

# 10 Steps to Write an Obituary

## 1 Gather Information

Research your loved one's life. Many families include details such as:

- Full name & nickname
- Birthdate & birthplace
- Date of death & city of residence at death
- Names of parents, siblings & significant others
- Date and time of funeral services being held
- Name of funeral home and cemetery



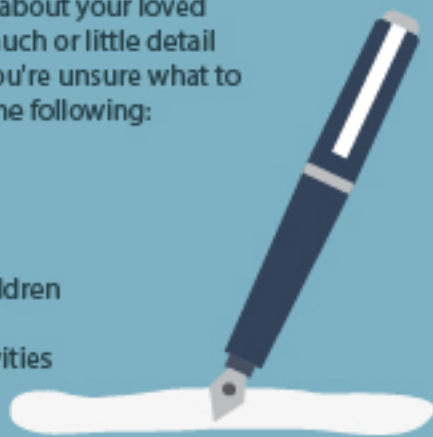
## 2 Check with Newspaper

Contact the newspaper about formatting requirements, length, and to inquire about pricing.

## 3 Write

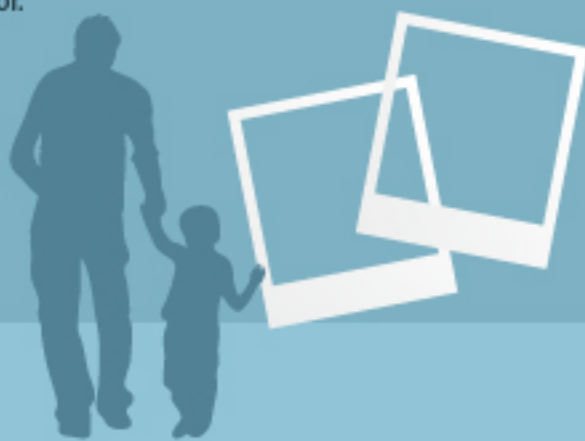
As you begin to write about your loved one's life, go into as much or little detail as you would like. If you're unsure what to write about, include the following:

- Childhood
- Education
- Honors and awards
- Marriage
- Children & Grandchildren
- Employment
- Extra-curricular activities
- Retirement
- Special pets



## 4 Make it Personal

Think about the things that made them special, and include the touching details that your reader might like to know about your loved one. Include interesting tidbits, something the reader might not have known about your loved one—and don't be afraid to include humor.



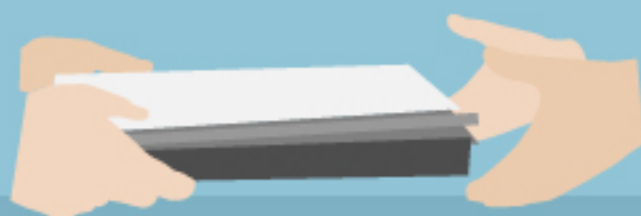
## 5 Proof and Edit

Have someone else check it for spelling and grammatical errors. Make sure you spell names correctly and don't leave out family members or other important details.



## 6 Delegate

Writing the obituary shouldn't be a stressful time. If you don't feel up to it or you aren't confident in your writing ability, pass the task on to someone who enjoys writing or that is good at writing letters.



## 7 Submit to the Newspaper

Ask for a proof of the obituary before it is printed so you can ensure there are no errors or omissions. Find out the deadline for submitting changes and where to send it.



## 8 Publish in Another Newspaper

You could print the obituary in the newspaper of the town where your loved one grew up; or if you loved one recently moved, at both the new and the old location.



## 9 Read the Story

Check to make sure names are correct and important information is included. If there are errors, call the newspaper and if time allows, have them print a correction.

## 10 Keep a Copy

Be sure to keep a copy of the obituary as a keepsake. Purchase several copies for family and friends unable to attend the funeral. For those unable to attend the funeral, it's nice to receive a copy of the funeral bulletin and the obituary.

## Avoiding Common Mistakes

- Don't make the obituary about those still living—make it about your loved one.
- Include information about your loved one's life, not just the funeral details.
- Avoid abbreviations or terms that everyone may not understand.
- Write in the third person and refer to your loved one as an individual.
- When considering memorials, consider your loved one's wishes—not your own.
- Proofread and proofread again.
- Double-check the spelling of all names.
- Have a close family member look over the obituary.

