



Obituaries & Online Memorial Pages

Honoring a Life, Safely and With Dignity Write the obituary, build the tribute page,
and keep the family safe from those who prey on grief

————— **An Extended Guide · No. 1801** —————

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What's Inside

Everything in this guide, with page numbers. Skip to whichever chapter answers your question right now.

1. The Whole Plan on One Page	4
2. What This Guide Covers	4
3. Why a Death Notice Needs Care	5
4. Details to Keep Out of a Public Notice	5
5. What a Safe Obituary Should Include	6
6. Gathering the Facts and Stories	7
7. Writing the Obituary, Step by Step	7
8. Finding the Right Tone and Length	8
9. Posting Through the Funeral Home	8
10. Posting in a Newspaper	9
11. Online Obituary Sites	9
12. Choosing Photos for the Notice	10
13. Proofreading and Getting Approval	11
14. What an Online Memorial Page Is	11
15. Choosing a Memorial Platform	12
16. Creating the Page — Name, Dates, Tribute	12
17. Gathering Photos and Stories First	13
18. Adding Service Details and a Link	13
19. Setting the Page's Privacy	14
20. Proofreading Before You Publish	15
21. Guest Books and Shared Memories	15

22. Virtual Candles and Tributes	16
23. Moderating the Comments	16
24. Inviting People and Sharing Safely	17
25. Deciding Between Private and Public	17
26. Charity Links and Donations	18
27. Scams That Mine Obituaries	18
28. Protecting Against Identity Theft After	19
29. Keeping the Page Over the Years	20
30. Common Worries, Answered	20
31. Dividing the Work Among Family	21
32. A Printed Keepsake of the Tribute	21
33. If You Only Do Three Things	22
34. If the Technical Parts Feel Hard	22
35. When Something Will Not Work	23
36. Finish the Job Soon	24
Everyday Cheat Sheet	24
A Picture to Follow Along	25
A Second Look	26
A Note From Bill	26
Your Visit — and My Promise	27

THE 60-SECOND VERSION

1. The Whole Plan on One Page

If you read only one page, read this. Here is the whole idea as a short checklist.

An obituary announces a death and honors a life; an online memorial page gives family and friends a lasting place to gather, share photos, and leave words of comfort. Both are acts of love. This guide helps you write and build them with dignity — and with a quiet eye on safety, because thieves read death notices too.

- 1 Gather the facts, favorite photos, and a few stories before you write.
- 2 Write the obituary, leaving out details that invite identity theft.
- 3 Post it with the funeral home, a newspaper, or an online obituary site.
- 4 If you wish, create an online memorial page: name, dates, a tribute, service details.
- 5 Set the page's privacy, proofread carefully, and only then publish.
- 6 Share the link with family and friends, and gently moderate the comments.

WATCH OUT

Leave a mother's maiden name, a full date of birth, and a home address out of any public notice. These are the very details thieves use to steal an identity, and an obituary hands them over freely.

The rest of this guide takes each step slowly and kindly. There is no single right way to honor a life, and no rush. You can write a little, set it aside, and come back when you are ready.

WHAT THIS IS

2. What This Guide Covers

This guide covers two related things: writing and placing an obituary, and creating an online memorial or tribute page. They often go together — the obituary announces, and the memorial page endures — but each has its own steps, and you can do one without the other.

Throughout, we keep two threads running side by side: doing this with warmth and dignity, and doing it safely. A death notice is public, and that makes it a target for a handful of scams and for identity theft. None of this should frighten you; a few simple choices keep a loving tribute from becoming a thief's opportunity.

- The obituary: what to write, what to leave out, and where to post it.

- The memorial page: choosing a platform and building it step by step.
- Safety throughout: protecting the family from scams that mine death notices.

GOOD TO KNOW

You do not have to be a writer to do this well. The most moving obituaries are plain and honest, not polished. Your love for the person will carry the words further than any fine phrasing.

WHY SAFETY MATTERS

3. Why a Death Notice Needs Care

It feels strange to think about safety while grieving, but a published obituary is a public document, and some people read it with bad intent. Understanding this now, gently, lets you write freely and lovingly while quietly closing the doors that thieves try to walk through.

- Identity thieves harvest obituaries for the details used to verify identity.
- A full birth date plus a mother's maiden name is a near-complete key to opening accounts in a dead person's name.
- An address signals that a home may be empty during the funeral service.
- Scammers phone grieving relatives claiming the deceased owed a debt.

The fix is not to write a cold or bare notice. It is simply to leave out a few specific facts that serve no one but a thief. You can write a rich, warm tribute that still gives away nothing dangerous. The next pages show exactly which details to hold back.

GOOD TO KNOW

The sad details a thief wants are almost never the ones that honor a life. Leaving them out costs the tribute nothing and protects the family a great deal.

