Will Writing Checklist

Disclaimer

The information in this document is general in nature and is not legal advice. You should seek independent financial, legal, tax and other relevant advice regarding your particular circumstances when preparing your Will.

DISCOVER · PREVENT · CURE

Before you begin

Creating or updating a Will helps ensure your wishes are honoured and provides clarity for those closest to you. It offers peace of mind, can ease the burden on loved ones, and allows you to leave a meaningful legacy.

You can:

- Create a new Will, or
- Update an existing one (in some cases via a codicil – a change to your Will)

How to prepare your Will

- Use an online service (e.g. Safewill) for convenience, or
- Work with a solicitor

Important

- Ensure your Will is legally valid (proper signing and witnessing)
- Store it safely and inform your executor and/or trusted person where it is

Consider including a gift in your Will

Including a gift in your Will is a simple but powerful way to support a cause close to your heart. It's a chance to be part of something you deeply care about and to create impact today, at no cost to you now.

After you have considered those closest to you, there are many ways to include a gift in your Will to a charitable organisation. You can leave:

- A **residuary gift** (what remains of your estate)
- A **percentage of your estate**
- A **specific asset**
- A **fixed sum (pecuniary gift)**

Even a small gift can have lasting impact. If you choose to give, consider informing the charitable organisation so they can acknowledge your intent and welcome you as part of their supporter community.

Consider talking about your wishes

If you're comfortable, discuss your plans with loved ones and appoint trusted decision-makers for financial, medical, and personal matters This can help:

- Avoid confusion
- Clarify your intentions
- Ensure your wishes are respected

Will writing checklist

1. Gather personal and legal details

- Your full legal name, address and contact details
- Full legal names of:
  - Executor(s)
  - Beneficiaries
  - Any charities you may like to leave a gift to

2. Consider assets and liabilities

Assets (what you own)

- Property (home, investment properties)
- Bank accounts and cash
- Shares, investments, cryptocurrency
- Vehicles, jewellery, collectibles, valuables
- Superannuation and insurance policies*

*Note: Super and some insurance benefits are often handled outside your Will. Check your beneficiary nominations with the providers to ensure they reflect your wishes.

Also consider digital assets:

- Logins/passwords (banking, investments, social media, email, registrations) so that someone you trust can access and manage them if needed

Liabilities (what you owe)

- Mortgages
- Loans
- Credit cards
- Other debts or financial commitments

3. Decide who receives what

People

- List beneficiaries
- Decide what each receives (amount, asset, or percentage)

Charitable giving (optional)

- Identify organisations you would like to support (after providing for loved ones)
- Gather their legal name, registered address, ABN
- Decide how you would like the gift to be used:
    - General purpose (most flexible, greatest impact)
    - Specific purpose (confirm feasibility with the organisation and likelihood of remaining relevant in the future)

4. Appoint key roles

Executor(s)

- Choose one or more suitable executors responsible for administering your estate
- Consider appointing a backup (substitute) executor
- Confirm they are willing to act
- Discuss your wishes with them
- Discuss the role with them in advance
- Note that they can engage legal/financial support (costs paid by the estate)

Guardian

- Appoint someone to care for minor children, dependants, or pets

5. Make it legally valid

- Sign and date it in front of two witnesses:
    - Witnesses must not be beneficiaries or related to them
- Store it securely and inform your executor(s) where to find it

6. Review and update regularly

- Update your Will as your circumstances change (e.g. relationships, finances, life events).

7. Keep important documents together

Store alongside your Will:

- Birth, marriage, divorce or citizenship certificates
- Passport
- Medicare/Centrelink details
- Property titles/deeds
- Loan and mortgage documents
- Bank, credit card and investment details
- Superannuation and insurance records
- Vehicle ownership documents
- Contact details for legal and financial advisers

Useful links

- Gifts in Wills Guide: **Gifts in Wills A4 Booklet**
- Writing Your Will Online: **Write Your Will Online**
- Frequently Asked Questions: **FAQ**

More information

If you have questions or would like to learn more about supporting The Kids Research Institute Australia, please visit our website: **Give in your Will**

For more information on giving to The Kids, please visit our website: **https://giving.thekids.org.au/**

“I don’t think many people do think about writing their Will, but they really should.”

Shannae Terrill, bequest supporter of The Kids Research Institute Australia

Watch:
https://youtu.be/9o2QhVmVRuE