EUROPEAN INLAND WATERWAYS SECTION
- A guide to using the Waterkaarten app

By Machiel Lambooij (February 2025)

Please email any corrections or updates to eiws-editor@theca.org.uk.

The **Waterkaarten** app is an electronic chart-based app, originally covering Netherlands inland waters but since extended to cover France, Belgium, Germany, UK and Denmark. It was formerly named ANWB Waterkaarten, as the app used to be maintained by the ANWB (the Dutch version of the AA).

It is the app most commonly used by cruisers on the inland waterways of the Netherlands and several other inland waterways countries and incorporates map-based information on all the waterways, locks, bridges and marinas - including opening hours, moorings and other facilities - updated constantly on a subscription basis. It also includes an autorouting feature and routes can be saved in the cloud. This feature currently works spasmodically in countries other than the Netherlands, although this is improving.

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However, although there is an English-language version of the app for Apple and Android (plus a Windows version in Dutch only) much of the information on the map requires a basic knowledge of Dutch to obtain the full benefit.

This information sheet is therefore designed to act as a 'gateway' to the app for non-Dutch speakers. It relates to the app and its complementary Windows version as available in January 2025. It is based on the personal experience of a user and is not official guidance by the company that sells the product.

How to obtain the product

Be aware there are similar products with almost the same name in the various app stores. You need the **Waterkaarten & ANWB Almanak 2**. You can also find the link to the correct app here: **https://waterkaarten.app**.

For the app version this is the correct icon:

The Windows version can be downloaded from the website mentioned. However, it is in Dutch only. If you have an Android or iOS tablet, you are better off using the app version as it is in English and simpler and more user-friendly. The chart information is the same as the Windows version. You can download the software free of charge with a trial period of seven days. Thereafter you have to take out a subscription for one month, three months or one year. There is no version for MacOS available.

Content

Charts of the Inland Waters of the Netherlands and **Wateralmanak 2** (information on bridges, locks, waterways, marinas). It does not include coastal waters but, since recently, basic information on the Waddenzee is included. Please note that the chart data is updated infrequently (usually half of the chart data each year, so a full revision takes two years). For open water details (depths, buoys), please note that the charts may therefore not be up-to-date. If this is critical to you (this is specifically the case with the Waddenzee), consult a secondary source, e.g. NV and Navionics (electronic) charts or the official maps. It is not advisable to navigate the Waddenzee outside the deep shipping channels on the basis of this product due to heavy tidal and current influence and constantly changing position of buoys. The

numbers of objects (bridges/locks) in red boxes refer to the relevant objects in the paper version of Almanak 2.

Language and unit settings

The app version should normally default to your device's standard language (if recognized). If not, then it will appear in Dutch, but you can set the language to English (or German) manually by going to *Profiel → Instellingen → Taal*. You can set the units in your preferred manner.

The Windows software version is only available in Dutch.

Subscription

Appstore

You need a subscription, which you can purchase through the app itself. Once purchased, one can request an activation code for a free copy of the Windows version. Current prices (January 2020) for the app version are €14.99 for one month; €39.99 for three months, and €54.99 for 12 months. You can pay through the relevant Android or Apple app store. You can use the subscription - with an account - on two devices.

Windows software

The separate Windows version (which is only in Dutch) can be downloaded and used free of additional charge once you have purchased a subscription to the app. Effectively, one needs to have an annual subscription in order to qualify for this concession. However, the Windows version can also be purchased separately at the same price as the app. Once the free software is downloaded, go to the first icon on the bottom half of the menu (if shown). A screen shows *Licentie kopen or activeren* (buy licence or activate). If you have already requested and received an activation code after purchasing a subscription to the app, click on *Activeren met activatiecode*. If not, purchase a code online. Click *Later* to ignore this screen.

You are then prompted to pay for it online unless you have a subscription. You can pay by Ideal (Dutch bank account holders only), Paypal or credit card and will receive an activation code to input. You can install the software on two PC's once you have set up an account. The same account can be used across the app and Windows versions, making it easy to keep both up to date.