WHAT TO LEAVE OUT

4. Details to Keep Out of a Public Notice

This is the single most important safety page in the guide. These are the facts that feed identity theft and other scams. None of them are needed to honor a life, so leaving them out is pure protection with no loss to the tribute.

- Mother's maiden name — a classic security question answer; never publish it.
- The full date of birth — a year alone is plenty; the exact day and month are a thief's prize.

- The home address — do not announce where the house stands, especially while the family is at a service.
- Middle names in full, if they double as security answers; use discretion.
- Any account numbers, and the names of banks or the exact employer if you can avoid it.

WATCH OUT

The combination of a full birth date and a mother's maiden name is the master key to identity theft. Publishing both in one obituary is the mistake thieves hope for most. Leave them out.

You lose nothing meaningful by holding these back. 'Born in 1940' honors the life as well as an exact date would. 'A longtime resident of Atwater' says all that a street address would, and keeps the family safe.

WHAT TO INCLUDE

5. What a Safe Obituary Should Include

With the risky details set aside, there is still a rich and loving story to tell. Here is what belongs in an obituary — the facts that honor a life without endangering the family. You can include as much or as little of this as feels right.

- Full name, often with a nickname, and the years of life — birth year and the word 'passed' with the date.
- The town or region they lived in, in general terms.
- Family: spouse, children, grandchildren, and those who went before — first names are enough.
- Life and character: work, service, faith, hobbies, the things they loved and were known for.
- Service details: date, time, and place of the service and any gathering afterward.

The heart of an obituary is the middle part — the life and character. A sentence about how a grandfather whistled while he gardened, or how a mother never missed a grandchild's game, says more than any list of dates. That is what readers remember.

TIP

Write the loving middle first, before the facts. Start with who the person was, and the dates and details will fall into place around a warm center rather than a cold list.

GATHER FIRST

6. Gathering the Facts and Stories

Before you write a word, gather your materials. Trying to recall everything while staring at a blank page is hard, especially while grieving. A little gathering first turns the writing from a struggle into a matter of arranging what you already have.

- 1 Jot down the plain facts: name, the year born, the town, the family members' names.
- 2 List the person's life highlights: work, military or community service, faith, passions.
- 3 Collect two or three short stories or qualities that captured who they were.
- 4 Ask a few family members for a memory each — it eases your load and widens the picture.
- 5 Choose the service details you will share, if a service is planned.

GOOD TO KNOW

Inviting other relatives to each contribute a memory does two good things: it lightens your task, and it lets the whole family feel part of honoring the person.

Keep your gathered notes in one place — a single page or a document. Once it is all in front of you, the obituary almost writes itself, because you are no longer inventing, only choosing and arranging.

THE DRAFT

7. Writing the Obituary, Step by Step

With your notes gathered, the draft follows a simple, time-honored shape. You do not have to follow it exactly, but it gives you a scaffold so you are never staring at a blank page wondering where to begin.

- 1 Open with the announcement: the full name, the town, and the year — 'passed away peacefully' or similar.
- 2 Follow with a short life story: where they grew up, their work, their family, their passions.
- 3 Add the warm heart: a line or two about their character and what they meant to people.
- 4 List the survivors by first name, and note those who went before.
- 5 Close with the service details and, if the family wishes, a line about donations in lieu of flowers.

TIP

Read your draft aloud once. Your ear catches what your eye misses — a clumsy sentence, a missing name, a date that reads wrong. It is the simplest way to improve any piece of writing.

Remember the safety page as you write: keep the full birth date, the mother's maiden name, and the home address out. Everything warm and true can stay; only those few risky specifics go.

tone & length

8. Finding the Right Tone and Length

There is no required length for an obituary. A few sentences can be as fitting as several paragraphs. What matters is that it sounds like the person and like your family, not like a form. Let the tone be whatever is true — solemn, warm, even gently humorous if that honors them.

- Short is fine: a brief, heartfelt notice honors a life as well as a long one.
- Newspapers often charge by length, so a shorter notice there also costs less.
- An online memorial page has room for the longer, fuller story, with no length limit.
- Let the person's own spirit set the tone — a joyful life can have a warm, even smiling notice.

GOOD TO KNOW

Many families write a short, plain notice for the newspaper and a longer, richer tribute for the online memorial page. That way each place gets what suits it, and length is never a worry.

Do not agonize over the length. Write what feels true, trim what feels like filler, and stop when it says what you meant. A short obituary written with love is never too short.

POST: FUNERAL HOME

9. Posting Through the Funeral Home

The simplest place to post an obituary is through the funeral home handling the arrangements. Most funeral homes have a website with an obituaries section, and they will post the notice there for you, often at no extra charge, as part of their service.

