WE BUY GUNS

Heir's Guide to Inherited Firearms

What to do, step by step, when guns are part of an estate. For families, heirs and executors

Inheriting firearms is common, especially after losing a parent, spouse or relative. Many people end up responsible for guns they didn't choose, don't recognize or don't feel comfortable handling. **You don't have to decide anything today.** This guide walks you through the first steps, at your own pace and without pressure.

> **Why firearms are different:** Firearms are regulated under federal and state law. Unlike most personal property, they can't always be given away, shipped or sold freely. The right steps depend on the type of firearm, where you live, and who will receive it.

1 First steps: secure, pause and confirm who's in charge

Keep everyone safe

- [ ] Store firearms in a locked safe or cabinet, and limit access to authorized people only
- [ ] Make sure they're unloaded. If you're not familiar with firearms, don't load, unload or test them; keep them pointed in a safe direction and ask someone qualified for help
- [ ] Store ammunition separately. Don't put old ammunition in the trash; ask a local range or hazardous-waste facility
- [ ] If storing them at the home isn't appropriate, a licensed dealer or secure storage provider may be able to help

Pause before anything changes hands

- [ ] **Don't sell, give away, transfer or ship any firearm until you've checked the law.** Moving firearms incorrectly can create legal risk you don't need
- [ ] Be careful across state lines. Moving or transferring firearms between states adds rules
- [ ] **Find out who has authority.** If the estate is in probate, the executor (personal representative) typically manages estate property, including firearms. If you're not sure, ask the estate attorney before anyone takes a gun home
- [ ] Make sure anyone who has access to, or receives, a firearm is legally allowed to have one

2 Identify and inventory what's there

- [ ] You don't need to be an expert. Make a simple list of every firearm with its **make**, **model** (if visible), **type** (handgun, rifle, shotgun), **caliber** (often stamped on the barrel), **serial number** and **condition**
- [ ] Note accessories: optics, magazines, cases, original boxes
- [ ] **Photos:** both sides of each firearm, the serial number area, and any markings or engravings. Clear photos are usually enough for identification and a first valuation
- [ ] Keep receipts, permits, NFA paperwork, appraisals and family history with the matching gun. Missing paperwork is common for ordinary firearms; just note it
- [ ] Don't clean, refinish or swap parts. It can lower collector value
- [ ] Don't judge value by age or looks. Two similar guns can differ a lot in value and legal requirements
- [ ] Optional: use our free intake spreadsheet, linked from webuyguns.com/selling-inherited-firearms

3 Watch for NFA items

Some firearms fall under the federal **National Firearms Act (NFA)**. These include machine guns, suppressors (silencers), short-barreled rifles (**rifle barrel under 16 inches**), short-barreled shotguns (**shotgun barrel under 18 inches**), destructive devices and "any other weapons." NFA items are federally registered, and they need federal (ATF) approval before they can change hands, including to an heir.

- [ ] Set aside anything that might be an NFA item and keep it secured
- [ ] Look for its registration paperwork (approved ATF forms or tax stamps) and keep it with the item
- [ ] Don't sell, lend, move or give it to anyone until the transfer is properly handled
- [ ] If you can't find the paperwork, don't move it; get qualified advice first

> **WeBuyGuns handles the NFA transfer process on your behalf** when you sell an NFA item to us.

4 Decide: keep, transfer to family, or sell

There's no single right answer. The best choice depends on the will or estate plan, state law, whether the person receiving the firearm is legally eligible, and what the family wants. Many families combine options: keeping a meaningful piece or two and selling the rest. You can also store the collection safely while you decide, or donate where the law permits.

Keep

- [ ] Confirm you're legally allowed to own it where you live
- [ ] Check your state's rules for inherited firearms
- [ ] Plan safe storage and insurance
- [ ] Keep its paperwork with it

Transfer to a family member

- [ ] Confirm the person can legally receive it
- [ ] Follow your state's transfer rules; a licensed dealer (FFL) may need to be involved
- [ ] If they live in another state, check before you move anything
- [ ] Record the transfer for the estate

Sell

- [ ] Choose a licensed process: dealer, auction or consignment, or an online buyer like WeBuyGuns
- [ ] Get a professional valuation; for rare pieces, get more than one quote
- [ ] Avoid private meetups and shipping guns yourself
- [ ] Keep a bill of sale or receipt

5 Keep good records

Good records protect the executor and the estate. Keep these together:

- [ ] The full inventory and photos
- [ ] Valuations and quotes
- [ ] Authority documents (executor)
- [ ] Transfer receipts
- [ ] Bills of sale
- [ ] Shipping and compliance records

Quick inventory log (add sheets as needed, or use our intake spreadsheet for larger collections)

Make	Model	Type	Caliber	Serial number	Condition	Photos / NFA?

6 Get help before final decisions

- **Estate attorney:** who has authority, the estate plan, and anything unclear about state law
- **State rules:** our free state-by-state guides at webuyguns.com/legal-guides, and more for executors at webuyguns.com/resources/estates
- **A knowledgeable buyer or licensed dealer** can help identify what you have, explain what affects value, and flag items with special legal requirements
- Questions are normal. Call **(317) 804-8713**, even if you're just gathering information

The WeBuyGuns option

If the family decides to sell some or all of the collection, WeBuyGuns is one option to consider.

- **Offers in under 48 hours**
- **Insured shipping**
- **Payment goes out once the collection is received and inspected**
- **Payment by ACH or check only**
- **We ensure and handle compliance in every state.** That's a core part of the service
- **NFA items:** we handle the transfer process on your behalf

Get your offer: webuyguns.com/get-offer or call (317) 804-8713

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General information only, not legal advice. Firearm laws vary by state and change over time. Talk to the estate attorney, or check current federal and state law, before you transfer, sell or ship any inherited firearm.