



Guide to Planning for Your Electronic & Digital Assets

These days, much of our personal information and many of our assets are stored electronically, which can make it challenging for an executor or someone acting as our power of attorney to access and manage important assets. To address this problem, it's important to have a plan in place for the management or termination of your electronic assets.

Electronic Devices

Some of the most valuable things we own are electronic hardware, such as laptops, tablets, and smartphones. However, if your heirs are not able to access these devices, they may be of little use or value. Be sure to share passwords for your electronic devices with an emergency contact so that they can continue to be used after your death or incapacity.

Rights to Digital Assets

Other common types of electronic assets are digital or online assets that are stored in the "Cloud." There are generally two types of digital assets: those which we own and those which we license. Many assets that we think we "own," such as our iTunes and Kindle libraries, are actually licensed to us for our own personal use. This means that we have no right to transfer these assets to our loved ones upon our death. We can leave our login information for these assets so that our family can access them; however, this is technically a breach of the terms of use for these assets.

On the other hand, there are digital assets that we actually own. These assets include domain names, websites and website content that we create, which can be extremely valuable. If we don't share our account information for these assets, it may be difficult or impossible for our heirs to access or benefit from them.

Importance of Planning for Digital Assets

Planning for digital assets is important not just for transferring those assets to others, but also – and often more importantly – for helping loved ones to sort out your finances if you become incapacitated or pass away. For years, executors and heirs relied on paper documents and bills that came in the mail to help piece together a loved one's affairs. Utility bills, bank and mortgage statements, and newspapers all came in the mail on a regular basis. Nowadays, you'll find few, if any, of these things in a person's physical mailbox. Rather, they're likely to show up in an email account. If no one has access to the email account, it can become all but impossible to figure out where your money is held and what bills need to be paid.

Practicalities of Planning for Digital Assets

In order to allow a friend or family member to have access to most online accounts, you will have to share your login information to those accounts. Because passwords can change frequently, you may wish to use a password service such as LastPass, RoboForm, or Apple Keychain that saves your login information for multiple websites. If you use this type of password service, be sure to keep your emergency contact person informed of your current master password/login information. If you decide not to use this type of service, you should keep a record of your current usernames and passwords for all accounts that you wish to share or pass on and share this information with your emergency contact.

Facebook & Google

Facebook and Google have implemented tools for users to arrange for the management or deletion of their accounts without sharing their login information.

Facebook: Facebook's Legacy Contact feature enables you to choose the person you want to manage your memorialized Facebook account after you pass away. Alternatively, you can choose to have your account deleted. [Click HERE](#) to learn more about Facebook's Legacy Contact feature.

To activate the Legacy Contact feature for your account, go to Settings, Security, Legacy Contact.

Google: Google allows someone of your choice to have access to your account if it is inactive for a certain period of time. This feature covers your Gmail account, as well as all other Google services covered by your username, such as YouTube and Google+.

To activate Google's Inactive Account feature for your account, click on My Account, Personal Info and Privacy, Inactive Account OR go to <https://www.google.com/settings/account/inactive> and log in to your account.

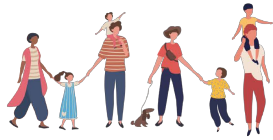
List of Common Online Accounts

Below is a list of common types of accounts that may be helpful in putting together a list of your own accounts.

- Email Accounts
- Financial Websites
 - Bank Accounts

- Brokerage Accounts
 - Credit Card Accounts
 - Insurance Accounts
- Utility Accounts
 - Gas/Electric
 - Water
 - Cable/Internet
 - Telephone
- Social Networks:
 - Facebook
 - Twitter
 - LinkedIn
 - Pinterest
- Photo & Video Sharing Accounts:
 - Instagram
 - Shutterfly
 - Snapfish
- Kindle or E-book Accounts
- Frequent Flyer Miles
- Website Assets
 - Domain Names
 - Web Hosting
 - Blogging Websites
- Subscription Accounts

- News Services (e.g., New York Times, Wall Street Journal)
- Netflix
- Amazon
- Grocery Delivery Services



Worksheet for Digital Assets

Hardware

Description/Type of Hardware (e.g., desktop in home office, laptop, smartphone, tablet)	Password

Online Accounts

Master Password Information

Master Password Service: _____

Login Info for Master Password Service:

Username: _____ Password: _____

Master Password: _____

Additional Password Information

