



# Pet funeral checklist: 5 questions to ask yourself

No pet owner wants to think about saying farewell to their beloved animal, but there inevitably comes a day when we have to say goodbye to our pet. If you're thinking about organising a pet funeral for your furry friend, here are five questions to ask yourself to ensure it's a special and dignified send-off.

## 1. Will I do it myself or go through a provider?

The [pet funeral industry in Australia is booming](#), with more and more Australians choosing a special send-off for their pet. Due to this growing demand, there are many companies that can organise the service for you. Like any funeral, having someone else organise it can take some pressure off you during an already difficult time. They can also provide a nice space for you to hold your funeral.

However, organised pet funerals can be quite expensive — in 2008 alone the cost of burial could be more than \$5000. You may also have less control over your pet funeral if you go through an organised service. Be sure to take the time to weigh up the costs involved and determine which option is best for you.

## 2. Do I want my pet buried or cremated?

One of the biggest decisions you'll make when farewelling your pet is whether to bury or cremate them. Traditionally, many people have chosen to bury their pets, as this is usually an affordable and more accessible option. The burial is also something that can be incorporated into your pet's funeral.

A cremation may be the best option if you want to keep your pet's remains with you forever. If your pet passed away in the care of a vet, they may be able to organise a cremation on your behalf.

### 3. Where will my pet be laid to rest?

If you do decide to bury your pet, the next decision is where to do so. Burying your pet in a designated pet cemetery means you have a sacred and dignified space where you can visit your pet. Keep in mind, a [headstone can cost up to \\$7,000 \(based on figures from 2008\)](#), so this cost will vary depending on the location and the level of personalisation.

You may also decide to bury your pet in your backyard. However, there are regulations around this, so be sure to [check the council guidelines in your area](#). Some areas don't allow you to bury pets or require them to be buried at a certain depth.

Going with cremation? You may choose to keep the ashes in a beautiful urn or scatter it in the ocean at their favourite beach.



### 4. Do I want a private service or have it open to loved ones?

Will you invite your friends and family to your pet's funeral, or give them a private send-off with just you and your partner perhaps? For some people, grieving a lost pet is a very personal process and they prefer to do it alone. Others choose to share their loss with loved ones, who may be able to recall funny and heartwarming memories of the pet. It all depends on what you're most comfortable with. However, if your pet was a family one, you may need to make a group decision on which option is the most appropriate.



## 5. How will I keep the memory of my pet going?

There are so many wonderful ways to keep your pet's memory alive:

- A photo album or book with pictures of your pet
- Jewellery, wind chimes or an ornament made out of your pet's collar tag
- A tree planted in your pet's name
- A painted portrait or framed photo of your pet
- A video or digital slideshow with photos of your pet
- A grave marker or garden stone where they're buried
- A dedication shrine to your pet filled with their favourite items
- A customised urn with their photo on it

Dealing with the loss of a pet is something we don't want to talk about or even want to consider. But creating a memorial service or a special and personalised farewell can often be a cathartic experience for you and your family. It's an opportunity to reminisce on memories of your pet and it's a great form of closure.

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