



A guide to planning your will

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 over 150 years, we've been there for people in crisis – a constant in times of peril. Today, the 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.



Any gift, no matter the size, could mean that, whatever happens in the future, you can help us be there for people when disaster strikes.

British Red Cross health staff member Beverley provides support to Sudha at her home in Nottingham. Our Community Crisis Supporter Service team work alongside families and the NHS to care for people who need support following hospital discharge, including palliative and end-of-life care.

Five 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 ask your solicitor. They will be able to advise you, and to word your will in a legally valid way to ensure your instructions are carried out. Taking time to work through this guide before seeing them can help you collect your thoughts.

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. **You don't need to send this information back to us** – it's purely for your own thoughts and planning.

Your name and address	
Your partner's name and address (if different from your own)	
Your executors These are the people who will make sure your instructions are carried out. You can have up to four executors. They could be friends, family or a solicitor. Make a note of their full names and addresses.	
Child/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/children). Remember to discuss your wishes with the people you would like to appoint to make sure they agree. You can also include pets here that you would like someone to take care of.	

Work out the value of your estate

This part will help you work out the value of your estate.

In the first section, make a list of everything you own, along with its approximate value.

In the second section, think about what you owe and make a note of your liabilities.

The result is what you own, minus what you owe.

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	£
Mortgage	
Loans and overdrafts	
Credit cards	
Credit or HP agreements	
Other liabilities	
B Total liabilities	

A - B = your total estate value	£
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Decide who you'd like to provide for

Make a list of the family, friends and charities you would like to leave something to in your will, and think about what you would like them to receive.

You will need to decide what you would like to give to each person, organisation or charity and whether it should be a specific item, an amount of money or a share of your estate.

Name and address	% Share	Amount £	Specific item

The British Red Cross
44 Moorfields
London EC2Y 9AL

The British Red Cross Society, incorporated by Royal Charter 1908, is a charity registered in England and Wales (220949), Scotland (SC037738), Isle of Man (0752) and Jersey (430).

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 – 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, whatever happens in the future, you'll leave a symbol of hope for future generations.