Helpdesk: telephone +31 70 20 42 300 (Monday-Friday 09:00 - 17:30) or by e-mail: **info@promanent.com**

Legend (app only)

The legend of the app charts can be found by clicking on the i-button in the right upper corner of the screen. If the app is set to English, the legend will be in English too.

See Windows specific legend information at the end of this document.

GPS

For optimal use, Waterkaarten requires GPS but you can also use it without. However, you will have to manually establish your current position and tracking and DTG information is then not available. The app on your device should, however, be able to connect to a phone with GPS switched on if your device has no built-in GPS (e.g. wifi-only iPads). You need to set GPS permission to 'always' for it to operate properly. There is a setting for shared GPS in Profile, Devices. An iPad with 4g connectivity has GPS built in.

Fairway Information Services

This service is provided by the *Rijkswaterstaat* (Dutch waterways authority). Up-to-date information on blockages and delays is incorporated in the app and the Windows software, but one needs to be online to receive it. Information on the Waterkaarten map is indicated by a red triangle (app) and by an orange box with a triangle (Windows). The underlying information is in Dutch. However, the information on the website itself can be viewed in English. If you see a red triangle, go to the map on the **Fairway Information Services** website, select English and click on the relevant location on the map. Most of the information is available in English in this manner. Some of the lower level information is still in Dutch - especially if

provided by local authorities - but the information category is in English, so you should be able to grasp what it is about. Please note that notifications may be published months before the relevant event. Therefore please check the date/time-windows mentioned in the underlying information.

NOTE: for the Windows version, you need to download the relevant Fairway Information each time you want it updated by going to the download button (button on the lower half of the menu) called *Synchroniseren* and clicking on the *Nu synchroniseren* button. You are then presented with a number of screens that check your licence, your account, whether there is a new software version and the Fairway Information. Do this before you plan your itinerary or depart as it may take some time. *Synchronisatie klaar* means all downloads completed.

Bridge and lock clearance

The app allows you to set the dimensions of your boat and air draught (the margin between bridge clearance and the minimum height of the boat). In the map, the colour of the bridges is then adapted to these details (green: bridge does not have to open; yellow: you will need to reduce your air draught; red: bridge will need opening). This is a very useful feature if you plan a journey on waterways with many bridges and your air draught may be critical. Go to Profile → Preferences → My Boat in the app.

For Windows go to *Instellingen* (icon in the bottom half of the menu), *Mijn boot* (enter length – *Lengte*; width – *Breedte*; draught - *Diepgang*; maximum air draught - *Max doorvaarthoogte*; safety margin – *Veiligheidsmarge;* minimum height of your boat - *Min. kruiphoogte*) and click on *Gebruik deze instellingen* (use these settings). The relevant object gets a red border if your ship will not fit, based on these settings. Be careful because this functionality is not always reliable.

