



WHERE CAN YOU HAVE A NATURAL BURIAL?

Natural burial is the practice of burying a human body in the earth, in a manner that allows for natural decomposition with minimal impact on the surrounding ecosystem.

*-Natural Death Advocacy Network
(NDAN)*

There are a growing number of cemeteries and Councils who are promoting natural or bushland burial alternatives within their community. Some of these offerings can be confusing, with each place offering something slightly different. Adding to the confusion has been the lack of standard definition around what actually constitutes a natural burial in Australia. There has been no one clear definition and so NDAN have gone some way to lay the groundwork for what we consider a best practice standard for natural burial.

In considering the information provided below in relation to your natural burial choices and providers, we suggest you also review the information provided by NDAN on what makes a natural burial – <https://ndan.com.au/resources/natural-burial>.

In trying to collate a comprehensive list of cemeteries who say they offer a natural alternative in Australia and also to address some of the confusion in relation to what exactly is the natural offering, we sent each of the following places listed here a questionnaire to gather more detailed information. We asked about what kind of options they offer for natural burial and how it works in their cemetery. For those who replied, the table of responses is shown here.



New South Wales

Banded Bee Farm

Under Construction

Regenerative natural burial ground under development

<https://earthfunerals.org/natural-burials/>

Cambewarra (Good Dog) cemetery

Section inside a conventional cemetery

<https://cremweb.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/index.php/shoalhaven-cemeteries/general-cemeteries/cambewarra-cemetery>

QUESTION	YES	NO
The natural burial ground is a section of (or contained within) an existing traditional cemetery	x	
The natural burial ground is a stand-alone independent ground where only natural burial occurs		X#
All burials are shallow depth i.e. 1 metre of soil above the body at the shallowest point		x
All graves are single graves and if two people wish to be buried together must be side by side	x	
Compost material is incorporated when back filling the grave		x
All graves are dug by hand		x
We allow mechanical lowering devices	x	
We allow the lowering of a coffin or body by hand	x	
Grave markers are allowed in this cemetery	X*	
GPS coordinates of grave sites are offered to families/next of kin	x	
All grave markers are locally sourced and of natural material		x
Coffins are allowed however they are only to be of biodegradable material	x	
Shroud burials are allowed		x
The body of the deceased is not allowed to undergo embalming or temporary preservation prior to burial	x	
The body of the deceased is required to be prepared naturally i.e. with no plastic or chemical preparations	x	



The body of the deceased is required to only be wearing natural fibres	x	
Metal such as jewellery is permitted to be buried with the deceased		x
We only permit biodegradable and compostable items to be buried with the body such as handwritten notes, fresh flowers etc.	x	
Families/next of kin are permitted to back fill the grave by hand	x	
We require declarations to be signed by the family and/or funeral directors stating there are no unsuitable items in the coffin and the body has been prepared in line with the principles of natural burial	x	

#this section is ONLY for natural burials not other types of burials but within a cemetery.

*markers at the grave only allowed to be of natural timber, cast bronze marker on collective, natural granite rock at entry to burial ground has name, life span and GPS coordinates for grave.

Kemps Creek – Catholic Cemeteries and Crematoria (No response received)

St Francis of Assisi, Natural Burial Field - Section inside a conventional cemetery
https://catholiccemeteries.com.au/burial/?search_by_cemetery=Kemps%20Creek

Lismore Memorial Gardens

Section inside a conventional cemetery

https://www.lismore.nsw.gov.au/cp_themes/default/page.asp?p=DOC-KER-12-06-67

QUESTION	YES	NO
The natural burial ground is a section of (or contained within) an existing traditional cemetery	x	
The natural burial ground is a stand-alone independent ground where only natural burial occurs	x	
All burials are shallow depth i.e. 1 metre of soil above the body at the shallowest point	x	
All graves are single graves and if two people wish to be buried together must be side by side	x	



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Compost material is incorporated when back filling the grave		x
All graves are dug by hand		x
We allow mechanical lowering devices	x	
We allow the lowering of a coffin or body by hand	x	
Grave markers are allowed in this cemetery	x	
GPS coordinates of grave sites are offered to families/next of kin	x	
All grave markers are locally sourced and of natural material	x	
Coffins are allowed however they are only to be of biodegradable material	x	
Shroud burials are allowed		x
The body of the deceased is not allowed to undergo embalming or temporary preservation prior to burial	x	
The body of the deceased is required to be prepared naturally i.e. with no plastic or chemical preparations	x	
The body of the deceased is required to only be wearing natural fibres	x	
Metal such as jewellery is permitted to be buried with the deceased	x	
We only permit biodegradable and compostable items to be buried with the body such as handwritten notes, fresh flowers etc.	x	
Families/next of kin are permitted to back fill the grave by hand		x
We require declarations to be signed by the family and/or funeral directors stating there are no unsuitable items in the coffin and the body has been prepared in line with the principles of natural burial		x

