

What to Include in an Obituary

A printable checklist to help families gather the details, memories, and relationships that tell the story of a loved one's life.

Basic Information

- Full legal name
- Maiden name, nickname, or preferred name, if applicable
- Date of birth
- Place of birth
- Date of passing
- Age at the time of passing
- Place of residence, if desired

Family & Early Life

- Parents' names
- Siblings and other important family relationships
- Childhood and upbringing
- Places they lived or communities that shaped them
- Meaningful childhood memories or family traditions

Education & Career

- Schools attended
- Degrees, certifications, or special training
- Career and places of employment
- Years of service or professional milestones
- Military service, if applicable
- Awards, accomplishments, or achievements

Relationships & Family

- Spouse or significant partner
- Children
- Grandchildren and great grandchildren
- Siblings and extended family
- Close friends or chosen family, when appropriate

Faith, Community & Interests

- Faith or spiritual life
- Church or religious community
- Ministries or service roles

- Community organizations or volunteer work
- Sorority, fraternity, clubs, or professional organizations
- Hobbies, passions, and favorite activities
- Causes or organizations that mattered to them

Their Personality & Legacy

- What they were known for
- Personality traits that made them unique
- Favorite sayings or expressions
- Family traditions they created or carried forward
- Favorite foods, music, activities, or places
- Stories that capture who they were
- The impact they had on family, friends, and community
- What you hope people will always remember about them

Family Recognition

- Loved ones who preceded them in death
- Loved ones who remain to cherish their memory
- Special caregivers or people who played an important role in their life

Service & Closing Information

- Funeral, memorial, or celebration of life details, if being publicly shared
- Burial or interment information, if appropriate
- Repast or reception information, if appropriate
- Memorial donation information, if applicable
- Favorite scripture, poem, quote, or closing reflection

A helpful question to ask:

"If someone had never met your loved one, what would you want them to know about who they were?"

Remember: An obituary does not have to include every detail of a person's life. Some information may be private, complicated, unknown, or simply unnecessary. Focus on the details that best honor the person and the story your family wants to tell.