

MAKE A WILL

By Attorney Michael H. Wald

What Is A Will?

A will is just a simple written document, declaring what you want done with your estate when you pass away.

Any individual, married or single, who has accumulated property or money, should have an updated will.

How Do You Go About Drawing Up A Will?

The first step in drawing up your will, is to sit down and list all your real and personal property. After you have listed all your real and personal property, it is time to go through the list and assign a realistic value to each of the items.

The second step is to decide how you want your estate divided up. If you have a family that you wish to leave your estate with, list each of their full names, ages, current addresses.

If you are single and don't have a family, you may wish to leave your fortune to a charity. If this is the case, list the correct name and address of the charity.

The third step in drawing up the will, is to choose someone to take care of your will. The person in charge of taking care of your will is called the executor. You may choose to leave this task up to your spouse, close friend, or even an attorney. But remember, whoever you choose, make sure they are trustworthy, good with finances, and will carry out your wishes the way you intended them to be carried out.

The fourth step in drawing up your will involves putting together the information you have collected. Although, you may write your own will, either in handwriting or typewriter, it is also a good idea to have it done by an attorney. By getting it done by a lawyer, you'll know that it is done properly.

The fifth step in making your will valid, is the signing of the document itself. When signing your will, you must have witnesses present in order for the will to be valid.

The witnesses you choose cannot be included in your will. Some states require that you have three witnesses, but most (like Texas) only require two. If you live out of state, it is a good idea to check with your state to see how many are needed. The witnesses should be over 21 years old and list their current address so that your executor can find them quickly in the case of your death.

In upcoming articles I'll write about what you should include in your will and why you should have one.

My thanks to Bill Vincent, a student in my law class at the University of Texas at Dallas, who assisted in preparation of this column.

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