- The funeral director usually offers to post the obituary on the funeral home's website.

- They can often also submit it to local newspapers on your behalf.
- Their obituary page frequently includes a guest book and a place to share memories.
- They will ask you to approve the wording before it goes live — read it carefully.

TIP

Ask the funeral director what they post and where before you write your own version. They do this every day and can save you steps, and tell you what each newspaper needs.

Letting the funeral home handle the posting takes a burden off the family during a hard week. Just be sure to read their draft closely — including a check that none of the risky identity details slipped in.

POST: NEWSPAPER

10. Posting in a Newspaper

A newspaper notice reaches the community in the traditional way, and for many families it remains an important step. Newspapers usually charge for obituaries, often by length or by the day, so this is where a shorter notice saves money.

- The funeral home can often submit the notice to the paper for you.
- Or you can contact the newspaper's obituary desk directly to place it.
- Costs vary widely and often depend on length, so a concise notice costs less.
- Printed notices usually also appear on the newspaper's website.

GOOD TO KNOW

Newspaper obituary costs vary a great deal and can change. Ask for the price per length up front so there are no surprises, and trim the notice to fit the family's wishes and budget.

Because a newspaper notice is both printed and public online, apply the same safety care here as everywhere: no full birth date, no maiden name, no home address. A thief reads the paper as readily as a neighbor does.

POST: ONLINE SITES

11. Online Obituary Sites

Beyond the funeral home and newspaper, there are dedicated obituary websites that gather notices from many places and let the public leave condolences. Some funeral homes feed notices to these sites automatically. They give a wider, searchable home to the notice and a guest book for far-flung friends.

- Large obituary sites collect notices nationally and allow online condolences.
- Often the funeral home posts to these sites for you as part of its service.
- They usually include a guest book, and sometimes virtual candles or flowers.
- Some features are free; some charge a fee for extras like a lasting tribute page.

WATCH OUT

On any public obituary site, the comments and guest book are open to strangers. Keep an eye out for suspicious messages, and never respond to a stranger there who asks about money or the estate.

These sites are a fine way to reach old friends and distant relatives who might otherwise never hear. Just carry the same caution: the wider the audience, the more worth keeping the risky personal details out of the notice.

PHOTOS

12. Choosing Photos for the Notice

A good photo turns a notice into a face people recognize and remember. Most obituary postings and all memorial pages welcome at least one picture, and choosing it thoughtfully is a small act of love in itself.

- Pick a clear picture that captures the person as people knew and loved them.
- A slightly older photo in good health often feels more fitting than a very recent frail one — follow the family's wishes.
- Make sure the photo is large and sharp enough; a tiny or blurry image prints poorly.
- For an online memorial page, you can add many photos, not just one.

TIP

Ask the family which photo they picture when they think of the person. That instinctive choice is almost always the right one, and it spares you from deciding alone.

If the best photo is an old print, it can be scanned or even photographed with a phone in good light. A companion guide on handling photos covers getting old pictures into digital form if you need it.

PROOFREAD

13. Proofreading and Getting Approval

Before anything is posted or printed, read the obituary carefully — and have someone else read it too. Errors in an obituary are painful to discover later and awkward to correct once a newspaper has printed it. A careful check is time very well spent.

- 1 Check every name is spelled right, including survivors and those who went before.
- 2 Check the dates, the service time, and the place twice.
- 3 Confirm the risky details — full birth date, maiden name, address — are not present.
- 4 Have at least one other family member read it through for errors and feelings.
- 5 Only approve it for posting once everyone is satisfied.

WATCH OUT

A misspelled grandchild's name or a wrong service time causes real hurt and confusion. Double-check names and times above all else, and have a second pair of eyes confirm them.

Having another family member read it also shares the emotional weight and lets them feel included. A second reader often catches both a typo and a missing memory worth adding.

MEMORIAL PAGE

14. What an Online Memorial Page Is

An online memorial page, sometimes called a tribute page, is a lasting web page devoted to one person. Unlike a newspaper notice that appears once, it stays available for family and friends to visit, add to, and return to over the years — on birthdays, anniversaries, and quiet moments of missing someone.

- It holds the person's name, dates, a tribute, and usually many photos.
- Visitors can leave messages, share their own memories, and light virtual candles.
- It can be kept private for family or opened to a wider circle.
- It endures, giving a gathering place long after the service is over.

GOOD TO KNOW

A memorial page often becomes the family's shared scrapbook, growing richer as relatives and old friends add stories and pictures the immediate family never knew. It is a living tribute, not a static notice.

Creating one is optional, and not every family wants it. But for those who do, it offers something a printed notice cannot: a place that keeps the person present and lets grief be shared across any distance.

