

**DIVORCE GUIDE**

**PRE-DIVORCE  
10 ESSENTIAL  
STEPS**



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# PRE-DIVORCE

## 10 ESSENTIAL STEPS

- 1** Spend time writing down the reasons for the breakup to gain clarity that you or your spouse are taking the right step to go down the divorce route.
- 2** Consider whether counselling could help salvage the marriage. Discuss with your spouse if the relationship has in fact irretrievably broken down and the reasons both or one of you may feel this way to gain a better understanding of the situation. Keep the discussion calm and if either of you becomes upset agree to have another chat in a few days' time. Agree on how you should jointly communicate your decision with the children.
- 3** Keep discussions with your spouse general in nature, and as measured as possible, until you have sought legal advice.
- 4** Arrange an initial consultation with your solicitor before you discuss anything with your spouse on the next steps so you know the general principles that apply to your situation. Discuss with your solicitor whether mediation would be suitable. Also, discuss with them whether they are collaborative solicitors and whether this process may be an option.
- 5** Engage the professional support of a financial adviser (IFA) to help you navigate your finances and understand your spouse's financial situation. In-struct a chartered accountant if your joint finances are more complicated.
- 6** Decide practically (and once you have received legal and financial advice) whether it would be better if one of you should move out, as the divorce process can be long and uncomfortable if you are in the same house. If you take this step, work out between you how to deal with your living expenses and the household bills in the interim, i.e. who should pay what, until your financial situation can be formally addressed later in the course of proceedings.
- 7** If you are moving out, make sure what time the children will spend with each of you and where this should take place is agreed before you move out. If you can go into detail early in the form of a parenting plan this may avoid any future disagreement. There is information and an example of this on the government website: <https://www.cafcass.gov.uk/grown-ups/parents-and-carers/divorce-and-separation/parenting-together/parenting-plan/>
- 8** Move out with your valuables, possessions, and all your financial and personal paperwork (including your marriage certificate) as you will need this later. If you have room or storage

take contents you solely purchased (unless in use by the children and your spouse) to avoid wrangles over trying to get these later. Division of the joint contents is likely to be addressed with remaining financial matters later in the divorce.

**9**

Get help straight away if you are suffering from domestic violence.

**10**

Look after yourself! Consider seeing your doctor if you are having problems coping and perhaps experiencing anxiety or being unable to sleep. Take as much support from family and friends as you need and do any relaxing activity that will help with stress and anxiety such as walking, yoga, and meditation.