

Let's Talk

**Police
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Wills

March 2024



Thinking about how your family would manage if you weren't around may seem a little morbid. But with a little planning now you can make it easier (and hopefully less expensive) for your loved ones to sort out your affairs after your death. It's not a nice thing to think about, but it's good to get it all sorted out sooner rather than later.

If you don't already have one, write a Will, if you do already have one, then make sure it's up to date. It's also a good idea to review your Will regularly especially when a life event happens, for example, marriage, divorce, or a birth of a new immediate family member.

Without a Will, the Government decides how your estate should be distributed, with no regard for your wishes. A Will ensures your Estate goes to the people you want it to.

There are several other things you can do in a Will:

- Appoint guardians for any children you have under 18 (under 16 in Scotland); if you don't do this, the State will.
- Set up trusts and other arrangements to keep any inheritance tax bill on your Estate to a minimum.
- Leave details of the kind of funeral you want.
- Leave details about what you want to happen to your pets.
- Say what should happen to your digital assets (such as social media, email, and other online accounts).
- Name the executors of your Will. These are the people who ensure the instructions in your Will are carried out when you die.
- Make gifts to charity.

If you die without a valid Will, the intestacy rules apply. These set out who is entitled to inherit from your Estate if you don't leave a legally valid Will. Click [here](#) for more details.

All adults should have a Will but it's particularly important once you own property, have children, start a business, or have savings and investments.

It's recommended that you use a solicitor to write your Will.

Using a Solicitor will ensure all the legal formalities are followed and they will be able to help ensure your Will is as tax efficient as possible.



Before you see a solicitor, it could save you some time if you can answer the following questions:

- What do I own?
- What do I owe?
- Who gets what?
- Is there anyone who depends on me that may question my wishes?
- Do I need to choose guardians for my children (under 18 years)?
- Do I have any other wishes such as funeral arrangements?
- Who do I want to be my executors?



You should review your Will every five years and if:



- You get married
- You have a baby
- You get divorced
- Your partner dies
- Your children have children of their own
- You move house
- You experience any other big changes in your life



Whatever your circumstances, you should make a Will. If you have unusual circumstances or special requests, the law may not always recognise them, so it's important you discuss these details with your solicitor.

It's important to keep your Will safe and to tell your executors where it is.

Where to find out more:

[Find a solicitor in England and Wales](#)

[Find a solicitor in Scotland](#)

[Find a solicitor in Northern Ireland](#)

It's also a good idea to review your inheritance tax situation regularly to see if you can reduce the amount to be paid from your estate when you die.

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