



Will Basics

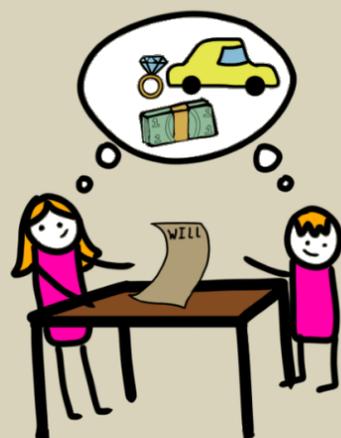
FOR WASHINGTON STATE

What is a Will?

A will is a legal document. It helps your family handle your affairs after you die.

It tells your executor how to give out or “distribute” your personal belongs and other property.

It also gives your executor the power to pay any debts you have when you die, like loans, credit card balances, medical bills, etc.



Why Have a Will?

A will helps you decide now how your affairs and property are handled after you die. It can make things much easier for your family and friends during a difficult time.

What If You Don't?

If you die without a will—a situation called dying “intestate”—Washington State law alone decides how your affairs and property are handled. This process is complicated and may not handle your property in the way you would have wished.



What Your Will Needs

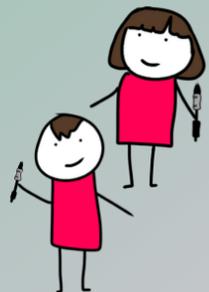
These are the *minimum requirements* for a valid will in Washington State. The laws about wills are complex and you should consider talking with an attorney for advice.

Your will needs to be **IN WRITING**.



It needs to **APPOINT AN EXECUTOR**.

You need to **SIGN AND DATE IT**.

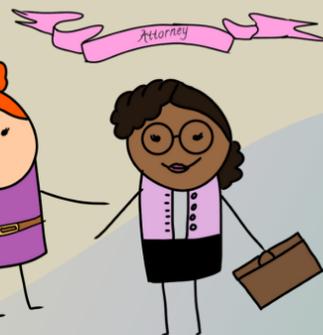


You need **TWO WITNESSES**, who watch you sign it and **SIGN IT THEMSELVES**.

Notary Public?

Washington State law does not require you and your witnesses to sign your will in front of a Notary Public.

This is an optional step and is called making your will “self-proving”. It’s a good idea to do this because it makes it easier to prove to the court later your will is authentic.



Talk to an Attorney

Washington State law does not require you to hire an attorney to write your will but it’s a good idea to talk with one. When it comes to the law, attorneys are the experts and your situation may require one.