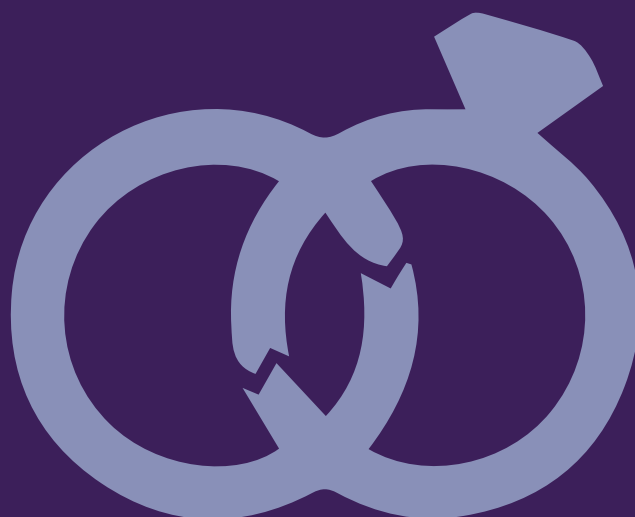


# TAKE FIVE

Your guide to divorce  
in five steps



THRINGS

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## Your guide to divorce in five steps

### 1. My marriage has ended what should I do?

When a relationship breaks down, thinking about the future for your family and finances can be distressing. You might also have to work with lawyers for the first time, which can feel daunting.

With a number of options available to you, it is helpful to have lawyers who understand your concerns and can guide you through the implications of these choices so that you make practical decisions that suit you and your family, both now and in the long-term.

### 2. Can I divorce amicably, or will I have to go to court?

Each individual case is different, as are the desired outcomes. But what is common is that it can be a very stressful time.

Taking legal advice is not about conflict, but about trying to avoid it. The starting point with any divorce is to try to negotiate, to try to resolve settlements quickly and efficiently in order to prevent the case from going to court. Very few cases are determined at a final court hearing and it is up to you to discuss the best options that would suit you and your former partner in achieving an amicable settlement.

Divorce law is changing, with the Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Act coming into force on 6th April 2022, allowing couples to divorce without assigning blame. This will ease the stress and allow couples to focus on issues concerning the children or finances.

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### 3. What if I'm not ready for divorce?

When a marriage breaks down, both parties may not be at the same point.

It is very difficult for some people who have mentally moved on to understand that their estranged partner is stuck in shock or anger and can't possibly see a way out. Lawyers understand this and have a duty to help each person move forward in a way that feels supportive and constructive - not to push people through a process that is too difficult or painful. You may want to think about coaching or counselling to help you through the process or, if you wish, bring a friend to the meeting with your lawyer to help you to take in the advice given and ask any difficult questions for you.

This is particularly important when it comes to entering into collaborative negotiations, which require a great deal of consideration for each party's point of view. The collaborative approach is like having a round the table meeting with both parties and lawyers present to discuss all of the options. This may not suit everyone and, as your matter progresses, your lawyer can help you to work out the best way for you to work towards a settlement.

### 4. What is an Anchor Statement

In collaborative negotiations, lawyers often ask their clients at the start to think of an anchor statement. Parties consider their individual core values, what is most important to them and their key aims or outcomes. These can either be around the children, money or may be a combination of issues. Sharing and cementing the anchor statements between both parties helps to keep the process focused and ensure fluctuating emotions don't affect the overall success of proceedings. Whether the process is collaborative or not, having your own anchor statement does help to retain focus.

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## 5. I don't know where to start

There is a lot to think about when a relationship breaks down and it's hard to see the wood for the trees. A specialist family lawyer will have empathy and experience and be able to guide you, at your pace, through the issues, working out what the priorities are and helping you to make a plan. It is helpful to meet with your lawyer to talk this through, as you will be able to ensure that your lawyer is the right person to help you. You can then agree how you would like to set the tone for moving things forward, who does what and when that is to happen.

Having a team around you to support you is a huge help, allowing you the emotional support and the ability then to focus on the legal issues and work to be done to get you and your family through the process in the best way possible.



### Would you like to know more?

Please contact one of our expert lawyers in this sector:

[Fiona Kellow](#)