that is used for housing offers, but some websites are more popular like:

- Facebook groups
- kamernet.nl
- athomeingroningen.com
- ROOM.nl (→ social housing for students)
- marktplaats.nl
- pararius.nl
- funda.nl (→ homes and apartments)
- WoningNet Groningen (→ social housing)



Important!

Some platforms only allow you to respond to an advert with a paid subscription (*Kamernet*) or assign rooms based on time duration since registration (*Room.nl*, *WoningNet*).

3. SSH Groningen

SSH offers non-profit short-stay (max. 1 year) housing to international and exchange students
→ **sshxl.nl**.

4. Private housing companies

Commercial parties offer housing for international students at large complexes, such as Xior, The Village, Blockhouse and Sugar Homes. This is often pricier than other options.

5. Real estate brokers / agencies

Brokers and rental agencies manage properties on behalf of landlords and act as intermediaries. You can easily find their services online or visit a office.

Important! Avoid paying for unnecessary costs! Some agencies charge extra 'administrative' or 'intermediary' fees. This is illegal!

Popular Areas to Live

Students live across the entire city. But especially in the north and central areas (see map). Most university buildings are also located around the city centre and Zernike Campus. Do not worry too much about location and travel time when looking for accommodation. Almost any corner of the city can be reached within a 20-minute bike ride.



→ Legend: Popular districts and neighbourhoods near campus

- | | | | |
|----|--------------------------|-----|------------------|
| 1. | Binnenstad (city centre) | 7. | Oranjebuurt |
| 2. | Oosterparkwijk | 8. | Schildersbuurt |
| 3. | Korrewegwijk | 9. | Zeeheldenbuurt |
| 4. | Selwerd | 10. | Rivierenbuurt |
| 5. | Paddepoel | 11. | Oosterpoortbuurt |
| 6. | Vinkhuizen | 12. | Tuinwijk |

Different Types

Indefinite term rental agreement

This is a lease with no end date. A tenant with an indefinite lease enjoys full rent protection and therefore cannot be evicted without a good cause (see also page 16). This is the most common contract type.



Fixed-term rental agreement

A fixed-term contract is a contract for up to 2 years in the case of rental rooms. After the specified period you have to leave the house if you do not get a new contract. However, the tenant can still terminate the contract early. You may not get another fixed-term contract after two years. The contract can eventually be converted to an indefinite lease. If the landlord does not notify you within the term of notice that you need to move out, the contract becomes an indefinite lease.



Campus contract

Housing associations often use campus contracts. This means you can only live there if you are enrolled as a student. You may be required to provide a *Statement of Enrollment* every few months. Are you no longer a student? Then you usually have to move out within a year.



of Contracts



Short-stay

A short-stay contract is intended for specific groups (exchange, international students and PhD'ers) who otherwise have more difficulty finding housing due to long distances. The lease is six or twelve months and the contract cannot be terminated.

Subletting

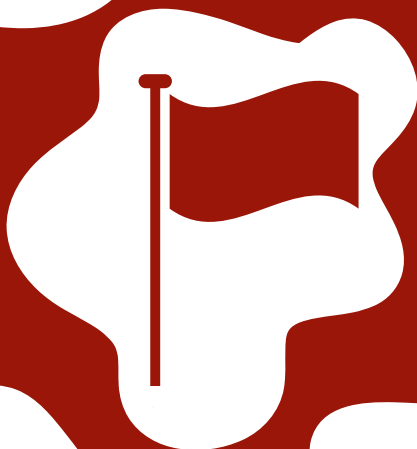
It is not unusual for a student to spend some time abroad. It can then be convenient to sublet the room. As a subtenant, you enjoy (limited) rent protection. Your rent cannot be terminated just like that. For this it is important that you draw up a contract and that you make clear arrangements about which of the primary tenant's things you may use, what the house rules are and how you will handle financial matters. Also check if the landlord allows subletting.



RED FLAGS

**Unexplained
service costs**

**You have to pay
an administrative,
intermediary
or mediation
fee**



**You have to sign
before you can
see the room**

**Not allowed to
register your
address with the
municipality**



On a budget?

Starting a live as a student can be expensive, fortunately we know exactly how to look after the pennies. Here are some tips and tricks to make your student life in Groningen a little more affordable.

Buying second-hand is often cheaper than buying new. In addition you also positively contribute to the environment. Popular second-hand shops in Groningen are:

- **Mamamini**
- **GoudGoed**
- **Kringloop Plus**

Can't drive? You can borrow or rent a cargo bike to move your furniture!

The Netherlands has its own equivalent of *Ebay*, namely "*Marktplaats.nl*" and "*Vinted*". People on *Marktplaats* offer a wide range of products from kitchenware to furniture, while *Vinted* mainly focuses on second-hand clothing.



Groceries

Plan your grocery shopping and shop fresh on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays between 9 AM and 5 PM on Vismarkt square in the city centre. Here you can find a large open air street market with many fresh food and budget options.

Your Rights

1. Contract Errors

Landlords often have little legal knowledge and this causes contract errors. The law takes precedence; you are not bound by unlawful provisions.

