

Planning your will guide

How to make
sure your
values live on



When you make or update your will, it's easy to provide for those you care about and remember the British Red Cross

For 150 years, we've been there for people in crisis – a constant in times of peril. Today, the British Red Cross emblem can be found across the world, wherever people are vulnerable. It's a symbol of hope, protection and kindness, when it's needed most.

Gifts in wills are the bedrock of the British Red Cross.

Whenever you see us in action – be it responding to an international crisis or helping people in a street very like your own – you can be sure the gifts in wills that people generously promised years ago are playing their part.

By leaving a gift in your will, you can make sure that whatever happens after you are gone, through the Red Cross emblem, you'll be there too.



A gift of just 1% of your estate could mean that, whatever happens in the world, we'll be there.

During the coronavirus pandemic, we supported the most vulnerable people in the UK. We've delivered food, medicines and support for those experiencing loneliness and isolation.

5 easy steps

Everyone needs a will that reflects their unique wishes. The worksheets in this booklet will help you get started. Use them to note down important information as well as any questions you want to put to your solicitor. He or she will be able to advise you, and to word your will in a legally valid way to ensure your instructions are carried out.

Step 1. Work out the value of your estate

Your estate simply means the value of all you own, minus any money you owe.

Step 2. Decide who you'd like to provide for

From your nearest and dearest to your favourite charities.

Step 3. If you have dependent children, choose guardians

Who are the relatives or friends you would want to look after them?

Step 4. Choose your executors

An executor is someone you nominate and entrust, to carry out the instructions in your will after your death.

Step 5. Make notes of any questions

It's good to have them all in one place, to talk through with your solicitor.

Taking a little time to work through this guide before seeing your solicitor will help you collect your thoughts and information.



Simple will planner

Prepare for your meeting with your solicitor by completing this simple checklist.

Your name and address	
Your partner's name and address (if different from your own)	
Your executors These are the people who will ensure everything happens. You can have up to four executors. They could be friends or family or a solicitor. Make a note of their full names and addresses.	
Children's full names and addresses (if different from your own)	
Guardian's full name and addresses (if you are appointing a guardian for your child). Remember to discuss your wishes with the people you wish to appoint to make sure they agree. Some people may also have pets they would like someone to take care of.	

Work out the value of your estate

In this section below, make a list of everything you own and make a note of its approximate value.

This section will help you work out the value of your estate. In the second section, think about what you owe and make a note of your liabilities.

The result is the total.

What is the value of your major assets	£
Your home (or share in it)	
Other property and land	
Cars and other vehicles	
Home contents including furniture and fittings	
Items of particular value (e.g. jewellery/art)	
Money in banks and building societies	
Shares, investments, national savings, premium bonds	
Insurance and pensions	
Other savings and assets	
A Total assets	

What are your major liabilities	£
Your mortgage	
Loans and overdrafts	
Your credit cards	
Credit or HP agreements	
Other liabilities	
B Total liabilities	

Total estate value = A Total assets – B Total liabilities	£
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Make notes of any questions

Now that you have started thinking about your will you may have questions or issues you want to discuss with your solicitor. List them here and you'll have them to hand when you meet.

To be discussed

The language of will-making

Here are some of the terms you may come across, and what they mean.

Administrator Someone who is appointed by law to settle your affairs if you die with no will.

Beneficiary Anyone who receives something from a will.

Bequest A gift left in a will. It can be:

- Residuary – a share of whatever is left after all debts have been settled and other gifts made.
- Pecuniary – a gift of a specific sum of money.
- Specific – a gift of a particular object or property.

Codicil An addition or amendment to an existing will.

Estate The total value of everything you own at your death, less any outstanding debts.

Executor(s) The person or persons you appoint to carry out the instructions in your will. An executor can be a relative, a friend or your solicitor.

Guardian(s) The person or persons parents choose to look after their children in the event of their death.

Intestacy The name for the situation that arises when someone dies without making a will.

Legacy Another name for a Bequest.

Probate The legal process to establish whether your will is valid.

Residue The sum left from an estate when all debts, charges and gifts are deducted.

Testator (male) / Testatrix (female)
The person making the will.

Trust An arrangement you can make in your will to administer part of your assets after your death.

Find out more

If you would like more information about leaving a gift in your will, or our free will offer, visit redcross.org.uk/mywill

Alternatively you can call us on **0300 500 0401** or email legacy@redcross.org.uk

Include the British Red Cross in your will too and you'll leave a symbol of protection, comfort and hope to future generations.