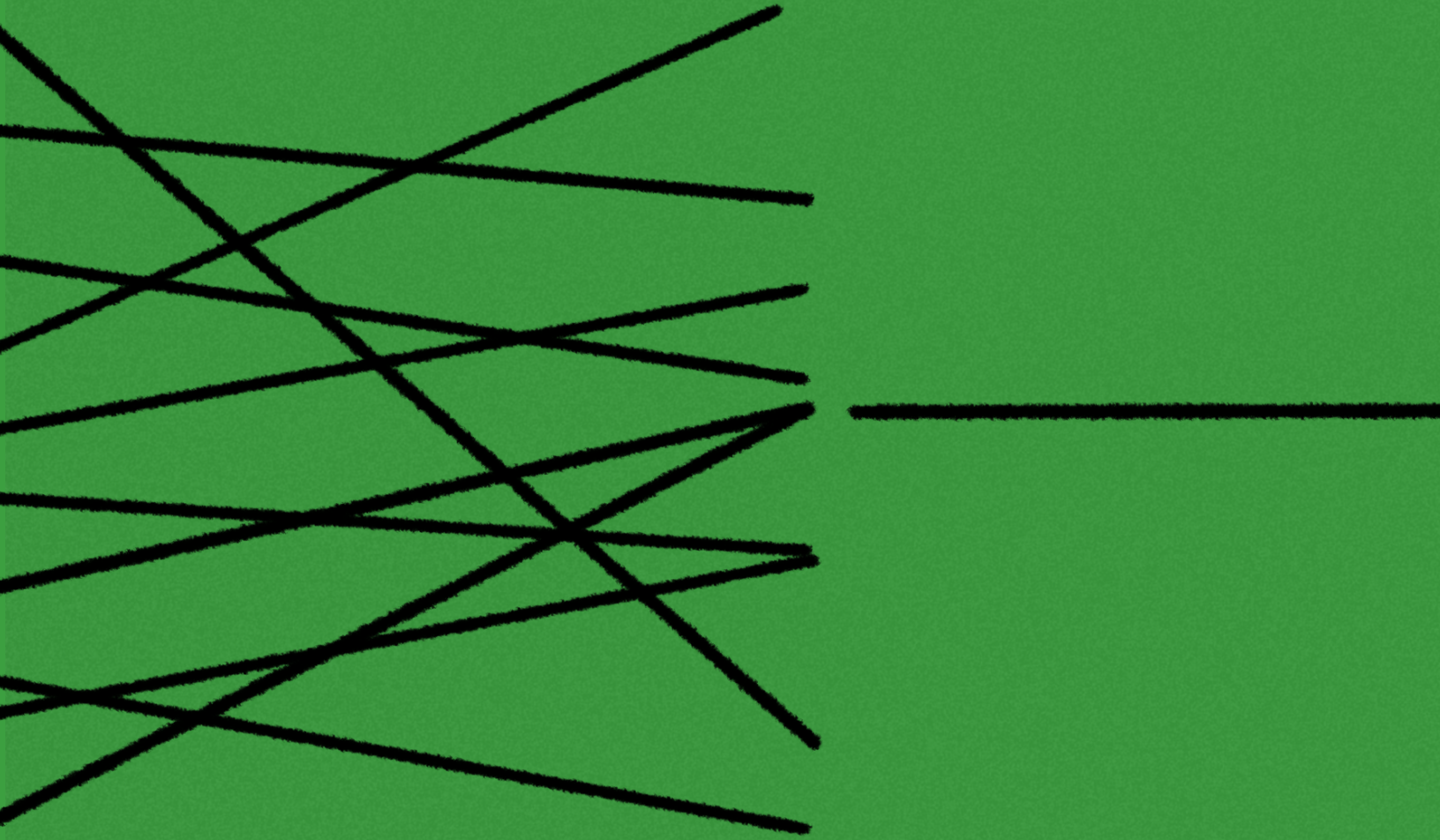


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HOW TO ASK
Your Spouse For
Divorce

