

BRIDAL GUIDE

3 Ways to Divorce-Proof your Marriage Before You Say “I Do”

Relationship expert and divorce attorney **Vikki Ziegler** shares her tips on how couples can avoid the pitfalls that lead to divorce.



We've all heard it again and again—and I'm not talking about eating your veggies. I'm talking about the divorce rate, and specifically how it's been hovering around 50% for the past several years. It can be hard when you're gearing up to say “I do” not to feel nervous that your relationship will become just another statistic. Lucky for you, that's where I come in. There are ways to divorce-proof your marriage, and this is coming straight from a matrimonial attorney and mediator (and woman who's walked the aisle more than once!)

1. Get naked (financially, that is)

When I say to people that they need to get naked before tying the knot, I mean you need to lay all of your financial baggage out on the table. No one is going to be thrilled to marry someone and then find out they still have over \$100k in student loans to pay off. Get honest now about debt, credit, and your incomes if you haven't already to save yourself the strife later.

2. Accept each other's pasts

Are you still carrying resentment about something that's happened in either of your pasts? There will be times when your partner disappoints you (and vice versa), but are you still losing sleep about a past transgression between you two? Bring it up. It's important to go into your new marriage with a light heart, not a heavy one.

3. Discuss deal breakers

Everyone has things that they cannot deal with in a partner such as cheating, bad hygiene, etc. What can you not tolerate under any circumstance? Each of you make a list and then share why they are deal breakers for you. This will help you go into a marriage free of surprises about what your partner can and can't accept.

The tips given here are some ways to go into your marriage fully prepared, but the work doesn't stop after saying your vows. Communicating your emotions, respecting each other, and trusting your partner are all things you can do every day to maintain a loving relationship and prevent becoming just another statistic. For more ways to divorce-proof your marriage, check out **The Pre-Marital Planner**, a handbook for engaged couples to fill out together to stay happily married.

—Vikki Ziegler, Esq.