

How to tell my spouse I want a divorce?

I've decided that I'd like to file for divorce from my husband. Is there a recommended way to inform him of my decision?

The recommended path will solely depend upon you and your husband. Unfortunately, if you ask 5 different people what they recommend, it's likely that you'll receive 5 different answers. Some will recommend that you tell him quickly and directly. Others may recommend that you don't mention anything at all, and simply let the filing speak for itself. The correct answer varies from individual to individual, and family to family. Following are some key factors which may assist in helping you decide on the best method for you:

Timing

The "how" aspect of breaking the news may largely depend the "when". In other words, how to tell your husband you want a divorce may depend on what planning and preparation you have completed before making your decision. For example, if you are a victim of [domestic violence](#), you could potentially risk additional violence if you tell him you want a divorce in an isolated setting, between the two of you and without protection. Seeking a domestic violence restraining order in family court may be necessary before you proceed forward. Another example of timing would be a scenario where you're dependent upon your husband for financial support. It's best to [have a plan in place to ensure you're covered financially](#) for the basics (food/housing/etc) before breaking the news. The key to the timing issue is to ensure you don't rush the decision to tell him you plan on filing for divorce.

Witnesses

Family may be helpful when dealing with this question. Chances are, some member of your family or someone close to them has been through a similar situation. Whether or not you tell your spouse you want a divorce one on one, or with family (or friends) present depends on the type of reaction you expect him to display. This is where you must use your instincts to determine whether he is the type that will react violently (which may be less likely if there are witnesses present), or attempt to hurt you financially by closing bank accounts/credit cards or stashing away assets. Each of these factors may have an impact on your divorce case, including the immediate and temporary orders you seek and the associated costs.

Let the petition for divorce do the talking

This is a common method these days. We have seen situations where one party's first notice or communication that the other wants a divorce is the actual service of a divorce petition. Again, there's no right or wrong method when it comes to this, and some advocate this is the safest route

to proceed with a divorce.