CHOOSE A PLATFORM

15. Choosing a Memorial Platform

There are several kinds of places to build a memorial page, and the right one depends on how private you want it and how much you wish to spend. It is worth a few minutes to pick before you start, so you do not build twice.

- The funeral home's own site: often the simplest, tied to the obituary, with a guest book built in.
- Dedicated memorial websites: made just for tributes, with photos, stories, and candles.
- A social media memorial: a Facebook page or memorialized profile, familiar to many relatives.
- A simple shared page or group: private and free, good for close family only.

GOOD TO KNOW

Some platforms are free; others charge a one-time fee or a subscription for a lasting page. Check what is free and what costs before you commit, and whether a fee is one-time or ongoing.

For most families, the funeral home's page or a dedicated memorial site is the easiest start. If you only want close family, a private group may be all you need. Match the platform to the circle you have in mind.

BUILD: BASICS

16. Creating the Page — Name, Dates, Tribute

Building the page itself is mostly a matter of filling in boxes the platform provides. The foundation is the person's name, their dates, and a written tribute. Take these calmly; most platforms let you save a draft and return to it, so nothing has to be finished in one sitting.

- 1 Start a new memorial on your chosen platform and enter the person's full name.
- 2 Enter the dates as the platform asks — remember, a public page need not show the full birth date.
- 3 Write or paste in the tribute — you can reuse the obituary or write a fuller version.
- 4 Save your progress; most platforms keep a draft you can polish later.

5 Preview how it looks before moving on to photos and details.

WATCH OUT

If the memorial page is public, apply the same caution as the obituary: avoid showing the full date of birth and never post a home address. A public tribute is as visible to strangers as a newspaper.

The tribute on a memorial page can be longer and warmer than a newspaper notice, because there is no charge by length. This is the place to tell the fuller story if you wish.

BUILD: PHOTOS

17. Gathering Photos and Stories First

A memorial page comes alive with photos and stories, and the work goes far more smoothly if you gather them before you start adding. Trying to find pictures while mid-build is frustrating; having them ready turns building into a gentle, even joyful afternoon.

- 1 Collect a set of favorite photos from across the person's life — childhood to recent years.
- 2 Ask relatives to send you their own pictures and a short memory each.
- 3 Gather any short videos, if the platform allows them.
- 4 Save it all in one folder on your computer or phone, ready to upload.
- 5 Then upload them to the page in a batch, and arrange them.

GOOD TO KNOW

Inviting the whole family to send pictures and stories makes the page richer and shares the task. People often send photos the immediate family has never seen, which become treasured discoveries.

A companion guide on gathering and handing over photos can help if the pictures are scattered across phones, old drives, and clouds. Getting them into one folder first makes this and much else easier.

BUILD: SERVICE

18. Adding Service Details and a Link

If there is a funeral or memorial service, the page is a natural place to share the details so everyone can find them in one spot. Many platforms have a dedicated section for this, including a way to link to directions or a live-stream if the service is being broadcast.

- Add the date, time, and place of the service and any gathering afterward.

- If the service will be live-streamed, add the link so distant family can watch.
- You can add a link for donations to a charity, if the family prefers that to flowers.
- Keep the venue details clear, but you need not publish the family's home address.

TIP

If the service is live-streamed, test the link yourself before sharing it widely. A broken link on the day causes real distress for relatives trying to join from afar.

Putting the service details on the page saves the family from answering the same question many times. People can simply visit the page to find when and where to come, and how to join if they cannot be there in person.

BUILD: PRIVACY

19. Setting the Page's Privacy

One of the most important choices is how private the page should be. Platforms usually offer a range, from fully public to invitation-only. This decision shapes everything else, so make it thoughtfully, with the family's wishes in mind.

- Public: anyone can find and view the page; best for reaching a wide community, but least private.
- Unlisted or link-only: only people with the link can see it — a good middle ground.
- Private or invite-only: only approved people can view and contribute; best for close family.
- Many platforms let you require approval before a comment or photo appears.

WATCH OUT

A fully public page is visible to strangers and to scammers who mine tributes. If you want the reach of a public page, be extra careful to keep the risky identity details off it.

There is no single right setting. A well-known community figure may warrant a public page; a private family may prefer invite-only. The next page weighs the choice between private and public more fully.

BUILD: PROOFREAD

20. Proofreading Before You Publish

Just as with the obituary, give the whole memorial page a careful read before you make it live. Once it is published and shared, errors are seen by everyone who visits, so a final check is worth the few minutes it takes.

- 1 Read the tribute through for spelling, names, and dates.
- 2 Confirm the privacy setting is the one you intend.
- 3 Check that the risky identity details are not shown on a public page.
- 4 Make sure the photos are the right ones and appear the right way up.
- 5 Test any links — service, live-stream, or donations — before publishing.

