

What makes a will legal?

Any adult of sound mind is entitled to make a Will. A Will does not have to be written by a solicitor provided that it is correctly worded who actually wrote your Will is completely irrelevant.

Furthermore to be legally binding a Will does not have to be witnessed by a solicitor either - it can be witnessed by any two competent people who are not beneficiaries or executors or directly related to a beneficiary.

Beyond that there are just a few technical requirements:

- The will must be typewritten or computer generated.
- The document must expressly state that it's your will.
- You must date and sign the will.
- The will must be signed by at least two witnesses. They must watch you sign the will, and each other sign the will, though they don't need to read it. Your witnesses must be people who won't inherit anything under the will.

If the Will comprises more than one page it should be so bound as to make subsequent interference difficult.

HOW TO SIGN YOUR WILL

Before signing your Will you must assemble two totally independent witnesses. They must be over 18 and neither very old nor hard to trace, in case there is a problem with the validity of your Will. A blind person cannot witness a Will.

The witness must not be a beneficiary or an executor of the Will and must not be the spouse of a beneficiary or executor of the Will. Witnesses to your Will can be married to each other. Provided they are not beneficiaries or executors or any of the other stipulated exemptions as mentioned above, your neighbors would probably do the job quite well.

Preferably, the witnesses should be neither very old nor hard to trace in case there is a problem with the validity of your Will. A blind person cannot witness a Will.

The testator must sign the Will first. The witnesses must watch the testator sign. The witnesses must then sign the Will and put their names, addresses and occupations. The testator must watch the witnesses sign. You will see that there are appropriate places for the testator and the two witnesses to sign.

You should keep the Will in a safe place at home or with your bank. You ought to let the executors or one of the major beneficiaries under your Will know where it is kept. You should never attach anything to your Will by way of a paper clip, pin or otherwise or in any way leave any mark on it. Such marks can cause great difficulty when it comes to prove your Will in the probate registry.