2. Rent Protection

You cannot be home evicted just like that. A landlord can only do that through court and under very strict conditions:

- **Misbehaviour:** i.e. nuisance, drugs, violence, vandalism, non-payment for >3 months.
- **Urgent personal use:**

a) A landlord may claim to be compelled to personal use, in which case the tenant's interest is deemed less pressing. You are then entitled to compensation.

b) The property is intended for a specific group (young people, students) and the contract includes a max. age or requires you to be enrolled as a student.

Subtenants have rent protection only against the person from whom they are subletting. So you are left in a vulnerable position against their landlord.

Tenants can always terminate their rent, while observing the payment term (usually 1 month).

3. Rental price

Rent is made up by the basic rent and service costs. **Basic rent** (*kale huur*) refers to rent minus service or other costs, like utilities. Many students also pay an advance for electricity, gas and water with their monthly rent.

Utilities must be agreed upon in the contract. Landlords are not allowed to turn a profit on utility costs. Utilities must be accounted for per category, and landlords must provide insight into the total annual utility costs, and offset overpayment (or underpayment) for utilities with the tenant.

The prices of student rooms or other housing are regulated based on a point system. Housing scoring 143 points or lower is considered social housing. Housing scoring between 144 and 186 points is considered mid-range. It does not matter if you rent privately or from a housing association.

The social housing limit is set at €932.93 and the mid-range limit is set at €1,228.07 in 2026.

If you're renting social housing, you might be eligible for housing allowance. The 2026 limit is set at a basic rent of €932.93 or €498.20 if you're under the age of 21.

Does your rent exceed this threshold? This is called **free sector** rent. Your landlord thus sets the rental price.

4. Rent increases

From January 1st, 2026, the max. annual mid-range rent increase entails 6.1%, free sector housing 4.4% and from July 1st 2026, social housing 4.1%.

As A Tenant

5. Security Deposits

Landlords can ask for a security deposit. As of July 1, 2023, the security deposit may be a maximum of two months of basic rent. Always make sure you have a payment transcript.

Landlords must refund the deposit within 14 days after the lease has ended.

Landlords may only offset the following charges against the deposit:

- Overdue rent
- Service costs
- Damage to the property that is the tenant's responsibility
- Cleaning costs

6. Intermediary Fees

A rental agency or broker may not charge a fee for acting as an intermediary between you and the landlord. If you, however, hire an agency to find housing for you then they are allowed to charge a (reasonable) fee.

7. Rent Benefit

Rent allowance (*huurtoeslag*) from the government cover a significant portion of your monthly rent. You are entitled to rent allowance if you rent a house (apartment, studio) with your own front door, bathroom etc. below the social rent limit; Your income and assets also may not be too high to receive benefits and you have to be officially registered at that address with the municipality.

8. Maintenance

Major maintenance works are the landlord's responsibility. Examples are exterior painting and a new central heating boiler. The tenant is responsible for daily maintenance and minor repairs such as painting interior walls or unclogging the toilet or sink.

9. Disputes

Are you paying too much rent? Is your landlord not doing any maintenance work? Did you not get your security deposit back? And does your landlord not cooperate? Or do you have another question about rental law? You can always contact the **Rent Support Center Groningen** (→ p. 18) for information or advice or visit → ***steunpunthuren.nl***.

The Rent Tribunal (***Huurcommissie***) helps tenants of student rooms, free sector and social housing. The tribunal deals with differences of opinion about, among other things, the rent, rent increase, rent reduction, service costs, utility costs and disputes about maintenance and home improvement. For certain other matters like eviction, you will need to go to court.

You can also report a 'bad' landlord or intermediary to the Rental Harassment Helpdesk (MOV) of the Municipality of Groningen. If justified this can lead to sanctions.

RENT SUPPORT CENTER GRONINGEN

The Rent Support Center Groningen (in Dutch: *Steunpunt Huren Groningen*) provides free legal advice, support and mediation in matters between tenants and landlords in the municipality of Groningen. Every inhabitant of the municipality with a rental question or rental problem is welcome at the Rent Support Center.

You can find all kinds of information about renting on our website!

Examples of topics are:

- high rents;
- unclear all-in prices;
- problems with maintenance;
- excessively high service costs or;
- incorrect mediation costs.

Walk-in hours:
Wednesdays from
1 PM to 3 PM
Damsterdiep 36

If tenant and landlord can not get to an agreement through our mediation, the Rent Support Center can also offer tenant support in filing a case with the Rent Tribunal (in Dutch: Huurcommissie).

The aim of all our efforts is to help the rental sector of the municipality of Groningen move forward. We want everyone to be able to live fairly in Groningen.

Email: info@steunpunthuren.nl

Tel. +31 50 785 1453

→ steunpunthuren.nl



**Steunpunt Huren
Groningen**

DID YOU KNOW YOU HAVE RIGHTS?

*Better call **9sb!***

Legal or administrative
problems at the RUG,
Hanze or somewhere else?
Contact the student
union's Legal Helpdesk
for free legal advice!



📍 Oude Kijk in 't Jatstraat 5
✉ steunpunt@groningerstudentenbond.nl



Contact Us

+31 50 250 0014

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