TIP

Preview the page as a visitor would see it, not as the editor. Most platforms have a preview or 'view as visitor' mode that shows exactly what the world will see.

Only once everything reads right and the privacy is correct should you publish. After that, you can still edit most pages, but it is far better to get it right before the first visitors arrive.

GUEST BOOKS

21. Guest Books and Shared Memories

Most memorial pages and online obituaries include a guest book — a place for visitors to leave condolences and memories. It can be a great comfort to the family to read these, and a comfort to friends to have somewhere to say what they feel.

- Visitors sign the guest book with a message of condolence or a memory.
- The family can read, and often reply to, the messages.
- Some platforms let visitors add their own photos alongside their words.
- Entries usually stay on the page, building a lasting record of how the person was loved.

GOOD TO KNOW

The guest book often becomes one of the family's most treasured keepsakes, holding memories from people the family may never have met but whose lives the person touched.

Reading the guest book can be moving and sometimes overwhelming in early grief. There is no rush to read it all at once. It will keep, and returning to it later, when the family is ready, is often a gift.

CANDLES

22. Virtual Candles and Tributes

Many memorial platforms offer small symbolic gestures visitors can leave — a virtual candle, a flower, a heart. These are simple ways for people to show they are thinking of the family, especially those who are unsure what words to write.

- A virtual candle is a small image a visitor lights in memory, often with a short note.
- Some platforms offer virtual flowers or other tokens.
- A few charge a small fee for certain tributes; many are free.
- They give quieter friends an easy way to show they care.

WATCH OUT

Be a little wary of platforms that push paid tributes hard. A candle should be a kindness, not a sales pitch. There is no obligation to spend to honor a life, and plenty of free ways to do so.

These small gestures mean different things to different families. Some find great comfort in a page full of lit candles; others prefer only written words. Set up whatever feels right, and never feel pressed to add paid features.

MODERATING

23. Moderating the Comments

On any page open to others, a few unwanted messages may appear — spam, an awkward comment, or, rarely, something hurtful. Knowing how to moderate keeps the page a place of comfort. Most platforms give the page's owner simple tools to manage what shows.

- Turn on comment approval if the platform offers it, so you see messages before they appear.
- You can delete spam or inappropriate comments as the page owner.
- Consider asking a calm relative to help watch the page so the task is not yours alone.
- Do not engage with anyone posting to provoke; simply remove and move on.

WATCH OUT

Scammers sometimes post on memorial pages or guest books posing as mourners, then reach out claiming the deceased owed money. Never respond to such a message, and remove it. No real debt is collected this way.

For most families, moderating is a light touch — the occasional spam message to remove. But knowing the tools are there, and that a relative can help, lets you keep the page a gentle place without it becoming a burden.

SHARING THE LINK

24. Inviting People and Sharing Safely

Once the page is ready, you share its link so family and friends can visit. How you share depends on how private you made the page, and a little care keeps the link reaching the right people and not the wrong ones.

- Send the link directly by text, email, or a family group message to the people you want.
- For a private page, invite people by name or email so only they gain access.
- For a public page, you can share it more widely, including in the obituary.
- Ask relatives to pass the link along to friends you may not have contact details for.

TIP

A family group message is a kind way to share the link all at once and let relatives spread it to their own circles. It saves you contacting everyone individually in a hard week.

If the page is invite-only, remember that only people you approve can see it, so you will need to send invitations rather than just a link. Decide early which circle you are inviting, and the sharing follows easily.

PRIVATE OR PUBLIC

25. Deciding Between Private and Public

The choice between a private and a public memorial is worth dwelling on, because it shapes who can share in the grief and how exposed the family is. There is no wrong answer, only the one that fits your family and the person being honored.

- Choose public if the person was widely known and the family wants the community to take part.
- Choose private if the family wants a quiet, protected space for close relatives and friends.
- A link-only page is a gentle middle: open to those given the link, hidden from general search.
- You can often start private and open it later, but it is harder to make a public page private again.

GOOD TO KNOW

If you are unsure, start more private. It is easy to widen a circle later by sharing the link further, but hard to pull back something already made public and seen.

Talk it over with close family before deciding. Some relatives find comfort in a wide, public gathering; others need the safety of a small, private one. The page can honor both if you choose its setting with care.

DONATIONS

26. Charity Links and Donations

Many families invite donations to a charity in the person's memory, in place of flowers. A memorial page or obituary is a natural place to mention this. A little care ensures the giving reaches the real charity and not a scammer riding on the notice.

- Name the charity clearly and, if the platform allows, link straight to the charity's own official site.
- Make sure any donation link goes to the genuine charity, not a look-alike.
- Some platforms offer a built-in donation feature — check what portion actually reaches the cause.
- The family need not share bank details publicly to collect memorial gifts.