PEACEFULLY

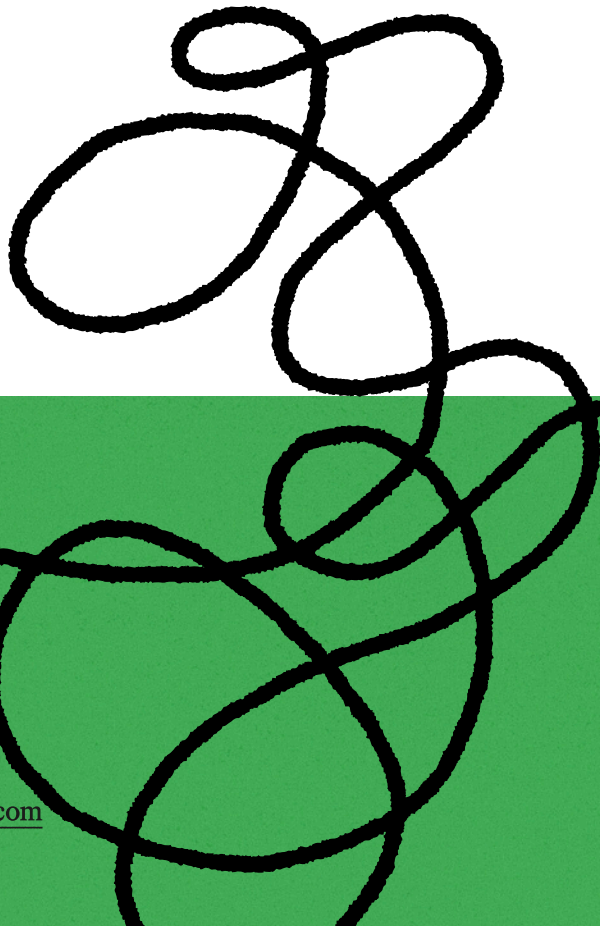
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Introduction

Asking for a divorce is an incredibly intimidating conversation to have. And many of us put it off because divorce is a life-altering decision that can have long-term unpredictable consequences.

But if your decision is made, this article provides valuable insights on how to ask for a divorce in a respectful and peaceful manner.

Let's dive right in.



How to Prepare Yourself to Talk about Divorce

Preparation is often vital to success in almost any situation. So, if you want to make a divorce conversation with your spouse smooth and effective, it is essential to prepare yourself and your arguments in advance.

Below are a few steps you need to take:

1. Outline the main points of your talk. Prepare your thoughts ahead of the conversation and write them down if you need to. Then, look through them and memorize the order in which you want to say them to your spouse.
2. Think about your partner's potential questions. Your partner will probably have questions and objections to your decision. Prepare to address all of the possible counterarguments.
3. Practice your speech. You must sound firm and confident if you want your voice to be heard. Practicing several times in front of a mirror will help find your courage and determination. Alternatively, practice with a certified divorce coach or therapist beforehand.



#1. Get to the Point

The success of your conversation largely depends on how you present your decision to get a divorce. Ideally, you should communicate your thoughts to your spouse as clearly and plainly as possible. Also, staying concise helps to focus the conversation.

For this reason, you must prepare the main points of the discussion and memorize them. It will help you avoid sounding insecure. After all, you don't want to look like a school kid who forgot to submit their assignment.

One way to prepare for the conversation is to list everything you want to address.

So here's what you should think through:

- Why do you want a divorce in the first place? Write down a brief explanation that you can use to start the talk. For instance, "I'm not happy in this marriage and think we need to consider the possibility of divorce."
- Add more detailed reasons (only you know them) to your list. Your spouse will definitely need more explanation, so prepare them in advance.

#2. Stay Calm

What you say is one of many important factors contributing to a peaceful resolution. But that's not all. The way you say it also matters: your emotional state, gestures, and intonation. You may have a lot of anger towards your spouse, but it won't help you achieve the desired result if you shout and yell. There are a few ways to get into an emotionally neutral state.

