

SCATTERING



ASHES

Celebrating the life of a loved one

Celebrating the life of a loved one:

How to scatter ashes on water

Scattering ashes at sea, on a river or lake, is a great way to give a loved one a wonderful send-off. Many people have a strong connection with the sea, which may be due to a favourite holiday destination or they may have worked on the water. Rivers are popular too, whether they liked fishing, walking or boating. Whatever your reason, placing their ashes in water can be very comforting.

This booklet will guide you through what you need to know: what the law says, the advantages of scattering ashes in this way, ideas for your ceremony and what to say. There is a lot more information available on our website and we're always very happy to answer your questions over the phone or by email.



The Law:

In the UK you do not need a licence to spread ashes on rivers or tidal coastal waters but you will need to follow some simple rules set by the Environment Agency. The Agency states that scattering ashes on water 'is acceptable', but:

- Stay away from buildings, people bathing or fishing, and marinas.
- Avoid scattering upstream of where water is taken out of the river (you can ask the Environment Agency for advice and information on specific locations to avoid).
- [If you are not using a water urn] Scatter the ashes close to the surface.
- Don't put anything in the water or on the water's edge that will not degrade naturally. For example, wire or plastic.

Where to scatter:

You can choose to scatter the ashes from a boat or the shoreline / riverbank.

From a **boat**: if you have access to a boat you can do it yourself. If not, there are many places around the coast and on the rivers of the UK and Ireland where you can hire a boat for the ceremony. We have over 60 different locations around the UK - scattering-ashes.co.uk/boat-map-uk

Advantages of a boat: it is totally private; you can reach more inaccessible places; it is easy to put the ashes into the water; and it is likely to feel more of an occasion.

From the **water's edge**: on a beach, a bridge or the riverbank, all make good venues. However, please be mindful of others, accessibility and tide times.

Advantages for a shore line: no additional cost, no restrictions on numbers; you choose your own timings and duration, no chance of seasickness!

1 Water promises Notelets



2 Petals



3 Floating Coconut Candles



How to scatter ashes on a beach:

Consider the timing to avoid other users and high tides. We would suggest a sandy beach and a spot below the high tide line. Sunrise or sunset works well and you are less likely to be disturbed.

There are a few ways to do this:

- Carve a groove in a shape or symbol: such as a heart shape or initials. Sprinkle the ashes into the trench, cover with sand if you wish and wait until the tide washes the ashes them away.
- Use a floating water urn on an ebbing tide (better on a steeper beach).
- Or simply scatter the ashes onto the water or shoreline.

Note:

- Don't scatter it above the high tide line. If you are not sure where this is, look for the line of seaweed and driftwood near the top of the beach.
- Try to stay away from the beach entry / exit point.
- When scattering, keep the urn fairly low, below waist height.
- Make sure party members are up wind of the breeze.
- Please consider accessibility for elderly members of the party. Never choose a location where safety could be compromised.
- If on a boat, ask the boat's skipper to give you the coordinates so you can record it for future generations.

Water Urns:

If you are scattering ashes on water, especially from a boat, a **Water Urn** is a good idea - they are designed to hold ashes and biodegrade completely in water. There are two main reasons for doing this.

- On the water, it is usually breezy and the finer ash particles get caught in the breeze, causing them to blow back and attach themselves to the side of the boat.
- You can choose an urn to compliment your ceremony. Some will float for a while and gently submerge below the surface, allowing time to reflect or say some words (5). Or you can choose one that sinks quickly, allowing them to remain in a more precise location (4).

4 Rock Salt Urn



5 Water Ceremony Set



6 Classic Water urn



Making it a ceremony:

You can cast petals (2), which look beautiful on the water. To pass on final farewells, use Promises - notelets (1) made from specialist paper that dissolves in the water. They allow you to write a personal message that you can commit to the water with the ashes. Lighting a floating candle also adds to the moment (3).

Keepsakes and Mementos

Some people find scattering all the ashes too final. Once scattered you cannot do anything else. So, it is a good idea to keep a little back in case you find later on that you or other family members want a small keepsake or memento.

We have a range of ideas for keeping a little of the ashes back in a discreet keepsake. See our website for more details.

Example Order of Service

- ❧ Welcome
 - ❧ Readings of poetry or passage(s) from a book
 - ❧ Reminiscences about that person
 - ❧ Eulogy - a talk focussing on the achievements of the deceased - their loves, pleasures, the meaning of their life
 - ❧ Scattering the ashes
 - ❧ Symbolic actions
 - Shaking hands or a hug
 - Light candles
 - A song
 - Or if it feels right, pop a cork!
 - ❧ Quiet reflection or prayer
 - ❧ Final thoughts, perhaps their favourite phrase or saying
 - ❧ Farewells
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www.scattering-ashes.co.uk

info@scattering-ashes.co.uk

01392 581012