WATCH OUT

Scammers set up fake donation pages that echo a real obituary. Point people to the charity's own official website, and be cautious of any donation link you did not create yourself.

A memorial gift is a lovely way for people to honor a life. Just steer the generosity through trustworthy, official channels, so every dollar reaches the cause the family intended and none is lost to a thief.

SCAMS

27. Scams That Mine Obituaries

It is an unhappy truth that criminals read death notices looking for victims. Knowing their handful of tricks lets you recognize and dismiss them calmly. A companion guide on scams targeting the bereaved covers these in more depth; here is the short version.

- The debt call: a stranger phones claiming the deceased owed money, demanding quick payment.
- The fake delivery: someone arrives with a 'package the deceased ordered' and asks for a fee.
- The funeral-home impostor: a caller posing as the director demands a payment or the service is delayed.
- Identity theft: thieves use published details to open accounts in the dead person's name.

WATCH OUT

No legitimate debt, delivery, or funeral fee is ever collected by gift card, wire, or a money app on an unexpected call. Anyone demanding payment that way is a scammer. Hang up and verify independently.

The single best defense is the one on the safety pages: keep the risky identity details out of the notice. The second is to never pay or share anything on an unsolicited call. Slow down, and verify every caller yourself.

PROTECT AFTER

28. Protecting Against Identity Theft After

Even a carefully written obituary cannot undo the fact that a death becomes public. A few protective steps in the weeks after a death guard the person's identity and the family's finances from thieves who prey on this moment.

- Notify the three major credit bureaus of the death and ask for a deceased flag on the file.
- Watch the person's mail for signs of fraud, and consider redirecting it.
- Cancel or settle accounts in an orderly way, keeping records.
- Consider opting the person out of data-broker lists that spread personal details.

GOOD TO KNOW

Placing a deceased flag with the credit bureaus is one of the strongest protections against identity theft after a death, and it is free. It is well worth the phone calls.

These steps belong to the larger task of settling an estate, covered in other guides. But they flow naturally from the obituary, because publishing the notice is the very moment the person's details become public. Protecting them promptly closes the door thieves hope to find open.

OVER TIME

29. Keeping the Page Over the Years

A memorial page is not only for the first days of grief. Many families return to it for years — on birthdays, anniversaries, and holidays — to add a note, a new memory, or simply to visit. It helps to think a little about the page's long life.

- Decide who in the family keeps the page's sign-in, so it can be tended over time.
- Note whether the platform charges an ongoing fee to keep the page live.
- Visitors may add memories for years; the page can keep growing.
- On anniversaries, family often return to the page to light a candle or leave a word.

WATCH OUT

If the platform charges a yearly fee to keep the page online, know who is paying it and when. A lapsed payment could take the page down. Keep the sign-in and the renewal date with the family's records.

A memorial page can become a quiet companion to a family's grief and remembrance for many years. Deciding now who tends it, and how it is kept live, ensures it endures as long as the family wishes.

COMMON WORRIES

30. Common Worries, Answered

Families setting out to write an obituary or build a memorial page tend to share the same few worries. Here are plain answers to ease them.

- What if I'm not a good writer? Plain and honest beats polished. Your love will carry the words.
- What if I make a mistake? Most pages can be edited; newspapers can print a correction. Breathe.
- Is it safe to put a photo online? Yes — a photo gives nothing to thieves, unlike a birth date or address.
- Do I have to build a memorial page? No. An obituary alone is a complete and fitting tribute.

GOOD TO KNOW

There is no single right way to honor a life, and no wrong one made in love. Whatever you write, and wherever you post it, the care you put in is what matters.

If a worry is holding you back, it is almost always smaller than it feels. And you do not have to do any of this alone — a patient helper can sit with you and make the technical parts simple.

SHARE THE WORK

31. Dividing the Work Among Family

No one person should have to carry all of this alone in a week of grief. Writing, gathering photos, posting, and tending a page are tasks that can be shared, and sharing them both lightens the load and lets more of the family take part in honoring the person.

- One person drafts the obituary; another proofreads and checks the facts.
- One gathers photos while others send in memories.
- One builds the memorial page; another helps watch and moderate it.
- One handles the service details and donation link.

TIP

Dividing the tasks is not only practical; it is healing. Giving each relative a small part to contribute lets everyone feel they helped honor the person, which eases grief as much as it eases the workload.

If one relative is far more comfortable with computers, it is natural to let them build the page — but let others still contribute the words, photos, and memories. The tribute is richer when many hands and hearts shape it.

KEEPSAKE

32. A Printed Keepsake of the Tribute

A memorial page lives online, but many families like a printed keepsake to hold and to pass down. There are a few gentle ways to turn the online tribute into something physical that does not depend on a website staying live.