DTG & Routes
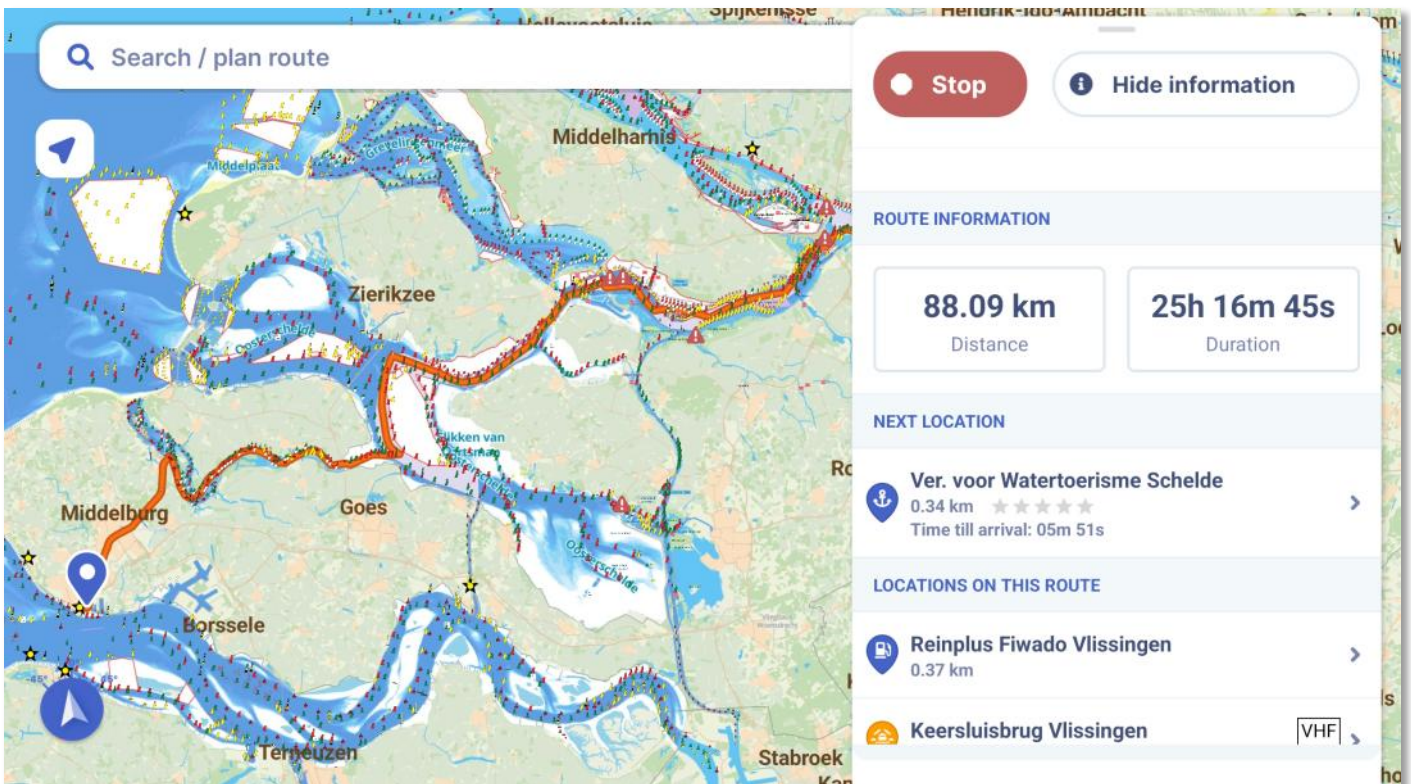
You can also use the app to plan and record a route, either manually or using the new autorouting function. To use the autorouting function, you either enter your start point and destination by name or by selecting them on the map. The software will then calculate distance and likely time needed and generate a list of locks, bridges and other features along the route. Routes can be named and saved both in your device (in 'Saved routes') and in the cloud. See example above. In the Windows software this is called *Routebibliotheek* (route library) and *Tracksbibliotheek* (track library). These are the third and fourth icons in the upper half of the menu.

Overlay with object information (bridges, harbours, marinas, Fairway Information)

In both the app and in the Windows software you can select map overlays with Points of Interest. The advice is to switch these all on, as this is the most useful aspect of the product. In the app, go to profile and select 'Show all POIs on map' (or select the POIs you want to see).

In the Windows version, go to *Wateralmanak* (first icon in the upper half of the menu). There you can select:

Bruggen (beweegbaar) - bridges (opening)

Bruggen (vast) - bridges (fixed)

Havens – harbours and marinas

Nautische berichten – nautical information

Scheepvaartberichten – Fairway Information Services

Sluizen – locks

Varen doe je samen – safety information on e.g. difficult crossings of waterways.

Terms on the charts in Dutch (in bold red or regular black)

The chart data is in Dutch, even in the English app versions. Please see below for a list of the most frequently used terms and their translations.

DUTCH	ENGLISH
.. m uit de oever blijven	Keep .. metres from the shore (obstacles)
Aanleggen verboden, Privé ligplaats	No mooring, private mooring
Afsluitbalk	Closing bar
Alleen op verzoek bediend	Only opened on request (usually in advance)
Bakboord	Port
BB	Bridge that can be opened
Bed. op verzoek	Opening on request (usually in advance)
Betonde geul	Buoyed channel
Breedte	Width
Brug geld	Bridge toll charged
Brug, bruggen	Bridge, bridges
Diepgang	Draught
Diepte, diep, ondiep	Depth, deep, shallow
Doorvaart verboden	No passing of ships
Doorvaarthoogte (or: *vrije doorvaarthoogte*)	Maximum draught, free draught
Fietsbrug	Bicycle bridge
Geen doorvaart	No passing
Geen Ligplaats	No mooring
Geen passanten	No visitors

