

How is a Jewish funeral conducted at Or Chadasch?

A Jewish funeral should take place as quickly as possible – in compliance with medical and official requirements. At Jewish funerals there is no "open coffin", out of respect for the deceased. After the tahara, the ritual cleansing of the deceased, the Chewra Kaddischa wraps the deceased in the traditional white burial robes, the tachrichim, and places him/her in a simple wooden coffin. Candles, flowers, wreaths and other funeral decorations are not used. Non-Jewish mourners should also observe this rule.

Guests should dress respectfully in dark clothing, with arms and knees covered and closed shoes. Women do not have to wear a head-covering, men are required to wear kippot. These will also be handed out at the cemetery. The funeral ceremony is conducted by a Jewish person. This can be a rabbi, a family member or a Jewish friend. The funeral ceremony is traditionally very simple and lasts between 30 minutes and one hour. Funerals take place at the Or Chadasch cemetery (Vienna Central Cemetery Gate 1, Simmeringer Hauptstraße 230B, Group 18). The ceremony begins, if desired, in the funeral hall (beside Gate 2, Simmeringer Hauptstraße 234). There is the opportunity here for speeches and individual arrangements. Afterwards, the funeral proceeds to the grave; the person conducting the funeral walks behind the coffin in front of the mourners, reciting a selection of prayers and psalms. Once all the mourners have gathered around the grave, the coffin is lowered into the ground. A minyan, a group of at least ten adult Jewish people, says the Kaddish, while the bereaved throw earth into the grave before it is closed. Those who wish to then say the prayer "El Male Rachamim" and wash their hands before leaving the cemetery.