- Print the obituary and a few guest-book messages to keep with family papers.
- Some platforms offer a printed memorial book of the page's tributes and photos.
- A photo book of the person's life, covered in a companion guide, makes a lasting keepsake.
- Save a copy of the page's text and photos to your own computer, in case the site ever closes.

GOOD TO KNOW

Websites can close or change over the years. Keeping your own saved copy of the tribute text and photos ensures the memorial endures even if the platform one day does not.

A printed keepsake bridges the online world and the family's shelf. It gives older relatives something to hold, and it carries the tribute safely into the future, whatever becomes of any one website.

A SIMPLE START

33. If You Only Do Three Things

If all of this feels like a great deal during a hard time, start with the three things that matter most. They honor the person and keep the family safe, and everything else can follow when you are ready.

- 1 Write a short, honest obituary — and leave out the full birth date, maiden name, and home address.
- 2 Post it through the funeral home, which can also place it in the paper and online.
- 3 Share one good photo and the service details with family and friends.

That is a complete and dignified tribute. A memorial page, a guest book, printed keepsakes — all of these are lovely additions, but they are additions. A heartfelt notice, safely written and shared, is enough.

WATCH OUT

Let the funeral home carry as much of the posting as it will. In a week of grief, accepting that help is wisdom, not weakness. You do not have to do it all yourself.

GETTING HELP

34. If the Technical Parts Feel Hard

Not everyone is comfortable building a web page or uploading photos, and grief makes everything harder. If the technical side of a memorial page feels beyond you, that is entirely normal, and there is no shame in getting a hand with it.

- Ask a younger relative who is comfortable with computers to build the page with you.
- Lean on the funeral home, which often sets up an online tribute as part of its service.
- A patient tech helper can sit with you and do the technical steps while you supply the words and photos.

- You stay in charge of what the tribute says; a helper only handles the buttons and uploads.

GOOD TO KNOW

The words and the photos are the part only you and your family can provide. The technical steps — the uploading and arranging — are the easy part for a helper. Let them carry that piece.

There is no prize for struggling through the technical parts alone. The tribute is no less heartfelt for having had help with the buttons. Keep your energy for the words and memories that only you can give.

TROUBLESHOOTING

35. When Something Will Not Work

Now and then a step on a memorial platform balks — a photo that will not upload, a page you cannot edit, a privacy setting that will not stick. These are almost always small, fixable things, not signs that anything is truly wrong.

- A photo will not upload: it may be too large or an odd format; try a smaller or more common one, or ask a helper.
- You cannot edit the page: make sure you are signed in as the page's owner, not just a visitor.
- A comment you removed came back: check the approval setting so messages wait for your review.
- A link does not work: copy it carefully and test it yourself before sharing.
- You forgot the page's sign-in: use the platform's password-reset link to get back in.

TIP

Keep the page's sign-in details written down somewhere safe with the family's records. Losing access to a memorial you built is a quiet heartache that is easily prevented.

When a step will not cooperate, pause rather than force it. A short break, or a word with a helper, usually clears it in minutes. None of these small snags can harm the tribute you have built.

FINISH THE JOB

36. Finish the Job Soon

You now know how to write a safe, loving obituary and, if you wish, build a lasting memorial page. The obituary usually comes first, often within a few days, so start there: gather the facts and stories, write from the heart, and leave out the details that only serve a thief.

If the technical parts of a memorial page feel daunting — uploading photos, setting privacy, keeping the page safe from scam comments — that is exactly the sort of thing I help neighbors with. We can build it together, gently, while you supply the words and memories that make it yours.

GOOD TO KNOW

You do not have to remember all of it. You just have to remember you can call. Friendly, in-home help, and I come to you — (330) 200-8042.

Honoring a life is one of the most meaningful things you will ever write. Take the care it deserves, keep the family safe as you do it, and know that a tribute made in love is always enough.

CHEAT SHEET

Everyday Cheat Sheet

Keep this page handy. It points you straight to what to do for each task. I want to... Do this
Keep the family safe Leave out mother's maiden name, full birth date, and home address
Gather first Facts, favorite photos, and a few stories before you write Write the obituary
Announcement, life story, warm heart, survivors, service details Post it Through the funeral
home, a newspaper, and online obituary sites Build a memorial page Pick a platform, enter
name, dates, tribute, and photos Set privacy Public, link-only, or invite-only — start more
private if unsure Moderate comments Turn on approval; remove spam and scam
messages calmly Protect after Flag the credit bureaus; never pay an unsolicited caller Get
help Call Bill: (330) 200-8042

AT A GLANCE

A Picture to Follow Along

One Life, Many Places

An obituary and a memorial page honor a life in different ways.

