



Do it Yourself Divorce - the steps involved

1

Preparing the Divorce Petition (D8)

You will prepare the Divorce Petition (D8) and then file for divorce with a designated Family Court (approx. 1 to 2 weeks).

2

The Court issues the Petition

The Court issues the Petition. They send a copy of the Divorce Petition to your spouse together with an "Acknowledgement of Service" form (approx. 1 to 2 weeks depending on court timescales).

3

Spouse files the Acknowledgement of Service

Once your spouse receives the Acknowledgement of Service from the court they should complete and return this to the court (approx. 2 to 3 weeks).

4

You receive a copy of Acknowledgement of Service

The Court will then send a copy of the completed Acknowledgement of Service form to you, so that you can prepare the documents for the next stage in the divorce (Decree Nisi) (approx. 1 to 2 weeks depending on court timescales).

5

Applying for the Decree Nisi (D84)

You will then prepare the necessary documents to apply for the first decree of the divorce ("Decree Nisi") to be pronounced. These documents are statement in support (D80 a, b, c, d or e) and application for decree nisi (D84). Once completed, you will then file these documents with the court with a request for a date for the Decree Nisi to be pronounced. (approx. 1 to 2 weeks).

6

Court considers if "the marriage has broken down irretrievably"

If the Judge is satisfied that the "marriage has broken down irretrievably" based on the information included in the Petition, they will issue a certificate for the Decree Nisi to be pronounced. Both you and your spouse will then be advised of the date fixed for Decree Nisi - you will receive a certificate of entitlement to decree nisi (D84A). The date is likely to be a few weeks later. You and your spouse will not be required to attend court, unless there is a dispute about costs (approx. 4 to 6 weeks depending on court timescales).

7

Decree Nisi

The court will then grant the Decree Nisi and send a copy of this certificate to both you and your spouse (or through your respective legal representatives) (approx. 1 to 2 weeks depending on court timescales).

8

Decree Absolute (D36)

6 weeks and 1 day after the date of Decree Nisi you may apply for the final decree ("Decree Absolute") by sending the appropriate form to the Court. This step is **not** automatic. You will need to prepare form D36 and file it at court on or after the first available date. This Decree will be processed by the court and a copy sent to both you and your spouse (approx. 1 to 2 weeks depending on court timescales) (approx. 1 to 2 weeks depending on court timescales).



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How to get legal advice for free?

You can get a lawyer to explain you about Consent orders, Clean break agreements and Divorce process for free by calling 0800 433 2255 and asking for Divorce First Free Advice Service.



SSB Law Guide

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