



## How much does a Will cost versus a Will Kit?

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This may be surprising but many lawyers actually charge far less for ordinary [Wills](#) than they are entitled to charge. For even a simple Will, the cost which might be charged at the Supreme Court scale (which is the benchmark for legal fees in South Australia) is around \$600 but most lawyers, including us, do not charge nearly that much.

Affordability is a real concern for most Will clients, but the simple truth is that the cost of [estate planning](#), which includes making a Will but also many other components, can vary from a few hundred dollars to a few thousand dollars depending upon your circumstances and needs.

Because every person has different needs, we prefer to give out a more precise estimate when we actually see clients about their Wills. A large number of people who have not previously made a Will do not understand the true legal complexity of their circumstances until they see us.

There is a greater number of people who never receive that advice and opt for a homemade Will, a Will Kit, a cheap Will or no Will, and then end up paying more, financially and emotionally, because of that decision.

Poorly prepared Wills almost always lead to additional costs in administering an estate, being costs that exceed or far exceed the cost of a well prepared Will.

Something as simple as forgetting to date a Will or using different coloured pens can be enough to cause a problem.

Not meeting the formalities for a Will can cost thousands by making it necessary to issue a summons to have the informal Will admitted to [probate](#). These are completely avoidable costs.

The wrong wording or not anticipating potential claims can similarly lead to tens of thousands of dollars in costs just to settle a dispute or hundreds of thousands if it goes to trial, not to mention the cost of a family torn apart.

And that's only where something is done wrong. There can also be missed opportunities to have your assets applied in an advantageous way for the benefit of your heirs, for protection against creditors or so that they do not suffer unnecessary cost, tax or stamp duty. These opportunities can also amount to several thousands of dollars lost.

It may be biased that I would advocate the only Will to have is a professionally drafted Will by an experienced lawyer. However I certainly would worry about my family or friends having only a homemade Will or a Will Kit, because the first thought that comes to mind whenever I hear of one is "how bad is it?" Followed usually by having to then work out how much extra time and effort it's going to take to sort out.

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