

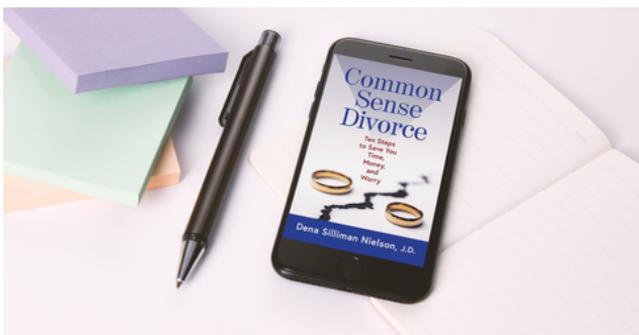
TOP TEN TIPS FOR YOUR BEST CASE DIVORCE

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For further reading by
Dena Silliman Nielson, J.D.

Common Sense Divorce:
Ten Steps to Save you
Time, Money, and Worry
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Everything herein is educational and informational.

Any legal advice should come from the reader's own legal
counsel.

Tip #1



Before deciding whether to stay or go, you should carefully weigh all the pros and cons. Now is not the time for rash or reactionary behavior. Explore all options to try to save your marriage before deciding to leave. A divorce will be available if all efforts fail, but you do not want to look back and wish you had done it differently.

Tip #2



If you plan to hire an attorney, interview several attorneys before making your choice. Be sure the attorney listens to you as you explain your situation, has a reasonable retainer for your location and gives you practical expectations for your case. Attorneys that promise you that you can get every single thing you want will be proven wrong most of the time. Also, be sure that you and the attorney can communicate effectively. Communication is the most crucial thing in the attorney/client relationship.

Tip #3



If you choose not to hire an attorney, do research on the requirements in your state before beginning this process. Simple divorces can be accomplished without an attorney if you feel qualified to represent yourself. Should you run into a situation where you are unsure what to do, do not hesitate to schedule a consultation with an attorney. Paying for this meeting will be money well spent compared to a possible outcome that could be detrimental to you or your finances.

Tip #4



Is it important as to who files first? The race to the courthouse can be avoided by filing jointly. If that is not possible, do not be intimidated if you are not the one that files first. The facts of your case are what matters more than who files first. There can be reasons why it makes more sense for one party or the other to be first to file, but those are rare instances.

Tip #5



In the days leading up to filing your case and during the ongoing process, try to stay off of social media. The temptation to follow your soon-to-be ex-spouse and comment on their activities and posts is too great. Additionally, giving your ex-spouse anything useful in court from your posts is not how you want this to go. Just resist that temptation by staying off social media altogether. This advice will serve you well in the end.

Tip #6



Be careful of any texts or emails you send to your soon-to-be ex-spouse in the days leading up to your case filing and as you go through this process. Just know, if you write anything down, you should expect to see it in court. Remember that advice as you communicate during this time.

Tip #7



Do not hesitate to participate in mediation. A trained and experienced mediator can benefit you and your soon-to-be ex-spouse, especially if your divorce has become complicated and it does not seem to be leading to resolution. Going into mediation, you must know what you can live with and what you cannot. Know your bottom line on every issue and be clear on that with your attorney.

Tip #8



Be honest with your attorney and with the court. If you have an attorney, do not try to shield them from the facts of your case. The attorney cannot adequately represent you if the truth is hidden from them. Never be untruthful or attempt to deceive the court. The Judge will know when you are trying to be less than truthful. It is in your best interest to always tell the truth – no matter what.

Tip #9



When preparing your financial statement for your case, be completely honest in listing your income and expenses. It is not in your best interest to try to make it look better than it is or worse than it is. Attorneys and Judges see these types of documents every day. It will be apparent to them if something is grossly over or underestimated. Should you try this, it will affect your credibility in all things – not just the incorrect item.

Tip #10



Once the case is over and you are finally divorced, try to gracefully extend a caring hand to your ex-spouse. I understand if this might take a while to accomplish. Sometimes, hurt feelings and anger can have a lasting effect on us. But you do not want these negative feelings to last a lifetime. Please do what you can to get past it right away. Seek personal counseling if you have difficulty getting past the hurt and grief. It is imperative if there are children involved.

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