

Codicil to a Will — Blank Template

A signed, witnessed change to a will you have already made — the *identification* clause, the amendment itself, and the *confirmation* that everything else stands — set out as fillable clauses. England & Wales. A starting point, not a substitute for a solicitor.

A codicil is a second document, not an edit — it never goes inside the will, it sits beside it, and both are read together at probate. The law that governs it is identical to the law that governs the will: the Wills Act 1837 defines "will" to include a codicil, so the same signature, the same two witnesses, and the same rules apply, with nothing relaxed because the document is short. This template covers one small, self-contained change. For anything touching who gets the estate, several changes at once, or a marriage or divorce since the will was signed, see Section V — a new will is very often the safer instrument.

READ THIS BEFORE YOU SIGN — IT DECIDES WHETHER YOUR CODICIL COUNTS

A codicil must be signed and witnessed exactly like a will. Under the **Wills Act 1837**, you sign (or acknowledge your signature) in the presence of two witnesses who are both there at the same time, and each of them then signs while you watch. A witness — or that witness's spouse or civil partner — must **not** be a beneficiary of the codicil or of the will: the gift to an attesting witness is void, and because a codicil republishes the will, a beneficiary who witnesses your codicil can lose a gift the will validly gave them. This template is a guide only. This template is not drafted to revive a will that marriage has revoked and must not be used to try. Make a new will. It cannot authenticate a crossing-out on the will itself, and is not the right tool once a will already carries a codicil. It is general guidance, not legal advice, and does not replace a solicitor.

FIRST CODICILS ONLY

If your will already has a codicil, do not use this template. Make a new will or take legal advice.

How to use this.

Read Section I first — the six things a codicil must satisfy, which are the same formalities a will itself must satisfy. Section II gives you the identification clause that ties the codicil to your will by date, and the clause that numbers it. Section III is the amendment clause itself — three controlled forms of words, of which you complete the one that fits — followed by the confirmation clause that leaves the rest of the will standing. Section IV is the attestation and signing routine — the part most home-made codicils get wrong. Section V is the honest "make a new will instead" list. Draft in pencil first; produce a clean final copy to sign. This is orientation, not legal advice; the longer walkthrough and the free will-readiness tools live at valoren.uk.

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What a codicil must satisfy

I

SECTION I • THE FORMALITIES THAT COUNT

A codicil can be perfectly worded and still change nothing if the formalities are wrong. Six things decide whether it counts, and every one of them is the same test a will itself must pass. Get these right and a small change stands cleanly beside the will; get one wrong and the codicil is void — the will stands exactly as it was before you tried to change it.

It is in writing, and signed by you

The codicil must be a written document, signed by you or by someone else in your presence and at your direction. Your signature comes at the end, after the amendment and confirmation clauses. Never staple, pin or clip it to the will — keep both in one envelope, unattached.

It must appear you intended the signature to give effect to it

A signature left as a draft mark, or on a document you clearly meant to redraft, may not satisfy this. Sign only the clean, final copy — the one you intend to stand as your codicil.

Two witnesses, present at the same time

You sign, or acknowledge your signature, in front of two witnesses who are both there together. This is the commonest failure — witnessed on different days, or one witness not actually present when you signed.

Each witness then signs in your presence

Each witness attests and signs while you watch. They do not have to watch each other sign — only you signing, or acknowledging your signature, needs both of them present together.

Neither witness may be a beneficiary

A gift to an attesting witness, or to that witness's spouse or civil partner, is void — even though the codicil itself still stands. Because a codicil republishes the will, a will-beneficiary who witnesses your codicil can lose a gift the will validly gave them. Choose two people with no stake in either document.

Ink, on paper, in one sitting

Video witnessing of a will or codicil was permitted only between 31 January 2020 and 31 January 2024 — that window is closed. Sign the date the same day you sign your name; do not sign and date on separate occasions.

Identifying the codicil

II

SECTION II • CLAUSES 1 AND 2

The opening clauses tie this document to a specific will and give it a number. Write your full legal name exactly as it appears on the will itself, and the exact date the will was signed — without that date there is nothing linking the two documents together.

Clause 1 • Identification

I,

FULL LEGAL NAME

DATE OF BIRTH

ADDRESS

declare this to be a codicil to my will dated the _____ day of _____ (year),
which I confirm was signed by me and witnessed in accordance with the Wills Act 1837.

Clause 2 • Numbering

This is the first codicil to my said will. *(If your will already has a codicil, do not use this template. Make a new will or take legal advice.)*

One small, self-contained change.

A codicil is for swapping an executor, correcting a name or address, or adding one fixed legacy — not for changing who gets the residue, making several changes at once, or responding to a marriage or divorce since the will was signed. Section V sets out exactly where that line falls.

The amendment and confirmation

III

SECTION III • CLAUSES 3 AND 4 – THE CHANGE ITSELF, THEN EVERYTHING ELSE STANDS

State the change, and only the change. Name the clause of the will you are revoking, and set out exactly what replaces it, or the new provision you are adding. Anything you do not mention in Clause 3 stays exactly as the will left it — which is precisely why the confirmation clause below matters.

