



# How to speed up your divorce

DIVORCE, RELATIONSHIPS

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By [Brette Sember](#)

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Most traditional divorces take months to complete. That can seem like forever once you've made the decision to actually go through with it. But there are ways to keep divorce from dragging on, allowing you to move forward.

## Go right to the finish line

The best way to move your divorce along is to reach a settlement with your soon-to-be ex. Work with your lawyers or see a mediator with the clear focus of creating a settlement (including property division, custody, child support, and alimony). Going through the court process and waiting for a judge to decide your case is time-consuming. Skip all of that and make the decisions yourselves, right away.

## Cut out the middlemen

Or, if you and your spouse can hammer out an agreement completely on your own, you can file

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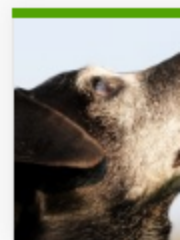
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for divorce without waiting for anybody. It's still a good idea to have the [agreement](#) written and/or proofed by a lawyer (for a small fee) so that it is correct and acceptable to the court. But then you can file as an [uncontested](#) divorce, the judge will likely approve it, and you'll be able to move on.

## Focus on what truly matters

If you can't reach a settlement immediately, look at what's worth fighting for. Depending on the circumstances, you might be tempted to contest everything out of spite. Don't waste time and effort haggling over things you don't truly need.

Instead, pinpoint your must-haves and focus on those. And be realistic about your demands. For example, if your state almost always awards joint custody, don't spend months litigating for sole custody.

### Do the leg work

If you can't agree on an uncontested divorce, you can still cut down the time your case takes (and how much it costs) by presenting your lawyer with information and documents that are labelled and organized. If you don't, someone at your lawyer's office is going to have to find time to hunt down and make sense of all the pertinent materials.

Best case scenario: You can move your divorce along if you are willing to negotiate and be realistic about what you want out of the process.

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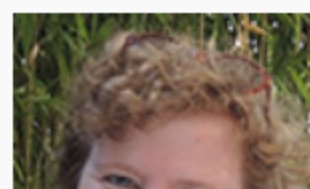
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## About Brette Sember

[Brette Sember](#) is a former attorney and author of more than 40 books, including *The Divorce Organizer & Planner*, *The Complete Divorce*, *How to Parent with Your Ex*, *The*





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