



## The Dangers of Homemade Wills

There is a temptation to make a home-made Will, mainly because it is perceived to be cheaper, but this can be very risky. If a Will is not prepared correctly it may be invalid, which in the long run makes it much more expensive and complicated.

Firstly, Wills have strict rules about the way they are made and executed, and errors are very easily made. If a Will does not comply with these strict provisions, it will be invalid. This includes ensuring that the Will is signed and witnessed correctly.

Other problems arise in relation to the actual wording of the Will. Many words and terms have specific meaning in laws which are different from their everyday use. For example, "I give my car to my grandson, my gold ring to my daughter, my boat to my brother and anything left over to my sister". The gift of "anything leftover" is likely to be limited to a gift of the rest of your personal belongings, and would not include your property, cash or other investments. These would all pass by the rules of intestacy; probably to people you would not wish to inherit.

Many people are tempted to alter their home-made Wills after they have been signed, by simply crossing out sections and amending them. It is unlikely that any of these alterations will be valid.

Important information is often omitted from home-made Wills, including naming substitute beneficiaries if someone should die before you. If this happened in respect of a residuary beneficiary, a partial intestacy would be created.

It is very easy for ambiguous or imprecise wording to be used, important details to be omitted, or sections to be written in a way that they can be misinterpreted. If there is any uncertainty as to the construction of a Will, any or all of it could be invalid.

If a Will is invalid, your estate would be distributed in accordance with an earlier valid Will or if there is not one, by the law of intestacy. This could lead to your estate passing to people you would not wish to inherit.

If a Will is potentially invalid for any reason a court application will be required. This would lead to the administration of the estate being much more complicated, lengthy, and costly. Costs could easily run into five figures. This is all in addition to the great deal of extra unnecessary distress brought to your loved ones.

Home-made Wills may appear to be good value, however in reality they often do not carry out your wishes and cost more in the long run. In the region of 90% of all litigation in relation to wills relates to home-made Wills.

Will drafting is a highly specialised field, there are often hidden complexities not appreciated by an individual or catered for in a home-made Will. A professionally drafted Will from Will Power Estate Protection can save a significant amount of money in the long run, and can save your loved ones a substantial amount of stress and heartache.