



## Casket or Urn? It is about choice and what is right for you.

One of the most personal decisions that an individual or their family can make is to choose between a cremation or casket burial. It's a choice that can be hard to make, especially if your loved one has never mentioned their preference.

For most people, the choice is based on their own cultural, familial, or religious traditions and often are based on what the family has done in the past.

### How to Choose between Cremation vs. Casket Burial?

The first decision a family or friend needs to confront when their loved one passes away is the method of the final disposition. Many different things factor into this decision.

### Cremation vs. Burial: Process

- Cremation is the process of using heat and flame to reduce the body to its essential elements. Using a specially designed furnace called a cremation chamber, the body becomes what is commonly referred to as ashes or cremated remains. The ashes or cremated remains are then contained in an urn, either decorative or simple. Urns are often placed in urn vaults, columbariums or niches.
- Burial is when the body is placed into the ground, typically within a casket. Caskets can be placed within vaults.

Both urns and caskets can have final resting places in-ground or above-ground locations. There are many different memorialization options from which a family can select. The choice is a personal one and can be guided by what best works for an individual or family.

## Common reasons for choosing cremation:

- Preferences of the deceased: If the deceased shared their preference for getting cremated, the family will often choose to honor their loved one's wishes.
- Preferences of the family: Family preferences might be the deciding factor if the deceased gave no preference.
- Cost: Cremation can often be more affordable than a casket burial.
- Flexibility: Complete flexibility regarding when and where to hold a memorial service for their loved one.
- Burial lot size: Cremation allows more flexibility for in-ground burials.
- Shared ashes: the family and friends can share ashes among themselves in multiple keepsake urns or other memorial options.
- Scattering capability: ability to scatter their loved one's ashes in a meaningful location.
- Religious reasons: Some religions, such as Buddhism and Hinduism, encourage cremation.

## Common reasons for choosing casket burial:

- Preference of the deceased: The deceased might have shared that they prefer burial.
- Preferences of the family: The family might decide to choose burial if the deceased voiced no preference and they would rather bury their loved one instead of cremating.
- Traditional funeral: A traditional funeral service where the casket is present. The family may also wish to have a casket open for a public or private visitation prior to the funeral and burial.
- Familiarity: Burial services have been utilized for centuries and are more familiar than cremation. Familiarity can be comforting when families are navigating the loss of a loved one.
- Burial lot size: Casket burial lot that allows multiple casket burials.
- Reversible: Burials can be reversed if the family needs to remove the deceased to another location.
- Religious reasons: Some religions traditionally encourage burial such as Islam, some Christian rites, and Orthodox Judaism.
- Environmentally friendly (green burial): Green burials can be more environmentally friendly and are widely seen as a more natural method of returning to the earth.

## Financial Concerns

Financial concerns are one of the biggest driving factors that cause people to choose cremation over burial today. Cremation is often less expensive than burial services, however burial costs can vary widely depending on the services requested.

The cost associated with either method depends on the different choices including service types, memorialization, lot size and customizations chosen by the family.

## Choosing between Cremation and Casket Burial

It remains a personal choice. The best way to make sure your wishes are followed is by pre-planning your Funeral and Cemetery services; this will help your family at the time of need, as your wishes are already clear to them.

When in doubt, speak to the Beechwood team, as they are always available to help, make suggestions and provide guidance and advice for you and your family.