

## Your Legal Questions

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**Q** My best friend has asked me to be her Executor – what does this mean and what will I have to do?

**A** Clearly your friend has, very sensibly, decided to make a Will. “Executor” is the name given to the individual(s) whose role it is to:

- Be responsible for or approve the funeral arrangements
- Collect together everything that the person who has died used to own (the estate),
- Identify all outstanding liabilities and arranging payment
- Ensuring that the wishes contained in the Will are carried out.
- Keep detailed records of all transactions – commonly known as the estate account

The Will only takes effect upon death so at this stage, assuming you are content to assist your friend in this way, you need do nothing at all other than to agree. If circumstances change and you find yourself unable to act you are not committed however it would be sensible to notify your friend so that she can make other arrangements.

As a matter of interest being appointed as an Executor does not prevent you from inheriting under the Will if that is your friend's expressed wish. So you can be an Executor and a Beneficiary.

Sometimes the estate of a person who has died may not be straightforward or may involve certain problems – you should not let this put you off. As an Executor you will be in a position to seek expert help and guidance as and when you need it. For example you might choose to instruct a solicitor to advise you on certain aspects or even to deal with the entire administration. In such cases the costs will be paid from the estate of the person who has died as opposed to you paying personally.

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