

A helpful glossary of terms used by the legal profession

Legal language can sometimes be confusing. To make it just that little bit easier, here is a list of the more common terms you are likely to come across.

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| Administrator | The person appointed by the court to administer your affairs if you do not leave a Will |
| Assets | All your money, goods and possessions. |
| Beneficiary | Any person or organisation named in your Will who will receive a legacy or bequest (gift). |
| Bequeath | To leave something in your Will. |
| Codicil | An additional document to your existing Will, making a simple change. It must also be drawn up legally and be witnessed. |
| Conditional Legacy | A gift that will only take effect if a certain event occurs. |
| Crown | The official term for where your money goes if you die without leaving a Will and without any next of kin. In practice, this means the HMRC. |
| Estate | The total sum of your possessions, property and money (minus debts) left after your death. |
| Executor (male) | Someone you appoint to carry out the instructions in your Will. Executors |
| Executrix (female) | are usually family, friends or professional advisors. |
| Intestate | Dying without having made a Will. |
| Inheritance Tax | A tax charged if the value of your Estate is above a certain limit. |
| Legacy | A bequest or gift left in your Will. It can be in the form of money, property, stocks and shares or possessions. |
| Legator | The person who makes the bequest. |
| Pecuniary Bequest | A gift of a fixed sum of money in your Will. |
| Pledge | To promise a gift (not legally binding). |
| Probate | The legal procedure after death, which confirms your Will is valid and confirms the executors' authority to carry out your wishes. |
| Residue | The remainder of your Estate after all the debts have been paid and all your pecuniary and specific bequests have been made. |
| Residuary Bequest | A gift of the remainder of your Estate after all other bequests have been made and debts cleared. |
| Restricted Fund | Monies or property required to be held for a specific project or cause, rather than for the general funds of a charity. |
| Specific Bequest | A specific gift ie: artwork, jewellery etc. |
| Testator | The person who makes the Will. |