First, the more you practice your speech, the less emotional you will become giving it. Also, consider consulting a coach or therapist if you feel like you won't be able to stay calm during the discussion.

It's very likely your partner won't feel calm once you tell them, so prepare for their emotional response. Don't let them frustrate you. Instead, take a deep breath or count to ten before continuing to talk to your partner.

Speak slowly and confidently and avoid screaming and name-calling.

#3. Use “I” and “we” when explaining your decision.

Starting your explanations with “you” may put your spouse into a defensive mood. For instance, if you say, “You’re never at home, so I’ve been feeling lonely,” it may sound accusatory. So instead, use “Lately, I’ve been feeling lonely. I guess it’s because we drifted apart and don’t have as many common interests as we once did.”

Your goal is not to put the entire blame on your spouse but instead avoid blaming anyone. Even if you believe they caused your divorce, avoid mentioning it. Instead, tell them how you feel in your marriage and don’t get to the specifics.

Honesty but not brutal honesty with your partner about why you are asking for a divorce is essential. After all, you want a peaceful ending, so don’t add fuel to the fire of marital conflict.

#4. Leave the past grudges out of the talk.

Avoid criticizing your husband or wife for their past misbehavior; it won’t lead your divorce conversation anywhere good. First, they will never agree with your accusations, so it’s a dead end. Secondly, you will only increase the tension and inflame your egos.

If you want to get some resentment off your chest, write down your thoughts in a journal or send it to a friend.

If your spouse is the one who starts blaming you, end the discussion and return to it when everybody calms down.

#5. Choose your timing.

Is there an ideal moment to break the news about divorce? Probably not, but some moments are better than others.

Make sure you don't start the discussion out of the blue or with your children around. Naturally, you've been holding all these feelings and thoughts inside for a long time and want to get them out. Nevertheless, it is best not to indulge your impulses and wait for an appropriate situation.

How to choose an ideal moment? Here are a few examples:

- First, make sure that you and your spouse have plenty of time to talk and don't have anything significant planned ahead.
- Have the discussion at home, where you have privacy, not in a public place.
- Choose a moment when your children are away, e.g., spending the night with their friends or relatives.
- There's nothing urgent any of you need to tend to for another couple of hours.
- Both of you are calm and not irritated or frustrated by some events.

#6. Deal with the guilt of being the “leaver”

Usually, a person who initiates a divorce feels guilty about breaking promises given at the altar. If you have similar feelings, you're not alone; it's very common. These emotions may push you into doing something rash, such as suggesting that your spouse take the house or the car after the divorce. To protect yourself from **impulsive actions**, you must eliminate your “leaver's guilt.” Recall all the times you tried to repair your relationship that were unsuccessful. Also, remember it's not your fault that your marriage failed. Maybe you and your partner just don't match, and you realized it sooner. A marriage takes two people to succeed and you and your spouse just couldn't work together. This isn't about blame, but about finding a healthy way forward.

#7. Listen to your spouse's arguments

Your husband or wife may have no idea you've been considering a divorce. So, when you begin this conversation, they could be surprised and baffled. But after the initial shock wears off after hearing the news, they will express their opinions.

They might ask questions or assume the reasons, such as an affair. Either way, their reaction will probably be very emotional.

One of your tasks is listening intently and not interrupting them when they speak. It will allow them to feel heard and respected. Let them say what they want and address all the points they made. Also, remember to stay calm and resolute.

Respond by saying that you understand they feel frustrated, but you believe divorce is the right decision for both of you.

#8. Prepare for possible objections

If you feel you're done with this relationship and want to end it, you'll need a strategy to withstand your spouse's objections. In one possible scenario, they will try to persuade you to stay, bringing in children or similar leverage into the conversation.

They might say, "Did you think about children? They need both of their parents around," or "You won't be able to support yourself financially."

Figure out what sorts of arguments your spouse can make and prepare your defense. Getting ready to deal with various objections and questions will help you to stay focused and ensure that the conversation goes as smoothly as possible.

