Do I have a choice about what happens to me after death? Yes!

You may normally have your body disposed of in any reasonable manner. "Reasonable" is the operative word, and you must make your wishes known.

For instructions to be followed after death, someone has to know about them in advance!

How to use this report

Charles Lindbergh, the first man to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean, laid out exactly how he wanted to be buried, what the funeral was to be like, and what hymns he wanted sung. As soon as he died, his wishes were carried out: he was dressed in his normal clothes and buried, without embalming, in a plain wooden coffin.

On the other hand, former President Franklin D. Roosevelt left a four-page letter with explicit instructions for his funeral. He wanted a very simple funeral with no hearse, lying in state, or embalming. Burial was to be in an unlined grave in a plain wooden casket. Unfortunately, these instructions were found in his safe—three days after his elaborate funeral and burial.

This document allows you to express your wishes about your body's disposal. This information will assure your family and friends that they have done what you wanted. It will also help them to avoid sales pressures from casket, cemetery, and funeral salespersons.

Optimally, you will first complete the form. Then discuss it with your relatives or whomever will make your funeral arrangements. Give them a copy of the form, filled in by you, and keep a copy in the records that will be opened immediately after your death. (Not in a safe-deposit box.)
Body Disposal Instructions and Discussion Guide

Full Name ________________________________
Maiden/Other Name __________________________
Usual Address ________________________________

Birth Place ___________________________________
Birth Date ____________________ Social Security Number ______
Spouse's Full Name ____________________________
Spouse's Address (if not living together) ____________________________

Spouse's Phone Number _________________________
Spouse's Birth Date ____________________ Birth Place ____________________________
Date of Spouse's Death ____________________ Wedding Date ________________________
Wedding Place __________________________________

1. How you should dispose of my body:
   - Interred (buried), not embalmed
   - Interred (buried), embalmed
   - Cremated, not embalmed
   - Cremated, after embalming
   - Do above after organ/tissue donation
   - Donate entire body (precludes organ donation)

2. I wish to donate:
   - My entire body for research, study, or transplant
   - Any organs or tissues that can be used for transplantation, research, or study
   - These specific organs or tissues:
     - Corneas (eyes)
     - Heart/lungs
     - Liver
     - Kidney
     - Pancreas
     - Skin
     - Pancreas
     - Other ____________________________
   - I have already made arrangements for this with:

3. I □ do or □ do not have funeral or burial insurance.
   The policy is with (company) ____________________________
   The policy number is ____________________________
4. I prefer the following funeral home or funeral director:

[Blank line]

They □ have or □ have not been previously contracted.

5. I prefer my hair and makeup be prepared by the following individuals:

[Blank lines for hair and makeup]

[Options for funeral home or no preference]

6. I want to be dressed in:

[Blank lines for options]

□ Shroud only    □ Shroud over clothing    □ No preference

7. I would like to be buried with (jewelry, favorite possessions, etc):

[Blank line]

8. I prefer a:

[Options for funeral/memorial, open/closed casket, or no formal service]

9. I prefer to have any service held:

[Options for church/mosque/synagogue, graveside, funeral home, home, or elsewhere]

10. I want the ceremony to be (choose all that apply):

□ religious    □ military/veteran    □ secular

□ fraternal order (type)

11. I want the service run by a (enter name if known):

□ minister

□ priest

□ rabbi

□ other

12. I have a preference for:

□ music

□ readings

□ prayers

□ other
13. I prefer a [ ] publicly announced or [ ] family-only funeral or memorial service.

14. I [ ] do or [ ] do not want “calling hours,” [ ] with or [ ] without an open casket.

15. I want these people to act as pallbearers (list as many as desired, use separate sheet if necessary):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

16. I want to be interred (buried) at (name cemetery):

[Blank]

17. I own a [ ] plot or a [ ] mausoleum.

The deed for the plot/mausoleum is kept ____________________________

It is in the name of ____________________________

18. I [ ] do or [ ] do not want to be buried with anyone else.

If with someone, who? ____________________________

19. I want a specific type of:

- [ ] Casket ____________________________
- [ ] Vault ____________________________
- [ ] Grave marker ____________________________

20. I want this written on my marker: ____________________________

[Blank]
21. I want this symbol/decoration on my marker: 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol/Decoration</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

☐ None

22. I ☐ do or ☐ do not want a veteran's marker.

23. Military service:
   I was in the (branch of military) 
   
   from ______________________ to ______________________
   
   I was discharged at (place) ______________________
   
   on (date) ______________________
   
   My discharge papers are located ______________________

24. If cremated, I want this done with my ashes:
   ☐ Inurned ☐ Buried ☐ Kept at home
   ☐ Scattered (specify site) ______________________

   ☐ Other ______________________

25. I want a specific type of:
   ☐ Urn ______________________
   ☐ Columbarium ______________________

26. Notify the following people of my death (list as many as desired, use separate sheet if necessary):
   Name ______________________
   Address ______________________
   Phone ______________________

   Name ______________________
   Address ______________________
   Phone ______________________

   Name ______________________
   Address ______________________
   Phone ______________________

   Name ______________________
   Address ______________________
   Phone ______________________
27. I prefer to have or not to have the following people at my funeral, if possible (list as many as desired, use separate sheet if necessary):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Come to funeral</th>
<th>Not come to funeral</th>
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<tbody>
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</table>

28. Other family and friends are listed in:
- Address book, located
- Rolodex, located
- Computer listing, located
  accessed by typing

29. I want mourners to send:
- Flowers
- Nothing
- Donations to

30. I want something special in my obituary:

31. Send copies of the obituary to the following periodicals (newspapers, professional organizations, newsletters, etc.):

   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   

32. I have a cost limit on any of the services mentioned above:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

33. My lawyer is:
   Name ____________________________________________________________
   Address __________________________________________________________
   Phone ____________________________________________________________

34. My life insurance company/agent is:
   Name ____________________________________________________________
   Address __________________________________________________________
   Phone ____________________________________________________________

35. My will is located at: ____________________________________________

36. The executor of my estate is:
   Name ____________________________________________________________
   Address __________________________________________________________
   Phone ____________________________________________________________

37. The key location or lock code to access my:
   Cars _____________________________________________________________
   House ____________________________________________________________
   Home safe ________________________________________________________
   Home desk ________________________________________________________
   Home files ________________________________________________________
   Office safe _________________________________________________________
   Office desk ________________________________________________________
   Office files ________________________________________________________
   Locker ____________________________________________________________
   Briefcase _________________________________________________________
   Safe-deposit box __________________________________________________
   Other safe/locker _________________________________________________
38. The location of other valuable property (cash, jewelry, art, furs, stocks, etc.) is:

_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________

39. Other instructions:

_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________

Note: If you have financial or other essential records on your computer, either teach someone how to access them or leave detailed instructions to follow. Be sure to leave someone your passwords, PIN numbers, and other security information.

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Now What?

After you have completed this form, take the time to discuss your preferences with those who will be entrusted with fulfilling these last wishes. You want them to understand why you made certain choices, so they can feel more comfortable and be prepared to carry them out.

You must discuss your desire to donate organs, tissues, or your entire body. Unless your next of kin agree, it rarely matters that you have filled out an organ/tissue donor form, signed the back of your driver’s license, or completed a living will—they must give their assent for donation to occur. Talk with them. That way, your wishes will be fulfilled.

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Educators and Professionals

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