

FUNERAL PLANNING

A checklist to help you with arranging a funeral



Arranging a funeral can feel overwhelming. This checklist is here to help you navigate the process.

Not all of the steps will be relevant to you. If you have any questions, you can call Poppy's any time during office hours for advice and support on 020 3589 4726.

1. FIRST STEPS WHEN SOMEONE DIES

- ☐ A medical professional must verify the death. In a hospital or a hospice, they will verify the death and will talk you through next steps. If someone dies at home, you will need to call their doctor or 999/111 for a medical professional to attend and verify the death.
- ☐ Register the person's death. The medical examiner will contact you to invite you to book an appointment at the registrar closest to where your person died.
- ☐ Begin sharing the news of the person's death. You can find guidance on this on the Poppy's blog - search '[how to share news of a death](#)'.
- ☐ If you need the funeral to be paid out of the bank account of the person who has died, we recommend speaking to the bank's bereavement team as soon as possible.

2. CHOOSE A FUNERAL DIRECTOR

- ☐ Speak to one or more funeral directors to explore what you want and need.
- ☐ Arrange to have your person brought into the care of a funeral director. You may have already arranged this.
- ☐ At this stage, you might start thinking about whether you want to arrange a cremation or a burial.

FUNERAL PLANNING CHECKLIST



3. THE FUNERAL - ALL THE DETAILS

Your funeral director can support you with these decisions.

- ☐ Choose a venue for the funeral, and for the wake, too, if you're having one.
- ☐ Confirm the date with your funeral director.
- ☐ Send out a 'save the date' to important friends and family. This can be as simple as a text, Whatsapp or email.
- ☐ Select key funeral choices such as flowers, coffin and hearse.
- ☐ Planning the service - this might include readings, musical choices, photo tributes, who might speak or share a eulogy.
- ☐ Appointing a celebrant or service leader, if you want one.
- ☐ Design and print the Order of Service booklet, if you want one.
- ☐ Choosing what you'd like your person to be dressed in - whether that's Sunday best, gladrags, or their favourite gardening threads - whatever feels right to you.
- ☐ If having a cremation, think about whether ashes will be scattered, interred or kept. You don't have to decide this now if you're not ready.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO VISIT YOUR PERSON?

You or other friends or family might choose to spend time with your person before the funeral. You are welcome to help wash or dress your person, or just sit and spend time with them. It's entirely up to you.

- ☐ Arrange a time with your funeral director to visit your person if that's what you want.

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5. PLANNING THE WAKE

Whereas your funeral director will support you with all the logistics and details for the funeral service, you will need to arrange the wake yourself if you're having one.

This might include:

- ☐ Booking a venue and paying any deposit/fees.
- ☐ Thinking about decorations - for instance, can you bring any of the funeral flowers to the wake to dress the room?
- ☐ Arranging food and beverages for guests.
- ☐ Choosing a guest or memory book, if you'd like one.

POPPY'S TIP

Can you delegate any of these tasks to a friend or family member? Often, people around you will want to help, and will be glad to be given something specific to look after.

6. JUST BEFORE THE FUNERAL

- ☐ Speak to your funeral director to confirm the final details and ask any questions you might have.
- ☐ If you or any other friends or family members are going to be coffin bearers, you might speak to your funeral director to learn more about how this will work.

USEFUL RESOURCES

- [Video and blog - how to carry and lower a coffin](#)
- [How to take care of yourself on the day of the funeral](#)



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7. AFTER THE FUNERAL

- ☐ IF A BURIAL - you will need to wait 12 months before placing a permanent headstone on the grave to allow the ground to settle.
- ☐ IF A CREMATION - you will need to collect the ashes from the crematorium. Each crematorium has different opening times and some require you to book an appointment, so it's worth checking the details with your funeral director.

USEFUL RESOURCES

- [Six things to do with funeral flowers after the service](#)
- [After the funeral - grief and bereavement resources](#)
- [Ways to mark a death anniversary](#)

WE'RE HERE IF YOU NEED US

Award-winning independent funeral directors serving London and beyond.

TOOTING

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