

Scattering Ashes

Ceremonies, permissions, ideas, advice and more!

Funeral Celebrants are happy to work with families and friends to conduct services for Scattering of Ashes.

Ashes are generally available a day or two after cremation. It is important to discuss with your funeral arranger, **who** is going to collect the ashes of your loved one and ensure that a letter of authority is supplied to facilitate collection. (*Note - Some Funeral Directors do not include ashes collection as part of their service fee*).

In NSW, nearly 70% of people are cremated and of these, only one-third are interred at a cemetery. A 2017 [Sydney Morning Herald article](#) highlighted that many ashes remain uncollected at crematoriums. Is this what you want for your loved one?

What are the options?

Take time to consider what you wish to do with cremated remains especially when the deceased did not communicate their wishes. Once scattered, ashes cannot be collected!

Some families will hold a service to scatter ashes on an anniversary of their loved one's death; others will hold a service when family and friends return or visit from overseas, for example.

There are countless options for **storing** ashes and **scattering** of ashes.

Ashes can be stored in an urn, a box or other ornament. There are many beautiful options available – simply internet search for cremated urns (*HINT – add an .au to your search to gain Australian options*).

Ashes, or portions of ashes may be made into **jewellery** and furniture or stored in jewellery or teddy bears. They can be turned into fireworks; scattered from planes, drones or floated out to sea; they can even be included in tattoos.

Ashes can be scattered at a mountain's edge, near beaches and rivers, at sporting fields, public parks, orchards or vineyards. They can be divided and shared amongst the next of kin, allowing each family member to decide on how and/or where they wish to keep them.

There's options of burying ashes in gardens and planting memorial trees, shrubs, flowers and herbs – the choices are endless. If placing ashes with trees and other plants, do your research first! See our **Planting Trees** page.

If cremation is your preferred option, think about what you want to happen to your remains, and let your next of kin know. Write it with your funeral wishes.

Scattering of Ashes Ceremonies

When planning a memorial or scattering of ashes service, seek the assistance of a Professional Funeral Celebrant to guide and conduct a ceremony to reflect this final act for your loved one. A Professional Funeral Celebrant may suggest readings, music and other cultural ideas, rituals and symbols to make it a truly moving tribute. **See our Directory** for local Celebrants who can assist you.

Is permission is required?

Before scattering ashes, it's important to get permission. If you want to scatter ashes on private land, you need permission from the landowners, and for public land, contact your local council or other authorities. Without the right permission, you may risk fines or legal proceedings. Also, the public place where you wish to scatter ashes could be earmarked for future development, therefore making it difficult for you to visit the site to remember the deceased.

Some local authorities actively support and encourage burial of ashes and the planting of trees in public parks. This supports greening strategies and becomes a lasting legacy for your loved one.

This information is provided as a guide by the Funeral Celebrants Association Australia 2018 - 2020

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For your own garden or even balcony gardens, you can purchase bio urns or mix ashes with wildflower, vegetable or herb seeds. (See **Planting Trees** page)

If you are considering scattering of ashes at sea, you must get permission from the master of the vessel or boat before scattering the ashes.

The Australian Government advises that no permit is required to scatter ashes at sea. However, sea burials are regulated under the *Environment Protection (Sea Dumping) Act 1981*, which is administered by the Department of the Environment. Therefore, people seeking to arrange a burial at sea will require a permit. Source: <http://www.environment.gov.au/marine/marine-pollution/sea-dumping/burial-sea>;

For options of releasing ashes in rivers or oceans, you may choose a biodegradable container; these are now available in the shape of turtles, fish and other options.

How to scatter ashes

Celebrants have heard many stories where scattering ashes did not go as planned - *part of Aunty Jean ended up in the eyes of family and friends*, for example! There's some simple tips and tricks to follow and your Professional Funeral Celebrant will discuss these with you. (**Hint** - consider wind direction!)

Taking cremated remains overseas

Cremated ashes can be taken overseas. Firstly, contact the consulate for the country the ashes are being taken to, to comply with local requirements.

Secondly, obtain a statement from the crematorium identifying the deceased person, where the body was cremated and have a copy of the death certificate with you when transporting remains. Also, there are usually requirements on the types of containers ashes can be carried in. Thirdly, contact your airline or transport mode to make the process as seamless as possible.

For more information: <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/factsheets/Pages/cremation-ashes.aspx>;

Recording where ashes are scattered

Friends and family overseas, or future generations, may wish to know where cremated remains were placed. These can be recorded at an Australian website, [Scattered Ashes](#).

If you have other questions or
wish to give us with feedback,
please email funeralcelebrants@gmail.com;