

Divorce Cost & Budget Worksheet

Fillable Planning Worksheet — ClearLegalTips.com (2026)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

Use this worksheet to estimate the total cost of your divorce before you begin. Fill in the figures that apply to your situation — leave the rest blank. Filing fees and required classes vary by state and county; check your local court's website for exact amounts. Add your figures in the right-hand column, then total each section at the bottom. This is a planning tool, not a quote.

A. Your Divorce Profile

Tick the boxes that describe your case. The more boxes on the left, the lower your likely cost.

- ☐ Uncontested — we agree on all terms (lowest cost)
- ☐ Contested — we disagree on one or more major issues
- ☐ We have minor children (adds parenting class + possible custody evaluation)
- ☐ We own real estate or a business together
- ☐ We have retirement accounts to divide (may require a QDRO)

Your state: _____

Your county: _____

Target filing month: _____

B. Court & Filing Costs

Item	Typical U.S. Range	Your Estimate
Divorce petition / filing fee	\$100 – \$450	\$
Response / answer fee (if applicable)	\$100 – \$400	\$
Service of process (sheriff / process server)	\$0 – \$100	\$
Parenting / co-parenting class (if children)	\$15 – \$100	\$
Motion / hearing fees	\$0 – \$300	\$
Certified copies of final decree	\$10 – \$40	\$

Court & Filing subtotal: _____

C. Professional Fees

Item	Typical U.S. Range	Your Estimate
Attorney retainer (per spouse, if hired)	\$2,500 – \$5,000	\$
Attorney hourly rate × estimated hours	\$150–\$450/hr	\$

Item	Typical U.S. Range	Your Estimate
Mediator (shared, often split 50/50)	\$100 – \$350/hr	\$
Online divorce service (uncontested)	\$150 – \$1,500	\$
Custody evaluator / GAL (contested)	\$1,000 – \$6,000	\$
Financial expert / appraiser	\$300 – \$3,000	\$

Professional Fees subtotal: _____

D. Document & Administrative Costs

Item	Typical U.S. Range	Your Estimate
Notary fees	\$0 – \$50	\$
QDRO preparation (retirement division)	\$300 – \$1,200	\$
Name-change filing (if restoring maiden name)	\$0 – \$400	\$
Postage / mailing / printing	\$10 – \$75	\$

Document & Admin subtotal: _____

E. Your Total Estimate

Court & Filing subtotal (B): _____

Professional Fees subtotal (C): _____

Document & Admin subtotal (D): _____

GRAND TOTAL ESTIMATE: _____

F. Ways to Lower Your Cost

- ☐ Keep it uncontested — settle terms directly before filing
- ☐ Use mediation instead of litigating disputed issues
- ☐ Use a reputable online divorce service for uncontested filings
- ☐ Ask the court clerk about a fee waiver if your income is low
- ☐ Gather and organize financial documents yourself to cut attorney hours

G. Notes

This resource is provided by ClearLegalTips.com for general informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Laws vary by state and change over time. Consult a licensed

attorney for advice specific to your situation.