EMPOWERING CHOICE AT END OF LIFE



Australian Capital Territory

Gungahlin Cemetery

Section inside a conventional cemetery

<http://www.canberracemeteries.com.au/canberra-cemeteries-home-page/our-cemeteries/gungahlin>

QUESTION	YES	NO
The natural burial ground is a section of (or contained within) an existing traditional cemetery	YES	
The natural burial ground is a stand-alone independent ground where only natural burial occurs	YES	
All burials are shallow depth i.e. 1 metre of soil above the body at the shallowest point	YES	
All graves are single graves and if two people wish to be buried together must be side by side	YES	
Compost material is incorporated when back filling the grave	NO	
All graves are dug by hand		NO
We allow mechanical lowering devices	YES	
We allow the lowering of a coffin or body by hand	YES	
Grave markers are allowed in this cemetery		NO – PLANTINGS ONLY AS MARKERS
GPS coordinates of grave sites are offered to families/next of kin	YES	
All grave markers are locally sourced and of natural material	YES – LOCALLY SOURCED PLANTS	
Coffins are allowed however they are only to be of biodegradable material	YES	
Shroud burials are allowed	YES	
The body of the deceased is not allowed to undergo embalming or temporary preservation prior to burial	YES	



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The body of the deceased is required to be prepared naturally i.e. with no plastic or chemical preparations	YES	
The body of the deceased is required to only be wearing natural fibres		NO
Metal such as jewellery is permitted to be buried with the deceased		NO
We only permit biodegradable and compostable items to be buried with the body such as handwritten notes, fresh flowers etc.	YES	
Families/next of kin are permitted to back fill the grave by hand	YES	
We require declarations to be signed by the family and/or funeral directors stating there are no unsuitable items in the coffin and the body has been prepared in line with the principles of natural burial		No

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Tasmania

Burnie Cemetery

(No response received)

Section inside a conventional cemetery

<https://www.burnie.net/Community/Services-and-Programs/Cemeteries/Natural-burial>

Kingston Lawn Cemetery

Bushland Burial Section inside a conventional cemetery

<https://www.millingtons.com.au/our-cemeteries/kingston-cemetery/>

QUESTION	YES	NO
The natural burial ground is a section of (or contained within) an existing traditional cemetery	Yes	
The natural burial ground is a stand-alone independent ground where only natural burial occurs	Yes	
All burials are shallow depth i.e. 1 metre of soil above the body at the shallowest point		No
All graves are single graves and if two people wish to be buried together must be side by side		No
Compost material is incorporated when back filling the grave		Soil
All graves are dug by hand		No
We allow mechanical lowering devices	Yes	
We allow the lowering of a coffin or body by hand	Yes	
Grave markers are allowed in this cemetery	Yes	
GPS coordinates of grave sites are offered to families/next of kin		No
All grave markers are locally sourced and of natural material	Yes	
Coffins are allowed however they are only to be of biodegradable material	Yes	
Shroud burials are allowed	Yes	
The body of the deceased is not allowed to undergo embalming or temporary preservation prior to burial		No
The body of the deceased is required to be prepared naturally i.e. with no plastic or chemical preparations	Yes	



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The body of the deceased is required to only be wearing natural fibres	Yes	
Metal such as jewellery is permitted to be buried with the deceased	Yes	
We only permit biodegradable and compostable items to be buried with the body such as handwritten notes, fresh flowers etc.	Yes	
Families/next of kin are permitted to back fill the grave by hand		No
We require declarations to be signed by the family and/or funeral directors stating there are no unsuitable items in the coffin and the body has been prepared in line with the principles of natural burial		No

Western Australia

Freemantle Cemetery

Did not complete the questionnaire, instead sending the link to the website as below.

Section inside a conventional cemetery

<https://www.mcb.wa.gov.au/our-cemeteries/fremantle-cemetery/natural-burials>

Pinnaroo Valley Memorial Park

Did not complete the questionnaire, instead sending the link to the website as below.

Section inside a conventional cemetery

<https://www.mcb.wa.gov.au/our-cemeteries/pinnaroo-valley-memorial-park>



Victoria

Carlsruhe Cemetery

(No response received)

Hybrid and conventional burial grounds

<https://carlsruhe.chronicle.rip/>

Greater Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust – Healesville and Lilydale

(No response received)

Hybrid and conventional burial grounds

<https://www.gmct.com.au/services/natural-burials>

Little Yarra Cemetery

Section inside a conventional cemetery

<https://www.uypct.org.au/areas/little-yarra>

QUESTION	YES	NO
The natural burial ground is a section of (or contained within) an existing traditional cemetery	YES	
The natural burial ground is a stand-alone independent ground where only natural burial occurs	YES	
All burials are shallow depth i.e. 1 metre of soil above the body at the shallowest point	YES	
All graves are single graves and if two people wish to be buried together must be side by side	YES	
Compost material is incorporated when back filling the grave		NO
All graves are dug by hand		NO
We allow mechanical lowering devices	YES	
We allow the lowering of a coffin or body by hand	YES	
Grave markers are allowed in this cemetery	YES - prearranged indigenous plants only	
GPS coordinates of grave sites are offered to families/next of kin		NO



