



## What Funerals Cost

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The average cost of a funeral, as of July 2004, is \$6,500, according to the National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA). That cost includes an outer burial container but does not include cemetery costs.

What parts make up that funeral-cost total? Well, here's a list of the average cost of commonly selected services, as of 1999, per the NFDA. Note that some parts of the country will be more expensive, though, and others will be less expensive. In addition, you can spend a lot more or a lot less, depending on the decisions you make.

Most Commonly Selected Services	Avg. Cost
Professional service charges	\$1,182.31
Embalming	\$400.51
Other preparations (face, hair, etc.)	\$150.35
Visitation/Viewing	\$314.42
Funeral at funeral home	\$356.68
Transfer of remains to funeral home	\$158.66
Hearse (local)	\$179.08
Service car/van	\$87.42
Acknowledgement cards	\$14.47
Casket	\$2,176.46
Vault	\$757.80

Of course, this isn't all that's involved. It's just what a funeral director would typically be involved in. Here are some additional expenses:

Service	Estimated Cost
Cemetery plot	\$500 to thousands
Opening and closing the grave	\$350 to \$1,500
Headstones, statues, or markers	\$500 to thousands

By contrast, a cremation can cost just \$1,500 or less. ([Consider cremation.](#))

If you don't want cremation, with careful planning and purchasing, you can pay just \$2,500 or less for a funeral and traditional metal casket. (More details and resources at this "[funeral rip-off](#)" website and in [this previous article](#).)

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