#9. Stay firm and calm about your decision

Persistence in the decision to divorce requires [courage and willpower](#). But, unfortunately, at the most critical moments, we sometimes lack the fortitude to stand our ground.

Your spouse's potential emotional reaction may distract you from the initial topic. So make sure to stay calm and return to what you want to say when it happens.

Here are a few tips to stay focused and firm when you ask for a divorce:

- Set boundaries and define your right to have your own opinion
- Know when to compromise
- Speak clearly, concisely, and directly
- Be prepared for the consequences of what you have communicated

In addition, don't hesitate to express your needs (in this case, a divorce) for fear of offending your partner. Instead, find a healthy balance between getting what you want and respecting your spouse.

#10. Give your spouse time to accept it

Perhaps, deep down, your husband or wife knew that your marriage was on the verge of collapse. However, the news that you want a divorce may devastate them.

That's why you need to tread carefully.

Don't force your point of view on your spouse. Instead, allow them to analyze the situation and work through the emotions independently. Then, if they require more time, let them have it.

This especially applies to introverts, who need to stay alone with their thoughts to make a decision. If your spouse needs time, table it and agree to come back and talk it through another time.

However, don't wait too long before you return to the topic, or your spouse may think you have changed your mind.

#11. Leave major legal arrangements for later.

You may want to discuss the legalities and major issues immediately after you ask your spouse about divorce. However, now is not the best moment since [your partner won't be emotionally ready](#) to make any decisions.

Moreover, you also need time to rest after such a tense conversation and get your thoughts together. Later, you can talk about the following things:

- Housing arrangements
- Plans for the children, if you have them
- Who gets what after a divorce
- Financial support and property ownership, etc.

In Practice

How to Start a Divorce Conversation

The words you choose to tell your spouse about divorce will likely shape the rest of the divorce process and define your relationships afterward. For this reason, you need to approach the conversation with compassion and prepare your spouse for the news.

But first things first.

Where should you begin? Is it better to get it over with and say it all at once? Your answer depends on whether you care about your spouse's mental state and reaction and if you want to break up peacefully.

There are ways to make things easier by using phrases that won't sound offensive to your partner. For example, you might try some of the following.

Start by acknowledging the problems in your marriage by saying:

- "We need to discuss the future of our marriage."
- "I have been feeling unsure about our marriage and want to talk about it."
- "I've been struggling with our marriage for some time and want to discuss it with you."

Proceed with one of the following phrases:

- "I feel like we've grown apart, and I think we should consider divorce."
- "I think it's time we discuss the possibility of divorce."
- "I have been unhappy in our marriage for a while and think it's time to talk about divorce."

Also, remember to use more of "we/our" or "I" rather than "you." This way, your words will sound like the best way out of this situation for both of you:

- "I believe it's time for us to consider ending our marriage."
- "I think it's in both of our best interests to consider separating."
- "I feel it's time we talk about the state of our marriage and the possibility of divorce."

Does it?

The Best Way to Ask for a Divorce: Does It Exist?

The optimal way to ask for a divorce is to stay emotionally neutral while clearly stating that you want to end your marriage. Essentially, no matter how gently you try to break the news to your spouse, they will still feel rejected.

So, the best you can do is to respect the other person's feelings and thoughts, stand firmly by your decision, and not feel guilty about it.

What comes next?

What to Do After You Asked for a Divorce

The steps you take after asking for a divorce will depend on your spouse's reaction. Most of the time, they will be shocked and angry, blaming you or trying to change your mind. However, if you know your spouse well, you can anticipate and prepare for a particular behavior.

You should also understand that this initial conversation is only the beginning, and you will have plenty of decisions to make in the coming days. For instance, you will need to discuss property division, child custody, alimony, etc.

So, make sure you set a peaceful tone and allow your spouse to adjust to a new reality. Doing so gives you an excellent chance to part ways amicably and stay on amicable terms with your ex.