

Thinking About Separation?

A Calm & Clear Guide to Help You Prepare

Take a Breath. You're Not Alone...

Separation can feel overwhelming. You might be scared, stuck, or unsure of the next move.

This guide is designed to help support you in the very early stages; before you say anything, sign anything, or make any major moves.

It includes:

- ~ Questions to help guide decision making
- ~ Safety and wellbeing reminders
- ~ Legal and financial preparation tips
- ~ A helpful checklist to work through



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What To Expect...

The facts, feelings and foundations you'll need to prepare for separation.

Mental & Emotional Health

- Separation can stir up a powerful mix of emotions: grief, guilt, relief, anger, anxiety, and everything in between.
- You may second-guess yourself. That's normal. Clarity often comes slowly.
- Children's emotions can shift quickly. They may be confused, clingy, withdrawn or acting out.
- Big emotions don't mean you're doing it wrong - they mean this matters.
- Consider speaking to a counsellor or psychologist.
- Are you getting enough sleep, food, or time to recharge?



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Physical Health & Safety

Stress often shows up in the body: fatigue, headaches, tightness, or sleep issues are common. Safety comes first. If there is any history or risk of family violence, make a safety plan. Check in with your GP or health professional if your body is feeling the impact.

Financial Health

Financial uncertainty is one of the biggest stressors during separation. Start by listing your income, expenses, debts, and assets. Seek advice from a financial counsellor or legal advisor if joint assets or accounts are a concern.



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Social Health & Support Network

Separation can affect your friendships, family dynamics, and work life. It's OK to set boundaries. Choose one or two trusted people to support you. Professional support groups or community services can help you feel less alone.

Legal Awareness & Planning

Understanding your rights early helps reduce fear and prevent conflict. Not all separations go to court: a respectful legal process is possible. Respect Legal offers a free 15-minute phone consultation to help clarify your options.



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Pre-Separation Checklist

Legal and Financial

- Speak to a family lawyer (Like us!)
- Secure access to important documents (ID, bank statements, super, mortgage)
- Create a list of assets and debts
- Consider opening a bank account in your name only
- Check access to joint accounts
- Update your Will and Power of Attorney

Practical and Personal

- Think through your children's needs and routines
- Write down your main concerns
- Choose a safe person to confide in
- Research housing options or temporary accommodation
- Create a basic safety plan if needed



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Emotional Readiness

- Are you clear on why you want to separate?
- Do you feel emotionally ready to have the conversation?
- Have you thought about timing and support for when you tell your partner?
- Consider speaking with a therapist or counsellor

Future Planning and Stability

- Start thinking about longer-term housing, work, and schooling needs
- Explore child support or spousal maintenance obligations/entitlements
- Map out a short-term plan (3–6 months) for your living, parenting, and financial arrangements
- Begin gathering info on co-parenting arrangements or parenting plans



About Respect Legal

We know this isn't just a legal process; it's your life, your family, your wellbeing. Our approach is professional, respectful, and child-focused. We'll walk alongside you, offering clarity and compassion every step of the way.

We offer a **free 15-minute phone chat** so you can ask questions and explore your next steps without any pressure.

Call 1300 697 377 or book online at respectlegal.com.au



*This guide is general information only. It's not legal advice. Everyone's situation is different; that's why our first step is always to listen to yours.

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