

The 25 Documents You Need Before You Die

Design Your Death Dossier Soon—or You Could Be Setting Up Your Heirs for Frustration and Financial Pain

- Marriage license
- Divorce papers

Marriage and Divorce

- Personal and family medical history
- Durable health-care power of attorney
- Authorization to release health-care information
- Living will
- Do-not-resuscitate order

Health-Care Confidential

Proof of Ownership

- Housing, land and cemetery deeds
- Escrow mortgage accounts
- Proof of loans made and debts owed
- Vehicle titles
- Stock certificates, savings bonds and brokerage accounts
- Partnership and corporate operating agreements
- Tax returns

Life Insurance and Retirement

- Life-insurance policies
- Individual retirement accounts
- 401(k) accounts
- Pension documents
- Annuity contracts

Bank Accounts

- List of bank accounts
- List of all user names and passwords
- List of safe-deposit boxes

The Essentials

- Will
- Letter of instruction
- Trust documents

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702303627104576410234039258092.html#project=DOC110702&articleTabs=interactive>