About Your Spouse's Estate Documents

Does your spouse have a will, and where is it located?	
On what date was the will executed? Also list the county and state in which the will was executed.	
Who are the executor and alternate executor? List their names, addresses, and telephone numbers.	
If your spouse has minor children, whom has he/she selected to be their guardians? List names, addresses, and telephone numbers. Use the back of this page to list specific information about the children, such as medical history, educational preferences, personality traits . . . and promises that your spouse has made, etc.	
Who is the lawyer who drew up the will, and when is the last time it was reviewed?	
Is this the same lawyer on your spouse's list of advisers, and is this the lawyer who will probate your spouse's estate?	
Does your spouse have a trust, and where is it located?	
What type of trust is it?	
What date was the trust executed?	
Who is the trustor(s)?	
Who are the trustees and successor trustees? List their names, addresses, and telephone numbers.	
What is the exact name of the trust?	
Who was the lawyer who drew up the trust, and is this the same lawyer listed on your list of advisers?	
Does the trust have a tax ID number? If so, record it.	

Date of Entry	***Notes, Thoughts, and Attachments***

About Your Special Bequests

The executor's job of evenly distributing items not specifically mentioned in your will is a tedious one. Someone generally comes up short and someone usually gets hurt or angry. This list will help identify who gets what . . . and where it is located. Complete a separate list of special bequests for you and your spouse.

Current tax law allows gifts of up to $10,000 from each parent, to each child, once each year without incurring a gift tax. You may consider giving away some of your property during your lifetime in an effort to reduce estate and inheritance taxes . . . and the potential for family feuds. To further ensure peace in the family, discuss your intentions relating to special bequests with your intended beneficiaries . . . **and be sure to review this matter with your lawyer and/or finanacial professional for advice on this and other estate tax savings matters.**

Gift	Recipient	Approximate Value	Location	Date Gifted

About Your Spouse's Special Bequests

Gift	Recipient	Approximate Value	Location	Date Gifted

About Your Insurance

Individually Owned Life Insurance Policies

— You may duplicate insurance pages for additional policies —

Who is the insured?	
What is the name of the insurance company?	
Where is the policy located?	
What are the policy date and number?	
What is the death benefit?	
Are there any riders, such as accidental death, waiver of premium, other insureds?	
Who owns the policy?	
Who is the beneficiary?	
When is the last time you checked the beneficiary?	
How much are the premiums? How often do you pay them? When are they due?	
What type of policy is this (term, whole life, universal life, etc.)?	
Who is the agent? List name, address, and telephone number.	
Do you have any policy loans? Is the policy assigned as collateral? If so, enter details.	

Group Life Insurance

Company	Name of insured
Group number—Certificate number	Death benefit
Any others covered by this policy	Beneficiary

Date of Entry	***Notes, Thoughts, and Attachments***

More About Your Insurance

Annuities

Who is the annuitant?	
Who is the insurance company?	
What is the annuity policy number and date of issue?	
Who owns the annuity policy?	
What was your initial cash investment?	
Is this a tax-deferred annuity? If so: — What is the current interest rate? — Guaranteed until? — On what date does the surrender penalty period end?	
If this a variable annuity, list the various investments you have, as well as your goals and objectives.	
What is the purpose of this annuity, i.e., retirement, educational fund?	
Is this an annuity that pays a monthly income? If so: — What is the monthly income? — How long will it pay? — Upon your death, will your beneficiary receive any benefits? If so: — How much and for how long?	
Is the annuity in your IRA?	
Who is the beneficiary?	
Where is the policy located?	
Who is the agent? List name, address, and telephone number.	

Date of Entry	***Notes, Thoughts, and Attachments***

Even More About Your Insurance

Health and Disability Insurance*

Who is the insured?	
Who is the insurance company?	
Is it group health or individually owned?	
What is the policy or group number?	
If group insurance, who pays for it?	
If you pay for it, how much are the premiums and when are they due?	
Where are the policy (or certificate) and benefit plan booklet located?	
If your dependents are currently covered, will coverage continue at your death? If so, will they have to pay premiums—at what rate? Also, will the coverage remain the same?	
Does your program cover organ donations or donor transplants?	
Who is the agent? List name, address, and telephone number.	
Do you have disability insurance? If so, who is the insurance company?	
What is the policy number, and where is the policy located?	
What is the monthly benefit, and how long will it pay?	
How much are the premiums, and when are they due?	
Does the plan have a lump-sum death benefit? If so, how much?	
Who is the beneficiary?	
Who is the agent? List name, address, and telephone number.	

