

Letter of wishes

A letter of wishes doesn't need to be signed and witnessed in the same way as a will or codicil but it's important to understand that as a consequence, it's not legally binding.

You can draft and sign a letter of wishes at any time, it doesn't need to be done at the same time as your will and it can be updated at any time. The letter serves as a 'wish list' and will help your executors to distribute some of your smaller and less valuable personal effects.

For anything sentimentally valuable, or items that are valuable in monetary terms, these should be included in your will along with any sums of money. Including these items in your will is the safest way of making sure they go to the people you want to have them.

It's useful to include contact details (telephone number/s and/or addresses) for the people in your letter of wishes.

Please see below for an example letter of wishes.

Example letter of wishes

To my executors

In the event of my death, please give the following items to the individuals detailed below:

My books to _____

My collection of family photographs to _____

My costume jewellery to _____

My dinner service to _____

If any of these people have passed away, their gift should fall back into the residue of my estate.

Signed _____ Dated _____