

Household “How-To” Notes

Your house has secrets that only you know.

The alarm code. The safe combination. Where the spare keys are hidden. How to reset the hot water system. Which switch controls what. Where the water shut-off valve is.

When you die, your executor will usually need to access your home, secure it, and maintain it until it's sold or transferred. Their authority to deal with the property generally comes once the estate is being administered, so it is worth checking with your solicitor about timing. But if they don't know the alarm code, they can't get in without triggering it. If they don't know where the spare keys are, they might have to call a locksmith. If they don't know how the house works, they could cause damage or miss important maintenance.

This section is about the practical knowledge that keeps your house running.

It's not glamorous. But it's incredibly useful.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Your executor might need to enter your house the day after you die. If the alarm goes off and they don't know the code, the police show up. If they can't find the spare key, they're stuck outside. If a pipe bursts and they don't know where the water shut-off is, your house floods.

Note these details down and you save your executor a lot of stress, and your property a lot of damage.

Let's write down the things only you know.

Your Household “How-To” Notes

How your home actually works, so whoever steps in can run it without you there to ask.

HOME SECURITY / ALARM

Store codes securely. You can note where the code is kept rather than the code itself.

ALARM CODE (OR WHERE STORED)

HOW TO DISARM

HOW TO ARM

MONITORING COMPANY

ACCOUNT NUMBER

24-HOUR MONITORING PHONE

WHAT HAPPENS IF TRIGGERED

KEYS & ACCESS

SPARE HOUSE KEY

SPARE CAR KEY

GARAGE REMOTE

MAILBOX KEY

SHED / STORAGE KEY

SAFE KEY

OTHER KEYS

Your Household “How-To” Notes (cont.)

SAFE / LOCKBOX

LOCATION

TYPE

COMBINATION / WHERE STORED

KEY LOCATION (IF KEY SAFE)

WHAT'S INSIDE

GATE & BUILDING CODES

FRONT GATE CODE

GARAGE DOOR CODE

BUILDING ACCESS CODE

INTERCOM CODE

EMERGENCY SHUT-OFFS

Your executor needs to know how to shut off utilities in an emergency.

WATER MAIN (LOCATION / HOW)

GAS (LOCATION / HOW)

ELECTRICITY METER / SWITCHBOARD LOCATION

Your Household “How-To” Notes (cont.)

HOT WATER, HEATING & COOLING

HOT WATER SYSTEM TYPE / LOCATION

HOW TO RESET / KNOWN ISSUES

HEATING SYSTEM / HOW TO OPERATE

THERMOSTAT LOCATION

AIR CONDITIONING / HOW TO OPERATE

SWITCHES, POOL & GARDEN

SWITCHBOARD LOCATION

WHICH SWITCHES CONTROL WHAT

POOL EQUIPMENT (LOCATION / HOW)

POOL PUMP SCHEDULE

IRRIGATION (HOW / TIMER / SCHEDULE)

REGULAR MAINTENANCE TASKS

WEEKLY TASKS

MONTHLY TASKS

YEARLY TASKS

Your Household “How-To” Notes (cont.)

TRADESPEOPLE & MAINTENANCE CONTACTS

PLUMBER (NAME / COMPANY / PHONE)

ELECTRICIAN (NAME / COMPANY / PHONE)

AIR CONDITIONING TECH

POOL / GARDEN MAINTENANCE

ANYTHING ELSE ABOUT HOW THE HOUSEHOLD RUNS