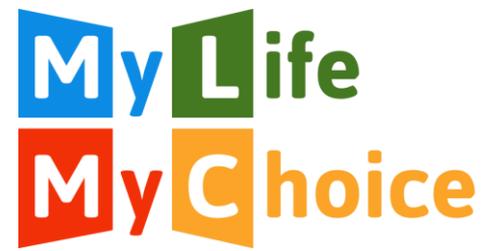


Making Your Will: A Guide



Your will lets you decide what happens to your money, property and possessions after your death.

Step one: Value your estate

Your estate is made up of all the things you own (your assets) and anything you owe to other people (your debts)



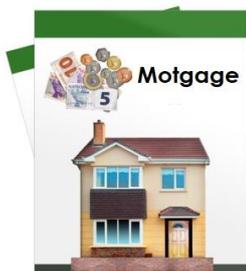
You need to get an idea of how much your estate is worth.



Think about all the things you own (your assets) such as your house, your car, and any valuable items such as jewellery or furniture.



You also need to think about any savings you have in the bank, and any life insurance you may have.



Finally, you need to think about any debts you have such as a mortgage, credit card debt or loans.

Step two: Decide how you want to divide your estate

You should make it clear what you want to happen to your whole estate.



To do this you need to think about who you want to benefit from your will and whether you wish to give any specific things to particular people.

You also need to think about what you want to happen if any of those people die before you.

Step three: donation to a charity



If you plan to leave a gift to a charity in your will, make sure you include the charity's full name, address and registered charity number. Incorrect information may mean your chosen charity doesn't receive the gift.

Step four: Choose your executors

Executors are the people who deal with distributing your estate after you've died.



Being an executor can involve a lot of work and responsibility, so consider the people you appoint carefully.

Step five: Write your will

You can do this in a number of ways:

- **Lawyers:** It is usually best to get advice from a lawyer. They can help you write your will and make sure it is legal.





- **Banks:** Some banks will help you write your will. You can contact your local branch to find out if they offer this.

Some banks charge a lot of money for this.



- **Make your own will:** If you decide to make your own will, it's best to seek advice first.

Step six: Sign your will



You must sign your will for it to be legal.



For your will to be legally valid, you must:

- be 18 or over
 - make it voluntarily
 - be of sound mind
-
- sign it in the presence of 2 witnesses who are both over 18
 - have it signed by your 2 witnesses, in your presence



If you make any changes to your will, you must follow the same signing and witnessing process.

Step seven: Store your will safely

You can keep your will at your home or store it safely with your solicitor, your bank or a local Probate Service

You must let your executors know where your will is kept.