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All grave markers are locally sourced and of natural material	YES	
Coffins are allowed however they are only to be of biodegradable material	YES	
Shroud burials are allowed	YES	
The body of the deceased is not allowed to undergo embalming or temporary preservation prior to burial	YES	
The body of the deceased is required to be prepared naturally i.e. with no plastic or chemical preparations	YES	
The body of the deceased is required to only be wearing natural fibres	YES	
Metal such as jewellery is permitted to be buried with the deceased		NO
We only permit biodegradable and compostable items to be buried with the body such as handwritten notes, fresh flowers etc.	YES	
Families/next of kin are permitted to back fill the grave by hand	YES	
We require declarations to be signed by the family and/or funeral directors stating there are no unsuitable items in the coffin and the body has been prepared in line with the principles of natural burial		NO

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Queensland

Alberton Cemetery

Section inside a conventional cemetery

<https://www.goldcoast.qld.gov.au/community/natural-burials-43842.html>

QUESTION	YES	NO
The natural burial ground is a section of (or contained within) an existing traditional cemetery	Yes	
The natural burial ground is a stand-alone independent ground where only natural burial occurs		No
All burials are shallow depth i.e. 1 metre of soil above the body at the shallowest point		No
All graves are single graves and if two people wish to be buried together must be side by side	Yes	
Compost material is incorporated when back filling the grave		No
All graves are dug by hand		No
We allow mechanical lowering devices	Yes	
We allow the lowering of a coffin or body by hand	Yes	
Grave markers are allowed in this cemetery		No
GPS coordinates of grave sites are offered to families/next of kin	Yes	
All grave markers are locally sourced and of natural material	NA	
Coffins are allowed however they are only to be of biodegradable material	Yes	
Shroud burials are allowed	Yes	
The body of the deceased is not allowed to undergo embalming or temporary preservation prior to burial	Yes	
The body of the deceased is required to be prepared naturally i.e. with no plastic or chemical preparations	Yes	
The body of the deceased is required to only be wearing natural fibres		No
Metal such as jewellery is permitted to be buried with the deceased	Yes	



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We only permit biodegradable and compostable items to be buried with the body such as handwritten notes, fresh flowers etc.	Yes	
Families/next of kin are permitted to back fill the grave by hand	Yes	
We require declarations to be signed by the family and/or funeral directors stating there are no unsuitable items in the coffin and the body has been prepared in line with the principles of natural burial		No



South Australia

Enfield Memorial Park

Wirra Wonga - Section inside a conventional cemetery

<https://aca.sa.gov.au/Our-Cemeteries/Enfield-Memorial-Park>

AND

Smithfield Memorial Park

Pilyu Yarta - Section inside a conventional cemetery

<https://aca.sa.gov.au/Our-Cemeteries/Smithfield-Memorial-Park>

QUESTION	YES	NO
The natural burial ground is a section of (or contained within) an existing traditional cemetery	Yes	
The natural burial ground is a stand-alone independent ground where only natural burial occurs	Yes	
All burials are shallow depth i.e. 1 metre of soil above the body at the shallowest point	Yes	
All graves are single graves and if two people wish to be buried together must be side by side	Yes	
Compost material is incorporated when back filling the grave		No
All graves are dug by hand		No
We allow mechanical lowering devices	Yes	
We allow the lowering of a coffin or body by hand	Yes	
Grave markers are allowed in this cemetery		No*
GPS coordinates of grave sites are offered to families/next of kin		No**
All grave markers are locally sourced and of natural material	Yes***	
Coffins are allowed however they are only to be of biodegradable material	Yes	
Shroud burials are allowed	Yes	
The body of the deceased is not allowed to undergo embalming or temporary preservation prior to burial	Yes	
The body of the deceased is required to be prepared naturally i.e. with no plastic or chemical preparations	Yes	



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The body of the deceased is required to only be wearing natural fibres	Yes	
Metal such as jewellery is permitted to be buried with the deceased		No
We only permit biodegradable and compostable items to be buried with the body such as handwritten notes, fresh flowers etc.	Yes	
Families/next of kin are permitted to back fill the grave by hand	Yes	
We require declarations to be signed by the family and/or funeral directors stating there are no unsuitable items in the coffin and the body has been prepared in line with the principles of natural burial		No****

* We do not permit grave markers on the site itself however families can choose to have their loved one's name engraved on a communal locally sourced sandstone wall

** Each site has a unique microchip inserted into the site which can be scanned with a tracking wand and identified.

*** Not grave markers but the communal wall available to families as an option to have their loved one's name memorialised can do so on locally sourced natural sandstone walls.

**** We are currently working on a declaration for funeral directors/families which will be implemented in the near future.