



# Elements of My Jewish Funeral: My Wishes

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The following is a brief guideline directing my family or others responsible regarding a Jewish funeral for me. The intent of this form is that I will have an opportunity to make my choices known about the various aspects of a funeral in a clear fashion that will help my family or others when they need this guidance after my death.

(Please check next to the option or options you choose), or fill in the appropriate information.)

1. I want a Jewish Funeral (a funeral that follows traditional Jewish practices). Yes \_\_\_; No \_\_\_;
2. I want my funeral (if possible) to be conducted by (name of rabbi or other person to officiate)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
and to use as the funeral home (if any)  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. I want my funeral to take place - as soon as practical \_\_\_; within 24 hours \_\_\_; within 72 hours \_\_\_; within (other time frame noted) \_\_\_\_\_; of my death, in (name of city) \_\_\_\_\_, at (name of place) \_\_\_\_\_

I want the funeral service to be - held in a chapel followed by a graveside ceremony \_\_\_; in the synagogue followed by a graveside ceremony \_\_\_; at graveside only \_\_\_.

I already have/own \_\_\_; will need \_\_\_; a burial plot at (place & details of the gravesite)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

**I want to be buried in**

**(name of place)** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

**and (any special instructions regarding placement)** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

**4. I want \_\_\_ no casket; \_\_\_ a casket; that is: inexpensive \_\_\_; the least cost \_\_\_; whatever my family/designee chooses \_\_\_; other (specify what other) \_\_\_\_\_**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_;

**and I prefer \_\_\_ a kosher (constructed of pine or equivalent materials, to be made with no metal fasteners, using dovetails, biscuits, dowels, and glue only), and with natural fibers and materials throughout to the degree possible); \_\_\_ a cardboard; \_\_\_ another wood (state here which other wood you wish) \_\_\_\_\_;**  
**\_\_\_ a "green", completely biodegradable casket; \_\_\_ some other arrangement (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_**  
\_\_\_\_\_.

- 5. I would \_\_\_; would not \_\_\_; wish to have 'kriah' ribbons (black ribbons that can be cut/torn and pinned on to identify the wearers as mourners) available to my mourners.**
- 6. I would \_\_\_; would not \_\_\_; wish a decorative wooden Jewish star placed on the lid of the casket.**
- 7. I would \_\_\_; would not \_\_\_; wish for a Shiva candle to be placed in the home of my mourner(s). (This is a candle that will burn for seven days).**
- 8. I would \_\_\_; would not \_\_\_; wish for pottery shards to be placed on my eyes.**
- 9. I would \_\_\_; would not \_\_\_; wish for soil from Israel to be sprinkled over my body in the casket.**

10. I would \_\_\_; would not \_\_\_; wish for Taharah (Jewish ritual purification and preparation of my body) to be performed by a Chevrah Kaddishah (traditional Jewish burial society). If possible, I prefer a traditional \_\_\_; liberal \_\_\_; a \_\_\_\_\_ (specify denomination); Chevrah Kaddishah be engaged/involved. Where possible, I would wish the \_\_\_\_\_ (name) Chevrah Kadishah to be contacted.
11. I would \_\_\_; would not \_\_\_; want the traditional Shmirat haguf (guarding of my body – if available) from the time of Taharah until the time of the funeral.
12. I do not \_\_\_; do \_\_\_; wish for a viewing at a visitation, or an open casket funeral. (This is very strongly discouraged in Jewish law and tradition).
13. I would \_\_\_; would not \_\_\_; wish to be dressed in traditional tachrichim (shrouds – usually linen, cotton, or muslin). If not, I wish to be dressed for my burial in \_\_\_\_\_

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(Tachrichim or shrouds are the traditional Jewish dress for the deceased. If one chooses Taharah, then it is anticipated that Tachrichim would also be chosen in most instances.)

