



Obituary – Quick and Easy Guide

What is an Obituary?

An obituary is often the first thing people read in the newspaper or online each day - and, for many, it will likely be the last thing written about their lives.

It is a detailing of life in chronological order of the individual. An obituary also serves as notification that an individual has passed away and provides information on any services scheduled to take place. Many people now write their own obituary ahead of time as part of the preplanning process.

People often save obituaries to remember someone; it needs to be something worthy of that person's memory. Obituaries are now shared on social media as an additional act of remembrance.

What Should Be Included?

An obituary is usually written in a standard format:

Announcement

It is important to state the deceased's full name and can include the date of birth and death. Most people include a photograph along with the text, it can be recent or a older favourite.

Survivors and Predeceased Information

It is customary to list family members who have survived the deceased, as well as immediate family members who predeceased him or her, including:

- Parents
- Spouse/partner and children (with their spouses'/partners' names also noted in brackets, if applicable)
- Adopted children
- Stepchildren
- Siblings
- Half and step siblings
- Grandchildren
- Surviving in-laws

Biographical Information

Recount, in a concise manner, the significant events in the life of the deceased. This may include the schools he or she attended and any degrees attained as well as their profession or interests.

Scheduled Services

Provide details of the scheduled services, including the time, date and address. These may include the funeral, visitations, burial and memorial service as applicable.

In Memoriam Donations

Give the name and website address of the organization to which you wish to direct any memorial donations made in honour of your loved one. The decision as to which organization to support may be based upon interests or values that the deceased expressed during life. The final paragraph can start with 'For those who wish, a memorial contributions in (name) memory to 'charity info here' are appreciated.

Final Considerations

All information included in the obituary should be verified with another family member. Have them assist you in confirming the dates, those who should be mentioned, correct spelling of names and the details of the scheduled funeral service.

If you are having trouble getting started, read other obituaries. Take into consideration when and in which newspapers or online website you wish your funeral director to publish the obituary.

Most obituaries follow these standard lines:

- *"It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of (deceased name) on (date), peacefully surrounded by family."*
- *"(Deceased name) will be sadly missed by" or "Fondly/Forever/Lovely remembered by...."*
- *"Beloved Wife/husband and best friend of (number) years...."*
- *"A Celebration of (deceased's name) life will be held on...."*

Additional Tips

Final Review

- Get the names right. Make sure you spell the deceased's name correctly and the name of any other family member or loved one you include.
- Ask other family members, friends and/or others who knew the deceased well to help you recall facts, dates, proper spelling of names or locations, other important or interesting information, etc.
- Have at least one other person proofread your obituary for mistakes or omissions.

Cost considerations

- Since the cost of running an obituary generally varies by length, it is best to be aware of the 'line rate' for each paper prior to drafting the obituary.
- Depending upon the chosen newspaper(s) or online website, publishing a photograph of the deceased might require an additional fee.
- Each newspaper or online website may have a particular format. It is best to review the current obituary section and note what order the information appears to ensure that it will fit.
- Publishing an obituary on a personal website or via social media, such as Facebook, is an option where length and number of pictures will not matter.

**Most important – Don't hesitate to ask a funeral director for assistance,
they are always willing to help.**

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