

Step 1: Imagine Your New Normal

As you start down the road to divorce, you may need some inspiration along the way. Document your post-divorce goals and refer to them when the divorce process becomes challenging.

Ideal Future for Yourself – Personally and Professionally:

Ideal Futures for Your Children:



Step 2: Gather

Share these documents with your attorney and financial advisor and ask them to work together on your behalf.

Before You Start the Process – Make sure you have a source of liquid funds for attorney fees and your support.

Locate Your Marriage License

Review Your Credit Report

Open a Credit Card in Your Name, If You Don't Already Have One

Personal Information for Each Family Member

Birth Certificates

Social Security Numbers

Judgments and Pleadings Involving Either Spouse

Important Documents

Prenuptial/Postnuptial Agreement

Bank Statements – Checking, Savings, Money Market, and CDs

Brokerage/Investment Statements/Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs)

Retirement Plan Statements/Documents – 401(k), 403(b), 457, Pension Plans, etc.

IRA Statements

Annuity Statements

Real Estate Titles for Residences, Investments, and Timeshares

Stock Option Statement/Restricted Stock/Stock Grants

Deferred Compensation – Corporate Bonus Plans, Incentive Comp. or Others

Employment Agreement

Pay Stubs

Social Security Statement for You and Your Spouse (ssa.gov)

Loan Documents

Credit Card Statements

Credit/Loan/Bank Applications

Loans to Family Members/Friends

Business Interests Including Sole Proprietorship, Partnership, Limited Liability Company (LLC), and Limited Liability Partnership (LLP)

Insurance Policies – Term, Universal and Whole Life

Income Tax Returns – Three to Five Years of Personal and Business

Wills/Trusts/Powers of Attorney

Step 3: Quantify

Create a marital balance sheet to value and divide your assets and debts. Be sure to identify any assets or debts accumulated prior to marriage.

Asset Type	Institution	Names on Account	Amount
Liquid Assets			
Checking			
Savings			
Money Market/Credit Union			
Taxable Investments			
Brokerage Account #1			
Brokerage Account #2			
Brokerage Account #3			
Retirement Investments			
IRAs			
401(k), Pension, 403(b)			
Annuities			
Deferred Compensation			
SEP, Keogh, SIMPLE			
Cash Value of Life Insurance			
Other			
Personal Assets (FMV)			
Residence			
Vacation Home			
Auto			
Personal Property			
Art, Jewelry, Etc.			
Other			
Other Investments			
Business Equity			
Rental Real Estate			
Stock Options			
Other			
			Total

Liability Type	Rate	Term	Years Remaining	Payments	Payoff Amount
Mortgage					
Home Equity					
Auto Loan					
Credit and Personal Loans					
Business Loans					
Other					
				Total	

Pre-Divorce Checklist

Preparing for Divorce

Step 4: Measure

Analyze your budget at a granular level to prepare for building your future budget. Expenses are for yourself, except for one section for the children.

Expenses	Monthly	Annual
Home		
Rent/Mortgage		
Homeowners/Assoc. Fee		
Home Equity Loan		
Property Tax		
Telephone		
Cell Phone		
Internet		
Security System		
Cable/Satellite		
Electricity		
Gas		
Water/Garbage		
Landscape/Lawn		
Snow Removal		
Exterminator		
General Home Rep./Mtn.		
Home Improvement/Upgrade		
Housecleaning		
Other Household (e.g. Pool)		
Total Home Expense		
Food		
Groceries		
Dining Out		
Total Food Expense		
Clothing		
Clothing		
Laundry/Dry Cleaning		
Total Clothing Expense		
Entertainment/Recreation		
Entertainment (Excl. Dining Out)		
iTunes/Netflix		
Hobbies		
Movies and Theater		
Vacations/Travel		
Classes/Lessons		
Membership/Clubs		
Books/Mag/Newspaper		
Total Entertainment Expense		
Medical Exp. Not Covered by Ins. (Excl. Children)		
Physicians		
Dental/Orthodontist		
Optometry/Glasses/Contacts		
Prescriptions		
Total Medical Expense		
Insurance		
Life		
Health		
Disability		
Long-Term Care		
Home		
Auto		
Other (Umbrella/Boat/Cottage/etc.)		
Total Insurance Expense		

Expenses	Monthly	Annual
Transportation		
Auto Payment		
Fuel		
Repair/Maintenance		
License		
Parking		
Taxis/Uber/Public Transit		
Total Transportation Expense		
Miscellaneous		
Postage		
Gifts/Holiday		
Personal Care: (Vitamins/Non-Rx, Toiletries, Beauty Salon/Spa)		
Pet Care (Food, Vet, etc.)		
Donations		
Other		
Total Miscellaneous Expense		
Other Payments		
Quarterly Tax & Add'l Payments		
Spousal Support Payments		
Child Support Payments		
Eldercare Expenses		
Professional Fees (Acctg., Financial Planning, Legal)		
Service Fees (Bank, Investments)		
Total Other Payments Expense		
TOTAL EXPENSES (Excl. Children)		
Child-Related Expenses		
Education/Tuition		
Daycare		
School Lunches		
Counselor		
Sports/Camps/Lessons		
Hobbies		
School Activities/Trips		
Toys/Games		
Smartphone/iTunes		
Clothing		
Medical		
Dental/Orthodontics		
Optometry/Glasses/Contacts		
Allowances		
Travel		
Miscellaneous/Haircuts		
Total Child-Related Expenses		
TOTAL EXPENSES (Incl. Children)		

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