14. I do not want \_\_\_; do want \_\_\_; a cement (or other) grave liner used in the grave (This is strongly discouraged: there is no legal requirement for it, and it is not in keeping with Jewish law.) If a liner is requested, or is required by the particular cemetery, I wish the liner to be placed in the grave: \_\_\_ after the lowering of the casket - over the casket, "upside down", so that the casket sits directly on the earth, and there is no 'lid' to the liner; \_\_\_ prior to the casket being lowered, so that the casket is within the liner; and I \_\_\_ do; \_\_\_ do not; want a 'lid' placed on the liner. If a 'lid' is to be used, I wish it to be lowered and placed \_\_\_ prior to earth being placed in the grave by mourners; \_\_\_ after earth has been placed in the grave by mourners, and after the mourners have left the grave site.
15. Absent any legal requirement, I do not want \_\_\_; am not concerned about \_\_\_; an autopsy. (This is strongly discouraged in Jewish law and tradition, but permitted if required by law).
16. Absent any legal requirement, I do not want \_\_\_; am not concerned about \_\_\_; embalming of the body. (This is strongly

discouraged, and when not required by law is not in keeping with Jewish tradition or practice. In almost no instance is this required by law for a local burial.).

17. I do not want \_\_\_; do want \_\_\_; cremation – the incineration of my body, reducing it to cremains (ashes and bone fragments). (This is strongly discouraged for a Jewish burial, and violates the sensibilities of some Jews. In those instances where cremation is chosen, Jewish law requires that cremains not be scattered, but must be given a traditional burial in a consecrated Jewish burial location).

18. I want \_\_\_; do not want \_\_\_; a headstone \_\_\_; a footstone \_\_\_; a monument \_\_\_; another type of marker \_\_\_; to be placed on my grave. (This is strongly encouraged in Jewish law, usually to be done within one year of the death, often coinciding with the Yahrzeit/anniversary of death or burial). I have \_\_\_; have not \_\_\_; made arrangements for such a marker. Arrangements were made with \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

19. On that marker or headstone, I wish the following to appear: (some suggestions to help you choose; English name; Hebrew name; Family name; dates of birth and death in English, in Hebrew, or in both; a Cohen or Levi indicator, if appropriate; a phrase from Psalms or other Hebrew liturgy; a descriptive phrase or phrases (such as faithful husband, loving father, beloved grandfather, etc.; and/or any other information or designation you wish). Graven images are strongly discouraged.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

At this time, I \_\_\_ have; \_\_\_ have not; made arrangements for such marker or headstone and inscription(s) to appear. I \_\_\_ made these arrangements; \_\_\_ I wish the arrangements to be

made; with \_\_\_\_\_  
(see number 18 for any additional information).

20. I would \_\_\_; would not \_\_\_; wish that donations in my memory be directed to a specific purpose. If so, I would like the donations to be made to (some suggestions: the Chevra Kadisha (sacred burial society) , the congregation – generally, or for specific purposes, such as building maintenance and repair, the youth group, the religious school, scholarships, the rabbi's discretionary fund, or the endowment; other Jewish causes such as Tay Sachs research, the UJC/Federation, or the JNF; the American Cancer Society, the American Heart Association, or the American Diabetes Association; food and care provider organizations such as Mazon, the local Food bank; local shelters for abused, homeless, or runaways; educational institutions and JNF, or Hadassah hospital; or any other causes you wish to identify).

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21. I would \_\_\_; would not \_\_\_; wish that a plaque with my name be placed on the Memorial board at the Congregation by my mourners or designees. I \_\_\_ have; \_\_\_ have not; made pre-arrangements for this plaque.

22. Other instructions I wish followed by my surviving family or my designees:

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I am signing this form in the presence of a witness to assure that this is understood to be a correct representation of my wishes and desires in regard to my funeral and burial arrangements.

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(Signature)

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(Date)

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(Witness' Signature)

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(Witness' printed name)

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(Witness' Telephone)

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(Witness' Address)

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(Witness' email address)