Gem. Haven	Municipal harbour
Gem. passantenhaven	Municipal visitors' harbour
Gemeente	Municipality
Gereed (year)	Available (year) - usually with works in progress
Gesloten	Closed for traffic
Geul zomers bebakend	Channel with buoys in summer time (buoys usually not shown on chart)
Havendienst	Harbour authority
Hefbrug	Lifting bridge
Hoogteschaal	Level scale (bridge) showing air draught
In ontwikkeling	Being developed
JH or *JH* followed by a name or **St. JV** name	Marina (with name)
Kantoor ANWB	Office of the ANWB (the Dutch AA)
Keersluis (staat open)	Floodgate (usually open except in case of high water or an emergency)
Kitesurfgebied	Kitesurf area
Lengte	Length
Let op	Attention
Lichttoren	Light tower
Liggeld verplicht	Mooring fee obligatory
Liggeld verschuldigd	Mooring fee obligatory
Liggeld/havengeld	Mooring fee/ harbour fee
Max. doorvaarthoogte H25	Maximum air draught 25 dm (i.e. 2.50m)
Meer	Lake
Meldsteiger	Reporting pontoon
Ondiep	Shallow (do not navigate here)
Overslaghaven	Transhipment port
Part. Haven	Private harbour
Passantenhaven/passanten	Visitor harbour, visitors welcome
Pontonbrug	Pontoon bridge
Reddingsbrigade	SAR station
Sluis, sluizen	Lock, locks
Spoorbrug	Railway bridge
Spuilichten	Sluice lights
Spuisluis	Sluice, spillway
Staat meestal open	Is mostly open
Staat open/openstaand	Is open
Stadshaven or Gemeentehaven	City harbour or municipal harbour

Steiger	Pontoon
Strand	Beach
Stuurboord	Starboard
Toegang betond	Entrance channel with buoys
Toegang ondiep	Entrance channel shallow
Toegestaan	Allowed
Uitwateringssluis	Sluice, spillway
Vaarroute	Shipping route, channel
Vast ged.	Fixed part (of a bridge); usually to indicate maximum air draught of fixed part
Verboden	Prohibited
Verkeersregeling	Traffic control system/regulations in operation
Visstokken / visnetten	Fishing equipment in the water
VV van *(date)* **tot** *(date)*	Foot ferry from (date) to (date)
VVV	Tourist information
Wachtplaats	Waiting area (bridge/lock)
Word niet meer bediend/wordt niet bediend	Is no longer operating (bridge/lock)
Zelfbediening	Self service (bridge/lock)
Zwemstrand	Swimming area with beach

SPECIFIC GUIDANCE ON THE WINDOWS VERSION

Installing the Windows version

You need at least Windows 7 and 3 GB of freely available disk space and internal memory of 2 GB. Windows tablet computers require at least Windows 8, 8.1 or 10. You need a keyboard and mouse and a screen of at least 800x600 pixels. The software can run without an online connection, except for downloading Fairway Information.

For Windows, go to the website **https://waterkaarten.app** (which is in Dutch) on your PC and click *Download and installeer* (download and install). You get a 7-days free trial. You will find a folder on your PC (*Waterkaart*). Start the program *Waterkaarten Nederland*. You will get a 'thank you' screen with the conditions of use. Click *Deze informatie niet meer tonen* (do not show this again) whenever this shows. Click on *Accepteer voorwaarden* (accept conditions)→ *Begin Proefperiode* (start trial period) → *Ik heb het gelezen* (I have read it) → *verder* (next). Then you are required to provide your e-mail address and open an account. You will get an email and need to click on the link provided showing your e-mail address to activate your account.