Clause 3 • Amendment

I make the following amendment(s) to my said will: *(Use whichever of the three forms below fits your change and draw a line through any form you do not use. Do not write your own operative words.)*

FORM A • REVOKE A CLAUSE AND REPLACE IT

I revoke clause _____ of my said will and replace it with the following:

FORM B • ADD A PROVISION

I add the following provision to my said will:

FORM C • REVOKE A GIFT WITHOUT REPLACING IT

I revoke the following gift in clause _____. That gift shall form part of my residuary estate.

Removing a legacy grows the residue.

If you are removing a gift rather than replacing it, use Form C above — it says in terms that the gift forms part of your residuary estate — or someone may later argue the gift simply failed rather than fell into residue. If the change touches who gets the residue itself, or its shares, that is very often a job for a new will, not a codicil — see Section V.

Clause 4 • Confirmation

In all other respects, I confirm my said will. *(This sentence stands as written — it is what stops the codicil reading as a replacement, and republishes the will as of today's date. A codicil can cause the will to speak again from the date of the codicil for relevant purposes. Because this confirms the will as at today's date, a gift described by what you own — 'my house', 'my car' — will be read against what you own on the day you sign this codicil. No detail to add unless a solicitor advises otherwise.)*

Attestation and signing

IV

SECTION IV • THE PART MOST HOME-MADE CODICILS GET WRONG

This is where validity is won or lost, and it is identical to signing a will. Sign in one continuous sitting with both witnesses present together. Use the same pen. Sign at the end, after the confirmation clause. **Neither witness — nor a witness's spouse or civil partner — may be a beneficiary of the codicil or of the will.** Do not date, sign, or witness on separate occasions.

Practice, not a section 9 requirement.

As a practical safeguard, initial the other pages in the same place. This helps identify the pages that formed the document when it was signed.

Clause 5 • Attestation clause

Signed by the above-named _____ as a codicil to their will, in our joint presence, and then by us in theirs. We were both present at the same time when the *testator* signed.

Testator's signature

SIGNATURE OF *TESTATOR*

DATE SIGNED

Witness 1 — must not be a beneficiary of the codicil or the will

SIGNATURE

FULL NAME (PRINT)

ADDRESS

OCCUPATION

Witness 2 — must not be a beneficiary, present at the same time as Witness 1

SIGNATURE

FULL NAME (PRINT)

ADDRESS

OCCUPATION

IF THE WITNESSING IS WRONG, THE CODICIL CHANGES NOTHING

The most common reasons a home-made codicil fails: only one witness; the two witnesses signed at different times rather than together; a witness (or their spouse/civil partner) was a beneficiary of the codicil or the will, so the gift to them failed; the *testator* signed before the witnesses arrived; the codicil was witnessed by video after 31 January 2024. Read the attestation clause aloud, do it in one sitting, and store the signed original with the will — never separately, never stapled to it.

When to make a new will instead

V

A codicil handles one small, self-contained change to a will that otherwise still says what you want. It cannot handle more than that safely, and a codicil that goes wrong is discovered only when you can no longer fix it. If any of the following is true, a new will is the safer instrument — not this template.

You have married or formed a civil partnership since the will was signed

Marriage revokes a will outright under the Wills Act 1837, unless the will itself shows you expected to marry that particular person and intended it to survive. This template is not drafted to revive a will that marriage has revoked and must not be used to try. Make a new will.

You have divorced since the will was signed

Divorce does not revoke the will — it edits it: your former spouse is treated as having died on the date of the decree, and the rest of the will stands exactly as written, often not as you would now choose. Rebuild it deliberately with a new will, not a codicil.

The change touches who gets the residue, or the shares

This clause decides most of the estate. Two documents arguing over it — the will and a codicil — is how estates end up disputed. A new will restates the whole picture cleanly.

You want to make several changes at once

Every extra document is another thing to find, read together with the others, and potentially challenge. A new will consolidates everything into one instrument.

A codicil to this will already exists

If your will already has a codicil, do not use this template. Make a new will or take legal advice. By the second codicil, most professionals stop amending and start again. Three documents read together at probate is where contradictions are born, and a registrar not satisfied a document was duly executed can refuse probate on it.

A clause in the will is ambiguous

If two readers can take a clause two ways, a second document rarely settles the disagreement — it gives them a second thing to argue about. Redraft the clause cleanly in a new will instead.

Where this template sits in the set.

Pair the codicil with the free **Blank Will Template** it amends, and the Original Documents Register so both originals can be found together when they are needed. If your circumstances have moved beyond a small, self-contained change, the Valoren Will products (from £149) prepare a complete will, with registration and Will Watch, in place of a second document. The job of this template is to get the small change right, or to point you clearly at the bigger one.

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Data current as of 18 September 2026. Prepared from customer-maintained records.

Checked against: Wills Act 1837 · Wills Act 1968 · Civil Partnership Act 2004 · Non-Contentious Probate Rules 1987 — legislation.gov.uk, 12 September 2026. Source instruments: Free institutional resource · Codicil to a Will · valoren.uk.

Standard Index Group — in formation · England & Wales

