

10 Hints to Designing the Perfect Memorial

1. **Design with the Person or Persons in Mind** - Memorials are permanent structures erected to remember a loved one. Who is it for and what do you want it to say about that person or persons and to others who see the memorial? They should be designed with an idea of who that person was and what they loved about life. Interests, hobbies, and faith are just a few of the things that you should think about. The best way to make sure a memorial says what it should about the person is to have input from that person before they pass. Pre-Need purchasing assures that you get what you want and not what someone else thinks you want.
2. **Know what you are Allowed** - Every cemetery, and in many cases sections within in a cemetery, can have different rules and regulations. Knowing size restrictions especially can help you in designing a monument that will work for a particular lot. Be aware of the surroundings and how you would like the monument to look in relation to others and the landscape.
3. **Budget** - When designing a monument, you should have a budget in mind, but ask for everything as you would ideally like it first. You can always work backwards if the price you are given is too high for you budget. There may be other less expensive options that still may memorialize your loved one in a similar way but not over extend yourself financially.
4. **Plan for the Future** - Realistically how many names should be planned for the stone? Monuments can be for one person, multiple people or for an entire family. Memorials should always be designed with future names in mind or you can risk designing something that may not fit all the names that you wish to add someday. You can utilize the back of the stone and base if needed and allowed.
5. **Determine Date Lay-out** - You have the option when designing a memorial to engrave full dates with month, day, and year or just years. Depending on the room left, it may be in the best interest of the stone to limit to just years. However, we have found that full dates are more popular in the area and if there is room why not?
6. **Contrast** - Dark polished colors usually have the best contrast in relation to the engraved lettering and design work. In some lighter colors, panels or coloring are necessary in order to make the information pop more. If space is a problem and you have a dark stone, you probably do not need a panel. If you are etching on a stone, the darker the better.
7. **Use White Space** - White space is a print marketing term that basically explains the area in print with no words or pictures. Sometimes less is more on monuments as well. It is not necessary to fill every spot on the stone with words, designs, etc. You want to have some white space in order to draw attention to the family name and/or design work that is there.
8. **Design with Longevity in Mind** - Whatever you decide to do, remember that engraving deep into a monument is your best bet for longevity. Coloring, lithochrome and gold leaf are not guaranteed as weather and forces out of the control of the retailer can lessen the life of these additions. Many can be touched up but not without additional cost.
9. **Add Accents** - Display Cases, porcelain portraits, hero medallions, etchings, vases, and vigil lights are just a few of the things you can add to your stone for personalization. Many of these things can also be added later.
10. **If you can't say it in Pictures, say it in Words** - You know the old saying "A picture says 1000 words." Although this may be true, sometimes there is no better way to say something than to write it out. Quotes, song lyrics, poems, bible verses, and inspirational quotes are very popular and effective in stating who a person was, and can be added to any monument memorial.