Hulpprogramma (help program for resetting the software)

There is in the Windows version a separate help program. It allows you to start a technical log to request support. It also allows resetting the software:

Reset de gebruiker en de licentie: reset the user and the licence

Reset alleen de licentie: reset the licence only

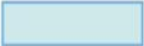*Reset voorkeursinstellingen:* reset the preferences
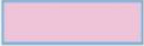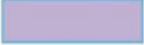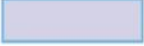
Bevestig: confirm the reset option chosen.

GPS connectivity

For the Windows version there is a separate program called 'GPS Tester', which is in English. It assumes that a GPS device (e.g. a GPS mouse) is connected to your PC. You will have to set the correct technical parameters for the program to find it. Consult the documentation with your GPS device.

Legend (for Windows)

There is a separate PDF document in the Waterkaarten folder on your PC which contains the legend for the Windows software (*Legenda waterkaarten*). This is in Dutch. Please find below print screens for the legends for the app charts in English. Most legends are the same in both versions. A difference is that the Windows version shows the *Staande Mastenroute* (a series of small yellow blocks on the relevant water-way), which the app does not show.

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Navigation

🟦	Channel open for all craft
🟥	Entry and through passage prohibited
⬜	Nature reserve (closed to all craft)
🟦	Minor channel, usually closed to motor-powered craft
🟪	Channel particularly suitable for canoes
🟪	Channel on which no speed limit applies to speedboats during the day and water skiing...
🟪	Channel on which no speed limit applies to speed-boats during the day and water skiing...
⬜	Channel closed to all craft
🟨	Channel closed to all motor-powered craft unless licensed
🚫sport	No small craft permitted
🟦	Water under development
🟪	Water skiing lane / speedboat lane

Mark at a separation point

Leading mark with port hand line

Leading mark with starboard hand line

Cardinal mark (South quadrant)

Separation mark (channel of equal importance)

Additional port hand mark

Additional starboard hand mark

Signposted canoe route

Special marks

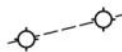Cardinal mark (North quadrant)

Cardinal mark (East quadrant)

Cardinal mark (West quadrant)

Various top marks

Leading lights with leading line

Port hand marks

Starboard hand marks

Preferred channel to port

Preferred channel to starboard

Yacht buoyage

Buoyage for docking marina (summer only)

Channel mark on right of left bank

Light buoys

Signposted for harbour entrance on left / right side

Water level / depth

Map	DTG	Routes	Search	Profile

— — — — — 10 dm depth line

•• •• •• 20 dm depth line

GHW Mean High Water (in dm)

GLLWS Lower low water spring (in dm)

GLW Mean Low Water (in dm)

KP Canal level (in dm)

NAP Normal Amsterdam Level

PP Polder level (in dm)

SP Weir level (in dm)

Recommended course line

D Depth in dm

Water gauge

Rocks / obstructions under water

Breakwater below surface

Channel less than 1 m deep (the IJsselmeer or waters openly connected with it, less than...

Channel less than 1 m deep (the IJsselmeer or waters openly connected with it, less than...

Warning sign for bridge clearance

Warning sign lowest level (in navigation channel)

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< **Facilities**

Scaffolding

Quay or bank

Camp site

Temporary berth or mooring

Recreation area

Daytime recreation area

WV / ZV Water sports association / sailing club

Public trailer slipway

Canoeing club

Crossing for canoes

Embarkation point for canoes

Polular diving spot

Bunker station / ship

Wastewater station

B Berth for commercial shipping

Marina

Quay

Map   DTG   Routes   Search   Profile

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< **General topography**

| Map | DTG | Routes | Search | Profile |

	Woods
	Residential area
	Industrial area
	Other area
	Reeds
	Wetlands
A16	Motorway (with number)
	Arterial road
++++	National border
	Street or road
	Motorway under construction
	Road under contruction
	Dyke
	Dyke with road
	Bicyle path
	Railway with station
	Tourist railway
	Light railway / underground
	Provincial border

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<   **Bridges and structures**

H	Clearance in dm
L	Length of lock chamber
V	Average fall of the lock in dm
W	Width in dm
)(**BB**	Draw bridge
D	Depth in dm
><	Culvert
34	Number of structure (bridge / lock)
≫a > b	Navigation lock / Guard lock
‖	Weir
)(	Fixed bridge
)(a ∣ b	Footbridge / Dam

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