

## Types of Grave Markers

The two most popular types of grave markers are flat markers and upright monuments, though many people choose statues, benches or other types of specialty markers. Any of those choices can pay tribute to one person, two people (companion markers) or a whole family.

Today's engraving and embossing technologies allow markers and other memorials to be personalized in limitless ways, from the traditional name and lifespan dates, to song lyrics or poetry, to nature scenes and even photography.

### Flat markers

An individual or couple often chooses a flat marker because it fits in with the parklike aesthetic of their chosen cemetery. These elegant, minimalist memorials are not only beautiful, they tend to be less expensive than upright monuments. For a number of reasons, including ease of maintenance and property views, some cemeteries allow only flush markers and have restrictions on size, so your choice could be restricted to certain parameters. A cemetery might be called a memorial park when no upright markers are present.



Flush to the ground, with a flat top or beveled edges, flat grave markers are made of solid stone or stone topped with a bronze plaque. They come in a variety of colors and can be customized with words, photos, illustrations and more. Flat markers are placed at the head of a burial space or cover the entire burial plot, and come in single or companion styles.

When you order a flat marker you may have the option of adding a vase, which some memorial parks require if you want to leave flowers at the gravesite. When not filled with flowers, or during snowy winter months, the vase is often stored upside down in the marker.

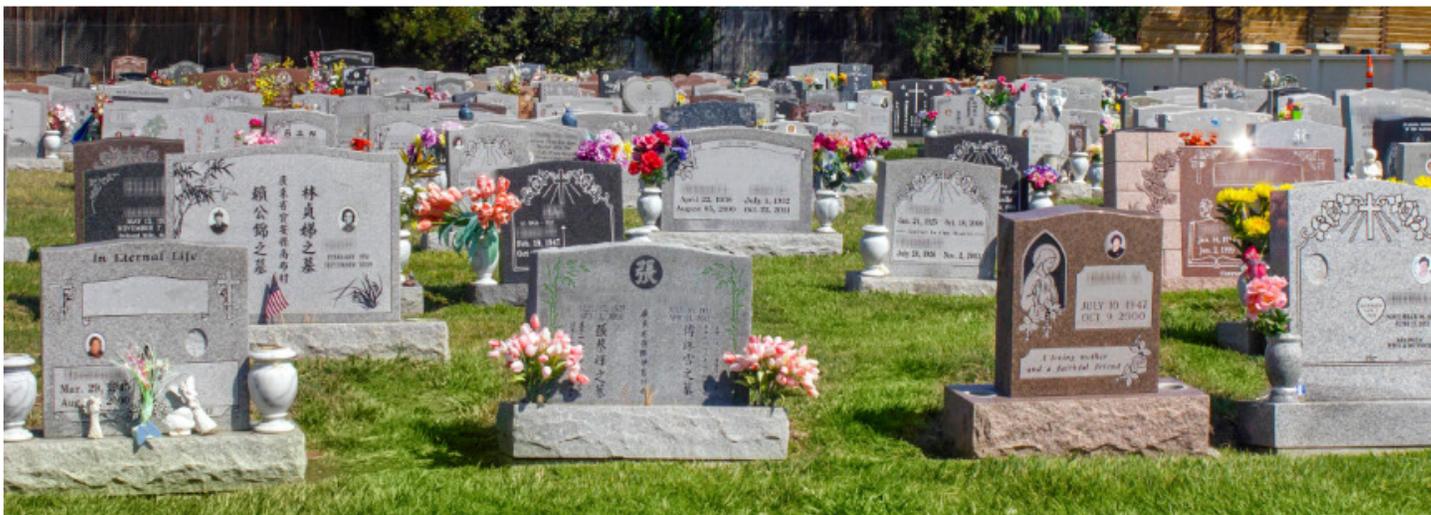
## Average costs for flush markers

Cost for a simple gray granite flush marker: \$500

Cost for a flush bronze memorial or flush companion granite marker: \$1,200 to \$5,000

## Upright monuments

An erect stone slab with a stone base, an upright monument is much more prominent than a flat marker. They are what come to mind when you imagine a headstone or tombstone. Upright markers come in different sizes, colors and shapes, from simple rectangles or custom shapes like hearts, open books or crosses.



