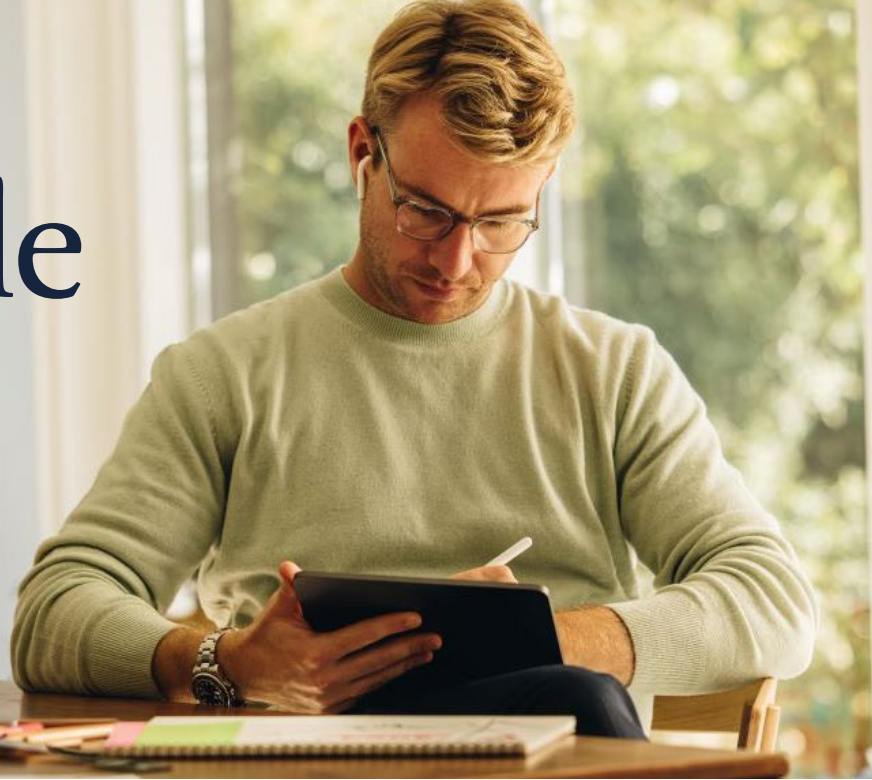




/guide



Your questions answered

MY SPOUSE WANTS TO DIVORCE - WHAT SHOULD I DO?

This Stowe guide offers advice on what to do when your spouse wants a divorce.

Hearing that your wife or husband wants a divorce can be extremely difficult as you look to a future that's different to how you imagined. Whether you're on the same page as your partner, or the news has come as a shock, it's a hugely overwhelming and emotional time.

So, what should you do when your spouse tells you they want a divorce?

Here are 6 tips to help you know where to start.

Speak with a divorce lawyer

We highly recommend that you speak with a family lawyer. It's vital to seek legal advice from a specialist divorce lawyer as soon as possible. Not only will they listen and guide you

through the next steps based on your unique circumstances. they'll also help you to deal with the complexities of divorce, offering clarity, explaining the language and legal process, and take the strain.

At Stowe, our experienced and compassionate family lawyers work with clients to identify the best approach, whether it's an alternative form of dispute resolution such as mediation, collaborative law, or arbitration, or a lawyer-led approach. And although most divorces don't end up in court, we are experienced at representing clients in the family court if necessary.

We offer a free initial consultation to discuss your options and help to alleviate some of the immediate fears and concerns you may have. The overwhelming feedback we receive from clients is that they feel a huge sense of relief following their first conversation with a divorce solicitor.

Take care of yourself

It sounds obvious, but even amicable divorces can be emotionally challenging, so it is important that you look after your needs and wellbeing. Accept support from friends and family to alleviate the pressure and think about whether you could benefit from professional support such as counselling assist you.

Child arrangements

Consider arrangements for any children of the family, including where and with whom the children will live with, and how often they will see each parent. Ideally you and your ex-partner will be able to agree the arrangements for the children. But if an agreement can't be reached, a family lawyer can assist with negotiations and, if necessary, help you to obtain a legally binding child arrangement order.

In the UK the family court's primary concern is the welfare of the children, and decisions regarding their care will be made with their best interests in mind. Unless there is evidence to the contrary, the family court works on the basis that where it is safe and appropriate to do so, maintaining relations with both parents is important for the child's welfare.

Consider child maintenance

It's a good idea to begin thinking about potential child maintenance payments to ensure you can meet your children's living expenses after divorce.

Child maintenance is a regular payment paid by one parent to the other to help with living expenses. It is calculated based on a number of factors and situations.

Child maintenance claims are handled by the Child Maintenance Service (CMS) but a family lawyer can help you to resolve child maintenance issues either directly or in rare cases, through the court system.

Review your finances

Gather as much information as possible about your financial situation. This includes details of assets such as property, bank accounts, investments, and pensions as well as any mortgages, loans and debts. It is important to consider all potential financial obligations, such as child maintenance or spousal support.

While it's not necessary to provide exact details right at the start, it is a good idea to prepare as much as you can so that you have a reliable overview of your financial circumstances with which to begin building a plan that will ensure you get the best possible outcome.

Talk to your spouse

Divorce doesn't need to result in a total collapse of communication between you and your ex-partner. There may be issues to be resolved that you can agree on. For example, you might be able to agree on the arrangements for the children but could use a little assistance from a family lawyer to reach agreements on financial issues.

Talking things through can make you feel more in control of the situation and is a cost-effective way of settling disagreements. However, we do recommend that you speak with a divorce law specialist before reaching any agreement with your spouse, to ensure you know your full rights and that the terms of the agreement you reach between you is fair in all the circumstances.

Dealing with the news that your spouse wants a divorce can be incredibly hard, but there are steps you can take to protect yourself and your interests and prepare for the future. Support from a family lawyer with help to smooth out the road ahead and ensure you can move forward from a position of strength.

Need more information?

Call our Client Care Team on **0330 838 7456** to speak with one of our specialist family lawyers or visit www.stowefamilylaw.co.uk

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