

Will-writing in different religions and  
cultures/nationalities



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# Christianity

- Christians may include charitable bequests in their wills as an expression of their faith and commitment to helping others.
- Christians view will-writing as an act of stewardship, ensuring their assets are used for the good of their family and church community

# Hinduism

- Hindu wills often include provisions for religious ceremonies and donations to temples or charitable causes.
- It is important to ensure the will respects family traditions and the wishes of elders.

## Judaism

- Jewish law (Halacha) encourages writing a will to ensure proper distribution of assets according to religious principles.
- A will may include charitable donations (tzedakah) as a way to honour the deceased's memory and support the community.

## Buddhism

- Buddhist wills may include provisions for donations to monasteries or charitable organizations.
- It is important to ensure the will reflects the deceased's commitment to compassion and non-attachment.

# Islam

- Islamic wills must comply with Sharia law, which includes specific shares for family members and restrictions on bequests.
- Up to one-third of the estate can be allocated to non-heirs, including charitable donations.

# Sikhism

- Sikh wills often include provisions for charitable donations, reflecting the importance of seva (selfless service) and helping those in need
- Wills may include instructions to ensure the well-being of family members and support for the Sikh community

## Australian

- **Low Will-Writing Rates:** A significant portion of Australians do not have a will, often due to perceived complexity or cost. This can lead to intestacy, where assets are distributed according to default laws.
- **Online Wills:** There is a growing trend towards using online services to create wills, making the process more accessible and affordable.

## German

- **Notarial Wills:** German Australians often prefer notarial wills to ensure legal validity and reduce the risk of disputes. Holographic wills are also common but must meet strict formalities
- **Cross-Border Issues:** Germans with assets in both Germany and Australia need to ensure their wills comply with the legal requirements of both countries to avoid complications

# Greek

- **Cultural Considerations:** Greek Australians may incorporate traditional inheritance practices into their wills, but it is important to ensure these comply with Australian legal requirements
- **Notarization:** Greek Australians often prefer notarized wills to ensure legal validity and avoid disputes, similar to practices in Greece

# Chinese

- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Many Chinese Australians may still view discussing death and will-writing as taboo, which can lead to delays in creating wills. However, younger generations are increasingly recognizing the importance of having a will to ensure their wishes are respected.
- **Cross-Border Considerations:** Chinese Australians with assets in both Australia and China need to ensure their wills comply with the legal requirements of both countries to avoid disputes and ensure smooth asset distribution

## Italian

- **Forced Heirship:** Italian Australians may be influenced by Italy's forced heirship rules, which guarantee a portion of the estate to close family members. This can conflict with Australian testamentary freedom
- **Dual Wills:** Italians with assets in both Italy and Australia may need dual wills to ensure compliance with both legal systems and avoid potential conflicts

## Japanese

- **Legal Formalities:** Japanese Australians often prefer notarized wills to ensure legal validity and avoid disputes. Handwritten wills are also an option but must follow strict formalities
- **Language Barriers:** Writing a will in Japanese may require translation upon execution in Australia, which can add complexity. Ensuring the will is clear and legally compliant in both languages is crucial

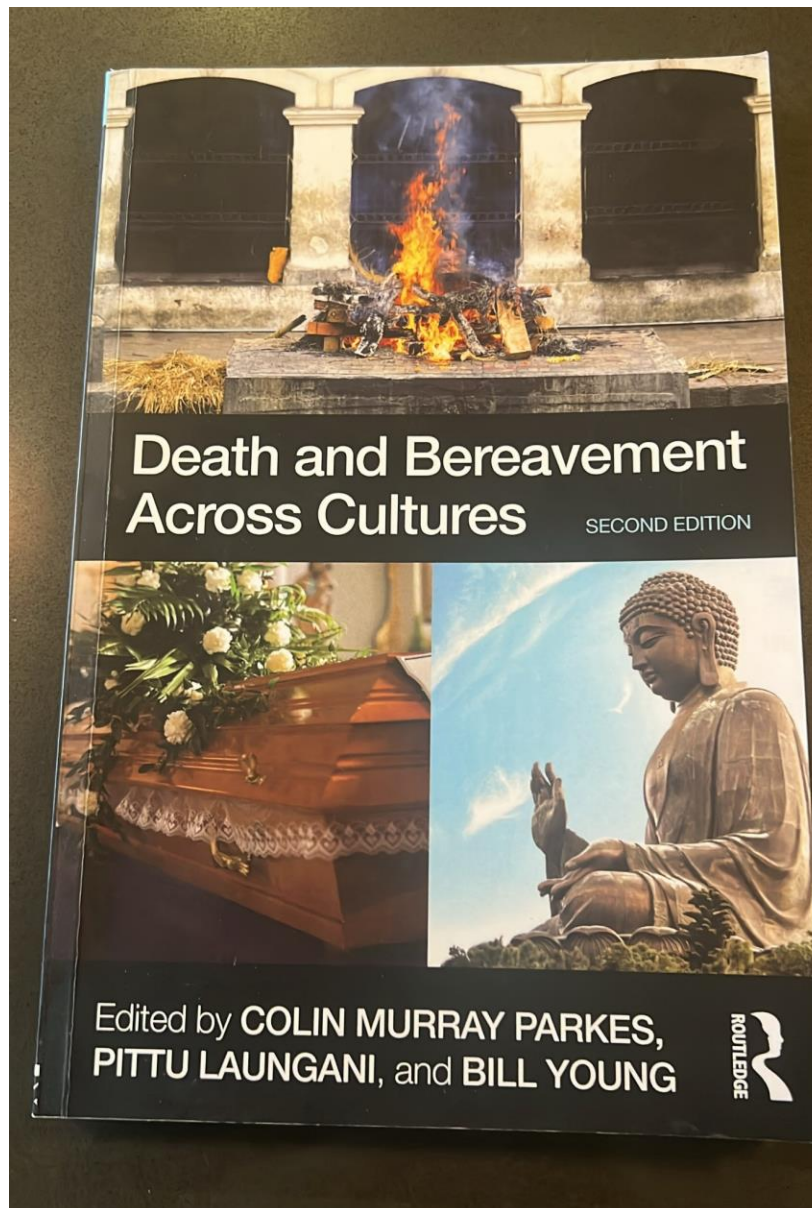
## Indian

- **Traditional Practices:** Indian Australians may follow traditional inheritance practices, such as favouring sons for property inheritance. However, there is a growing awareness of the need for legally valid wills to avoid disputes
- **Legal Compliance:** Ensuring that wills comply with both Indian and Australian legal requirements is important for Indian Australians with assets in both countries

## Aboriginal

- **Culturally Appropriate Wills:** Aboriginal Australians may require culturally appropriate wills that reflect their kinship structures and customary law needs. This can help ensure their wishes are respected and reduce disputes
- **Low Will-Writing Rates:** There is a low rate of will-writing among Aboriginal Australians, partly due to historical neglect of their succession needs. Efforts are being made to improve access to culturally sensitive will-writing services





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