

Coffins Vs Caskets

Do we choose a Coffin or a Casket?

When arranging a funeral, you will have the option of whether to purchase a coffin or a casket for the deceased. But what is the difference between the two?

The decision of whether to have a Coffin or Casket is generally one of personal preference, and/or cost. Caskets are usually more expensive than Coffins, and are mainly purchased for Burials.

A coffin is more traditional with tapering at the head and feet. It is usually made of particleboard, custom wood or solid timber. The lid of the coffin comes separate. The lid is then secured into place with 4 -6 plastic or metal screws. A coffin can have four or six handles.

Coffins are available in the following styles

- Particleboard /Custom wood plain
- Particle board with stain or veneer
- Particle board with surrounding paper design
- Particle board, painted with a matt or gloss paint
- Solid Timber

A casket is rectangular in shape and is the same width & height at the head, as it is at the foot. It is usually made of solid wood or metal. The lid is attached with hinges on one side. Some lids are made in two sections; this is to assist viewing purposes. Caskets are traditionally larger than coffins and come in a variety of designs. They may have a handle bar, or individual handles (x 6)

Caskets are available in the following styles

- Cardboard Casket
- Rental Casket (particleboard capsule, in a solid timber outer shell)
- Solid Timber
- Metal Casket

The majority of the selections available for both coffins and caskets are in a wood grain finish or plain white.

Some funeral directors will offer a custom option, whereby the family can choose to have the coffin or casket painted in a particular colour or design. There is usually an extra fee for these options

The interior of a coffin or casket is lined with protective plastic sheeting and then covered, usually in neutral coloured silk, satin or cotton trim, and then finished with a lace edging.

If you have purchased a very basic coffin; it may not have the inner material lining.

Is there an Environmental Option?

Cardboard Caskets are an environmental alternative, although they are not widely used in Victoria. This has been due to past problems with weakness.

However, www.onearth.com.au produces cardboard coffins, which meet strength guidelines and sell direct to the public, through Funeral Line Australia, or alternatively through your chosen Funeral Director.

Examples of Coffins



Simple Particleboard coffin
With veneer (Above)



Solid Wood Coffin with stain (Above)
not shown with handles



Plain Particleboard coffin (Below)

Examples of Caskets



Solid Wood Caskets
(Above, below left & right)



Metal Casket (Above)

