

Signing day: how to sign your will so it is valid

England and Wales. One page. Keep it beside the will while you sign. Wills Act 1837, section 9 (signing) and section 15 (witnesses who inherit).

READ THIS BEFORE ANYBODY SIGNS. A witness, or a witness's husband, wife or civil partner, loses anything the will leaves them. The will stays valid; their gift does not. Choose two adult witnesses who understand that they are witnessing your signature and can observe you sign or acknowledge your signature. Neither witness, nor their spouse or civil partner, should receive a gift under the will. If there is any doubt about whether a proposed witness can properly witness the signing, use someone else or take legal advice.

What the law requires

I

Wills Act 1837, section 9. Section 9 requires writing and signature, testamentary intention, signature or acknowledgment before two witnesses present simultaneously, and each witness then signing or acknowledging their signature in the testator's presence. Section 15 deals with a witness who inherits (see the warning above).

BEFORE YOU SIGN · The signature happens in front of both witnesses, or is acknowledged to both of them together.

THE PERSON MAKING THE WILL (THE TESTATOR) · Signs the will, or acknowledges a signature already made, while both witnesses are present together and watching.

THE TWO WITNESSES · Each signs in the testator's presence, after the testator has signed or acknowledged. Neither witness, nor their spouse or civil partner, should receive a gift under the will. If one does, the will stays valid; their gift does not.

AFTER SIGNING · A change made afterwards is ignored unless it is itself signed and witnessed.

Good practice — not a validity requirement

II

BEFORE YOU SIGN · Use the final version of the will. Check every name, address, gift and share once more. Do not sign it in advance. Check the warning above before anybody picks up a pen.

THE PERSON MAKING THE WILL (THE TESTATOR) · Signs at the end of the will, in the space provided, and dates it. Use the same pen for every signature. As a practical safeguard, initial the other pages in the same place. This helps identify the pages that formed the document when it was signed.

THE TWO WITNESSES · Have both witnesses in the room at the same time for the whole signing. Each prints their full name, address and occupation accurately in the boxes provided. Both witnesses stay until both have signed.

AFTER SIGNING · Do not write on, staple, unstaple or alter the signed will. Keep the original safe, flat and dry. Copies do not replace it. Tell your executor, or a trusted person, exactly where the original is held. To change anything later, use a properly signed and witnessed codicil for a small change, or a new will for anything larger.

Record of the signing

III

Testator's full name	
Witness 1: name, address, occupation Neither witness, nor their spouse or civil partner, should receive a gift under the will.	
Witness 2: name, address, occupation Neither witness, nor their spouse or civil partner, should receive a gift under the will.	
Both witnesses present together at the signing	Yes / No
Where the original will is kept	

Starting point only. Not legal advice. If there is any doubt about whether the person making the will understands what it does, what they own, or who they might be expected to provide for, do not rely on a self-completed will without professional advice.

POWERED BY VALOREN

Data current as of 18 September 2026. Prepared from customer-maintained records.

Checked against: Wills Act 1837, sections 9 and 15 · Civil Partnership Act 2004, Sch. 4 para. 3 —
legislation.gov.uk, 18 September 2026. Source instruments: Free institutional resource · Signing Day Sheet
· valoren.uk.

Standard Index Group — in formation · England & Wales