Upright monuments provide a large canvas for personalization. In addition to names and dates, they might include verses, etched photos or illustrations of things people loved. They are a good way to tell a story about a loved one—or to tell your own story if you are purchasing cemetery property in advance. When personalized with a loved one's likeness, symbols of faith, or images of sports gear, beloved pets or items that give a nod to signature hobbies, they can reveal a bit about personality and values. They can be immediate reminders to everyone who sees them how much the people they pay tribute to were loved and cherished.

In designs for individuals, couples or families, upright monuments make an impression. Though they are generally more expensive than flat markers, they are a popular choice for burials in cemeteries that allow them.

You will often find upright monuments allowed in spaces like hedge estates or walled estates ([read more about types of cemetery property](#)), where the cemetery maintains a consistent aesthetic that is easier to keep up in perpetuity.

Average starting costs for upright markers

Starting cost for upright markers: \$1,500

Starting cost for companion and family markers: \$3,500

### **Specialty markers**

Memorial benches, angel statuary, obelisks, crosses and other highly customized designs take permanent memorials to the next level. Uncommon shapes stand out in a cemetery, they draw attention and pique curiosity. Who doesn't want a closer look at a marker shaped like a dolphin leaping above the waves or a 15-foot polished black granite obelisk? Specialty markers are a unique offering for unique people.

### **Average starting costs for specialty markers**

Starting cost for a wide selection of upright and specialty memorials: \$5,000 to \$15,000

### **What factors influence the cost of a grave marker?**

A number of things influence cost:

**Material.** In general, bronze markers are more expensive than comparably sized stone markers, and granite markers are less expensive than marble markers. The price of the granite depends on where it comes from and how it's extracted from the earth. Though marble costs the most, many choose it for its polished appearance. Marble weathers more quickly, however, and requires more upkeep over the years.

**Size.** Generally, the larger the grave marker, the pricier it will be.

**Customization.** Bronze markers are embossed. Stone markers are carved, etched and engraved. Either way, the more detailed the marker, the higher the cost. Typically, engraving of a name, birth date and death date costs about \$500. Prices go up from there. However, though many funeral homes, cemeteries and other sellers charge separately for engraving or embossing, Dignity Memorial marker prices include this service. A funeral director or cemetery associate can help you decide exactly what to put on a marker. [Contact us](#) for more information.

### **How much does it cost to install a grave marker?**

Because of their weight and size, grave markers must be installed by professionals. Most cemeteries offer installation services, with starting prices ranging from \$200 to \$2,000, depending on the size of the monument and location of the cemetery.

### **How long does installation take?**

Many grave markers are installed after [a funeral](#) takes place. From the time a final design is approved, production and delivery time on a grave marker can range from 10 weeks to six months or longer, depending on the complexity of the design and where the stone originates. Depending on your location and the time of year, the ground may need to thaw or settle for installation to take place.

During the time between a burial and the installation of the marker, the grave is marked by a temporary marker. A growing number of families are electing to buy and install markers before their time of need to avoid delays and more easily identify their final resting places.

**What happens if there's a problem?**

When you order a marker from a Dignity Memorial provider, be sure to carefully check the order paperwork for errors such as a misspelled name or wrong date. If the marker doesn't arrive as you expected, we will do everything required to correct it. If a grave marker purchased from Dignity Memorial becomes damaged at one of our memorial parks, whether by natural events or maintenance activities, you need only call and request maintenance or repair.

In any case, with our Service Guarantee, if you are not 100% satisfied, we'll make every effort to to correct the situation immediately. Please [contact us](#) for customer care.