

# Men's Fitness

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## Divorce Mistakes That Will Ruin Your Life

By Sam DeHority & Sunil Ramsamoo

First came love, then came marriage... now you're getting divorced, and it sucks. The good news is that you aren't alone, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, for every 1,000 people, 6.8 get married, and 3.4 get divorced. (That's 50% for the mathematically challenged.)

But there are bigger things right now than worrying about the stigma of being known as the "divorced guy"; men also have to contend with court battles and, in some cases, it ain't pretty. If you're headed for divorce, here are some things to always keep in mind. We spoke to Silvana Raso, a partner at Schepisi & McLaughlin P.A., about what to do when you're faced with the prospect of a messy split.

For starters, don't be afraid to initiate the divorce. It simply doesn't matter which party files for divorce first. Next, remember your goal is to get out of court sooner rather than later. If your soon-to-be-ex-wife is taking you to court, chances are you'll be tempted to act on emotion and draw out the process for as long as possible, but focus more on the business aspect of the situation. With those basics in mind, here are the five seemingly harmless mistakes most men make during the ugly process.

### Lose Your Cool

One thing said while you're married, is completely different when you're getting divorced. Words can be considered threats and that could be a major blow against you in court. Raso notes, "If you lose your cool and say something to your spouse that can be perceived as threatening, even if you don't mean it, the spouse has a right to get a restraining order and get you removed from the house." Even repeatedly calling your ex could garner a restraining order, so be sure to keep your cool during the whole process.

### Abuse Social Media

Tweeting your latest adventures or showing Facebook pics of the latest girl you hooked up with is great... unless you're getting divorced. When you put something on Facebook or Twitter, it could ultimately be used against you in court. Something as innocent as hitting the town with some friends and posting photos during the divorce could hurt your case. You don't have to deactivate your account, just play it smart and, when in doubt, don't update your status.

### Flaunt the New Girl

Having a girlfriend after you've decided to get a divorce isn't a bad thing, but don't parade your new relationship around. Flaunting your new arm candy around will likely upset your former spouse and may cause her to seek the ultimate payback. "I've seen people get engaged during

a divorce and the fiancée is sporting a big diamond ring, and it does not help the process. How much did the ring cost? How much did he spend?" says Raso. You might be tempted to show off your new lady, but hold off until the process is complete. You don't want to add any unnecessary fuel to the fire.

### **Volunteer to Move Out**

The second people decide to go their separate ways, it always seems like the man volunteers to move out. But why should he? According to Raso it's not necessary. "Do not move out of the house if you're both living there. It's going to cost you more money because now you're going to be paying rent for another place and you're going to have to support that other household," she advises. "Many people think that if they just move out of the house they don't have to support that other household anymore. It has to be supported exactly as it was when you were living there, and now you're going to have your own set of expenses. You absolutely have a right to remain in that house. The only time you don't is when you lose your cool and say something you shouldn't say (see 'Lose Your Cool')." While we understand it might not be easy to live with the woman you're divorcing, it might be the best decision to hold your ground, and most cost-effective one at that.

### **Hide Money**

The prospect of a split tied up with so much legal proceedings and red tape could make you a little paranoid. Fight the temptation and do not hide your money away in offshore accounts or bury it in your back yard. No good can come of it according to Raso. "The courts and the lawyers have an axiom that they live by, which is 'False in one, false in all.' So if you're found lying about money in one instance, the court will be very likely not to believe anything else you say about assets." Avoid being branded as a liar and be upfront about your financial situation.

Now that you're up to speed, perhaps the one thing you should walk away knowing is that every case is different. A friend of yours might have had a bad divorce but not all divorces are created equal. But all of this could have been avoided from the get-go had you just signed a prenuptial agreement.