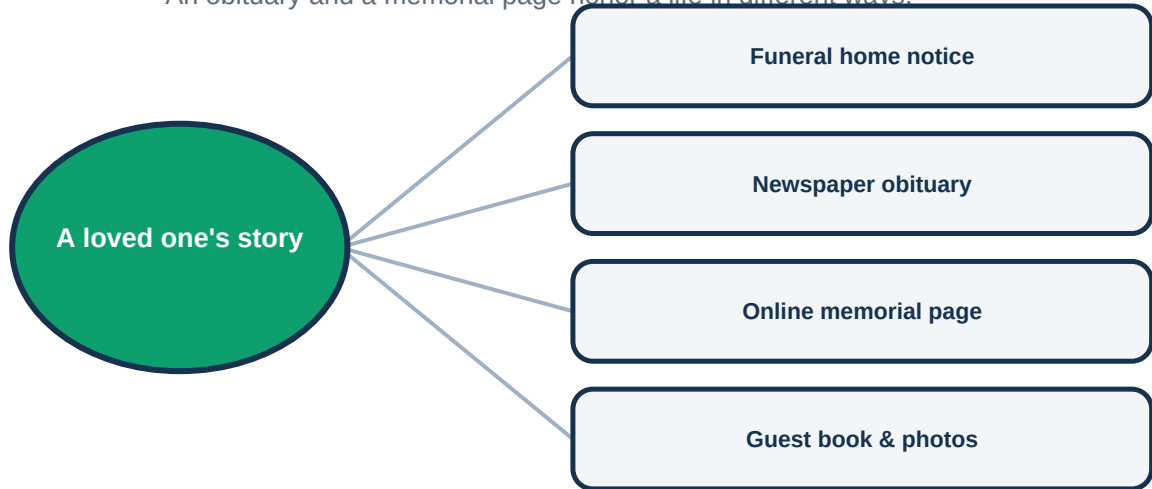


Illustration — a schematic. Set-up screens differ; each takes only a few minutes.

AT A GLANCE

A Second Look

From Draft to Published

Do one box at a time — this guide walks each one slowly.

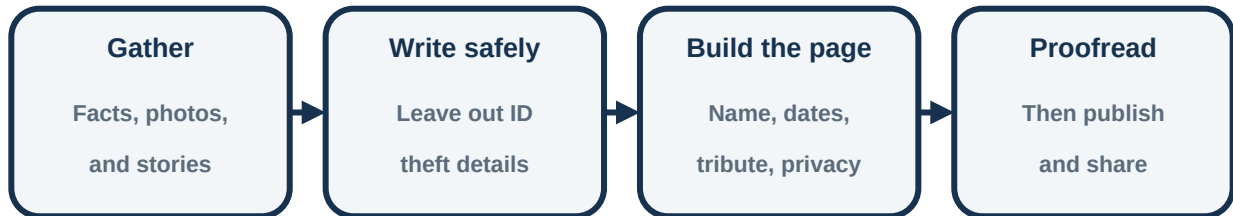


Illustration — a schematic. The order is a suggestion; do one box at a time.

A schematic of the plan — company steps vary; the order does not have to.

BEFORE YOU GO

A Note From Bill

A quick note from Bill. I write these guides to make home tech a little less frustrating, and I do my best to keep every step accurate and up to date. Still, every home, device, and setup is a bit different, so I can't promise a guide will match yours exactly or fix your particular problem. These guides are for general information only — they're not professional, legal, or financial advice, and they don't replace your device's own manual or the manufacturer's instructions. Please go slow, use your own good judgment, and use everything here at your own risk. If a step involves electrical wiring, a gas appliance, a water heater, plumbing, or climbing a ladder — or if anything just doesn't feel safe — please stop and call a licensed professional (or give me a call at 330-200-8042). Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results.



HOW I CAN HELP

Your Visit — and My Promise

In-home visit — \$99 flat for your first visit. No contracts and no surprise charges, and a 30-day follow-up is included.

Remote Support — \$49 for a screen-share session. I only connect with your permission, you watch the whole time, and you can end anytime. If I can't fix it over the screen-share, I refund the \$49 — and if it turns out you need me in person, that \$49 goes toward your visit. It's included free for Support Plan members (\$39/mo).

GOOD TO KNOW

My promise — If you're not 100% satisfied with your visit, I'll come back at no charge, or refund the full \$99. No questions, no awkwardness. That's how I'd want to be treated.

Call or text **(330) 200-8042** · Book a visit: billshometech.com/book · bill@billshometech.com

This free guide is for general information only — not professional advice, and no substitute for your device's own manual. Any prices or outside products mentioned can change; please confirm current details before you buy. Please use your own good judgment and follow it at your own risk — for anything involving electricity, gas, water, or heights, stop and call a licensed professional. Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results. © 2026 Bill's Home Tech, LLC.