*It is important to review your policies periodically to determine proper benefits and adequate coverages. It is also wise to obtain written verification of this information from the insurance company.

Date of Entry	***Notes, Thoughts, and Attachments***

About Your Retirement Plan

Fewer than 10 percent of the working population will retire with adequate means to maintain the standard of living they enjoyed while they were working. Planning for a financially secure retirement is crucial. See your insurance or financial professional in order to maximize your retirement plan. See your legal and tax adviser to ensure that you are complying with the law.

— You may duplicate this page for your spouse (including former spouses) —

Name	
Do you have a company retirement plan?	
What is your plan number?	
What is the location of the benefit plan outline and copies of your statements?	
How much do you expect to receive at retirement?	
Are there any survivor benefits? If so, what percentage will go to your survivor, and for how long?	
Who is your beneficiary?	
Who should your beneficiary contact? Enter his/her name, address, and telephone number.	
Are there survivor benefits if you die prior to retirement? If so, are these benefits in the form of income or lump-sum settlement? Enter the amount your beneficiary can expect to receive.	
Are you participating in a 401K program? Briefly describe the plan. Include the plan number, location of the certificate, the beneficiary, and the approximate benefit to you and your survivor.	
Do you have a Keogh program? If so, briefly describe the plan and the estimated retiree and survivor benefits.	
Who is the trustee? List the name, address, and telephone number of the institution as well as the person to contact and the account number.	
Who is the beneficiary?	
Where are the plan documents kept?	
Do you have one or more IRAs? If so, list each IRA, the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the trustees, and the account numbers.	
Who are the beneficiaries?	
Where are the documents kept?	

Each year post the total value of these items in this section of *The Beneficiary Book*. Better yet, place a photocopy of the latest statement(s) in this section of *The Beneficiary Book*.

Your beneficiary will be able to take advantage of an IRA rollover of your IRAs and other qualified retirement funds at your death, provided he or she is named as primary beneficiary. Be sure **not** to name a trust as primary beneficiary. Doing so will cause immediate distribution and immediate taxation.

Date of Entry	***Notes, Thoughts, and Attachments***

Frequently Asked Questions About Estate Planning

Q. How should a will be recorded?	A. Ask your attorney.
Q. How do I choose an attorney if I don't have one?	A. Your local Bar Association can refer you to a lawyer who specializes in the area pertaining to your situation. Interview a few . . . and ask about their fees up front.
Q. Should the survivor have a new will or trust drawn?	A. Upon the death of a spouse, circumstances change. See your lawyer regarding this matter.
Q. Will an Estate Tax Return need to be filed?	A. Your attorney can best advise you on this matter.
Q. Where should I keep my will?	A. Someplace safe and accessible— BUT NOT IN YOUR SAFE-DEPOSIT BOX.
Q. Should all assets be held in joint tenancy?	A. Depending upon the size of the estate, joint tenancy may cause increased estate taxes upon the death of the surviving spouse. See your lawyer about the benefits of a Revocable Living Trust.
Q. How do I remove the decedent's name from bank accounts, credit cards, utilities, etc.?	A. Generally the presentation of a certified copy of a death certificate will do.
Q. What are some other sources to consult to preserve my estate?	A. Your life insurance agent, lawyer, banker, and accountant should be able to advise you on keeping your estate plan up-to-date. Also look into courses and seminars. Your local library is a great source of information, too.

Frequently Asked Questions About Estate Planning

Q. What Social Security benefits am I eligible for and how do I apply for them?	A. Contact your local Social Security office.
Q. What are the various tax benefits and consequences relating to retirement income, IRAs, etc.?	A. Contact your accountant, insurance professional, or financial planner.

Questions You Would Like to Ask Your Advisers