



Illustration: Martin Haake

# At a funeral

*In many countries, 1 November is a day when people visit the graves of deceased relatives. ANNA HOCHSIEDER presents key language to talk about death, funerals and mourning.*

**MEDIUM PLUS**



## A perfect send-off

The older I get, the more time I seem to spend at **funerals** — a regular reminder of my own **mortality**. I don't plan to **kick the bucket** just yet, but at 65, it's time to start thinking about where and how I want to **be laid to rest**: **burial** or **cremation**, **religious** or **secular ceremony**? Or maybe I could **donate** my **body** to science. These are decisions I shouldn't leave to my **loved ones**. I don't want them to have to worry about **funeral arrangements** when they're **grieving** my **death**.

The last funeral I **attended** was that of a dear neighbour of mine. Helen had **lived to the ripe old age** of 97. Her family **held a wake** at a **funeral home**, where Helen was **laid out** in an **open coffin**. Friends and **acquaintances** came to **pay their respects** to the **departed** and **offer their condolences** to the **bereaved**.

The next day, a **hearse** transported Helen's **mortal remains** from the **funeral parlour** to the village church. The vicar **delivered a eulogy**. There were **prayers** and **hymns**, and then, as the **church bells tolled**, eight **pall-bearers** carried Helen's coffin past some impressive **tombs** to her **final resting place** and lowered it into the ground. The **mourners** scattered **soil** on to the coffin and threw flowers into the **grave**. Then we all gathered at Helen's house and shared our memories of the **deceased** until deep in the night. It was the perfect **send-off** to celebrate a life well lived.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. funeral procession ['fju:nərəl prə'seʃən], funeral cortège ['fju:nərəl kɔ:t,teɪʒ] | 8. cemetery ['semətəri], graveyard ['greɪvjɑ:d] |
| 2. coffin ['kɒfɪn], casket ['kɑ:skɪt]  | 9. inscription [ɪn'skrɪpʃən]                    |
| 3. pall-bearer ['pɔ:l ,beərə]  | 10. urn [ɜ:n]                                   |
| 4. gravedigger ['greɪv,dɪgə]   | 11. grave [greɪv]                               |
| 5. hearse [hɜ:s]   | 12. wreath [ri:θ]                               |
| 6. bier [biə]  | 13. floral tribute [flɔ:rl 'trɪbjut]            |
| 7. pall [pɔ:l]   | 14. gravestone ['greɪvstəʊn]                    |
|  | 15. mourner ['mɔ:nə]                            |

## Funeral services

Someone whose job it is to arrange funerals and to prepare the bodies of dead people for cremation or burial is called a **funeral director** or **undertaker**.

The place where dead bodies are prepared and where visitors can go to see them is called a **funeral home** or **funeral parlour**.



It's not a matter of life and death but you might want to test yourself on what you've learned on these pages. You'll find exercises in **Spotlight plus**: [spotlight-online.de/spotlight-plus](http://spotlight-online.de/spotlight-plus)

At [spotlight-online.de/teachers/picture-it](http://spotlight-online.de/teachers/picture-it) you can find German translations for these words and expressions, as well as our Vocabulary archive.

**acquaintance** [ə'kwetəns] • Bekannte(r)

**bereaved: the ~** [bi'ri:vɪd] • die Hinterbliebenen

**burial** ['beriəl] • Beerdigung

**condolences: offer one's ~ to sb.** [kən'dəʊlənsɪz] • jmdm. sein Beileid ausdrücken

**deceased: the ~** [di'si:st] • der, die Verstorbene

**departed: the ~** [di'pɑ:tɪd] • der, die Verstorbene

**donate** [dəʊ'neɪt] • spenden

**eulogy** ['ju:lədʒi] • Grabrede

**final resting place** [ˌfaɪnəl 'restɪŋ pleɪs] • letzte Ruhestätte

**funeral** ['fju:nərəl] • Beerdigung

**grieve** [gri:v] • betrauern

**hearse** [hɜ:s] • Leichenwagen

**hymn** [hɪm] • Kirchenlied

**kick the bucket** [ˌkɪk ðə 'bʌkɪt] *ifml.* • den Löffel abgeben

**mortality** [mɔ: 'tælətɪ] • Sterblichkeit

**mortal remains** [ˌmɔ:təl ri'meɪnz] • sterbliche Überreste

**mourner** ['mɔ:nə] • Trauergast

**pall-bearer** ['pɔ:l ,beərə] • Sargträger

**respects: pay one's ~** [ri'spektɪz] • die letzte Ehre erweisen

**scatter** ['skæɪtə] • (ver-)streuen

**secular** ['sekjələ] • nicht-kirchlich

**send-off** ['send ɒf] • Verabschiedung

**soil** [sɔɪl] • Erde

**toll** [təʊl] • läuten

**tomb** [tu:m] • Grabmal, Gruft

**wake** [weɪk] • Totenwache