

Compare Cremation Costs to Burial Costs

Those considering the most economical solution for the disposition of remains should compare cremation costs to burial costs.

Preparation Cost

The first cost difference between cremation and burial comes with preparation of the body. To prepare a body for burial, funeral directors must disinfect and embalm it. For those that intend to have an open casket for the burial, stylists must prepare the body for viewing, including application of specialized techniques and cosmetics. Housing the body, collecting burial certificates, and preparing the deceased for burial averages around \$1,600.

Those that choose cremation without a viewing can avoid these fees entirely. There is no need to embalm remains prior to cremation, nor must the body be prepared for viewing, unless there is an open casket funeral.

Burial Casket vs. Cremation Container

Burial caskets vary dramatically in cost. A wood or metal casket starts around \$500, and can go up to \$14,000, depending on the materials and construction. A casket is not needed for cremation. Most crematories require a simple cremation container that starts at under \$100.

Additional Burial Costs

Burial is associated with additional costs. Families must buy a plot; transport the body to the cemetery; have the grave opened; have the remains placed inside; close the grave; and pay for a headstone.

After cremation is complete, the only standard cost is the cost of a cremation container to store the remains. This can cost as little as \$50 for a basic urn, up to several thousand dollars for an elaborate urn, a niche for the urn at a local cemetery, and a memorial.

No matter how you compare the costs, cremations involves far fewer costs, and typically lower costs, than traditional burial.

- Neptune Society

Single Burial/Cremation Cost Comparison

Service or Product	Average Cost		
	Traditional Burial	Cremation	
		Niche	Grave
Embalming-Prep/Cremation	\$1,600	\$1,400	\$1,400
Casket/Urn	\$2,400	\$500	\$500
Open/Close	\$1,000	\$500	\$500
Grave/Niche	\$1,200	\$2,900	\$600
Stone/Engraving	\$500	\$0	\$350
Vault	\$1,250	\$0	\$0
Other Mortuary Services	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
Church Services	\$650	\$650	\$650
Estimated Total	\$11,600	\$8,950	\$7,000