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WEALTH MANAGEMENT

FREE CHECKLIST · FROM A CERTIFIED DIVORCE FINANCIAL ANALYST

The Divorce Financial Checklist

What to gather, what to protect, and what not to sign yet: the financial side of divorce organized into one calm, step-by-step checklist.

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Divorce rearranges a financial life quickly, and much of it lands at once. This checklist puts the financial side in one calm place: what to gather, what to protect, what to understand before anything is signed, and what comes after. Work through it at your own pace; a little at a time is exactly how it's meant to be used. Nothing here requires special knowledge, and no question it raises is too basic to ask.

STEP ONE

What to gather

Copies are fine. If something is missing or hard to find, note it and move on; a gap is information too.

- [ ] **Federal and state tax returns**
  The last three years, including all schedules and attachments.
- [ ] **Recent pay stubs for both spouses**
  Two or three months' worth, plus any bonus or commission records.
- [ ] **Bank and credit-union statements**
  Every account, joint and individual, for the last twelve months.
- [ ] **Investment and brokerage statements**
  Taxable accounts, stock plans, and any employer stock or options.
- [ ] **Retirement account statements**
  401(k), 403(b), IRA, and pension benefit statements for both spouses.
- [ ] **Social Security statements**
  Available for each spouse at ssa.gov; they matter later, too.
- [ ] **Mortgage statements, deeds, and appraisals**
  For every property, including anything owned before the marriage.
- [ ] **Insurance policies**
  Life, health, home, auto, disability, and long-term care.
- [ ] **Credit reports for both spouses**
  Free at annualcreditreport.com; they surface accounts people forget.
- [ ] **A complete list of debts**
  Credit cards, loans, and lines of credit, with balances and whose name is on each.
- [ ] **Business records, if either spouse owns a business**
  Returns, financial statements, and any ownership agreements.
- [ ] **Estate documents**
  Wills, trusts, and powers of attorney as they stand today.

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STEP TWO

What to protect

Quiet, practical steps that keep you steady while everything else is in motion.

- [ ] **Open a checking and savings account in your own name**
  At a bank where you don't share accounts.
- [ ] **Establish and monitor credit in your own name**
  Watch your report for accounts you don't recognize.
- [ ] **Change your passwords**
  Email, banking, phone, and cloud storage, and turn on two-factor authentication.
- [ ] **Photograph and inventory valuables**
  A simple phone video of each room is enough.
- [ ] **Understand how health insurance continues**
  Know what you're covered by during the process, and what it costs.
- [ ] **Keep copies of every document somewhere private**
  A folder with a trusted person, or secure cloud storage.
- [ ] **Build a simple transition budget**
  What does one month of your life cost right now? Just the honest number.
- [ ] **Note the dates that matter**
  When accounts were opened, homes were bought, and benefits vested.

STEP THREE

Before you sign anything

A settlement is one of the largest financial decisions of your life. These are the questions to have answered in full, first.

- [ ] **An equal split is not always an equitable one**
  The same dollar amount can carry very different taxes, growth, and risk. Compare what each asset is worth after taxes, not on paper.
- [ ] **Retirement accounts divide under special rules**
  Most employer plans require a court order called a QDRO. Done incorrectly, a division can trigger taxes and penalties that were avoidable.
- [ ] **The house is a math question and an emotional one**
  What decides it is whether you can afford the house going forward: mortgage, taxes, upkeep, on one income.

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- [ ] **Understand how support is taxed**
  Before agreeing to any amount, know what it means after taxes, for the payer and the recipient.
- [ ] **Know what health coverage will cost after it's final**
  Losing coverage under a spouse's plan is common; price the alternatives before you sign, not after.
- [ ] **Model the settlement over time**
  What does this agreement look like in five, ten, twenty years? This is exactly what a Certified Divorce Financial Analyst models.
- [ ] **Asking for time is allowed**
  Nothing is finished until you understand every line. If anyone is pressuring you to sign quickly, treat that as a signal to slow down.

STEP FOUR

After the papers are signed

The rebuilding phase: where a plan for your new financial life gets built with you, not for you.

- [ ] **Retitle accounts and property as the decree requires**
  Banks, brokerages, vehicles, and real estate.
- [ ] **Update every beneficiary designation**
  Retirement accounts, life insurance, and transfer-on-death designations override your will; they pay whoever is named.
- [ ] **Refresh your estate documents**
  Will, trust, powers of attorney, and healthcare directives, in your name and your choices.
- [ ] **Review your insurance needs**
  Life, health, and disability coverage sized for your new situation.
- [ ] **Close or separate any remaining joint accounts**
  Including cards where you're an authorized user or co-signer.
- [ ] **Revisit Social Security**
  Depending on the length of the marriage, you may have benefits based on an ex-spouse's record. Worth checking; it never reduces theirs.
- [ ] **Build the new plan**
  Income, home, retirement: one written plan you understand and own, with steady guidance beside you.

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No question is too basic. Truly.

If it would help to walk through any of this with a Certified Divorce Financial Analyst, the door is open: fifteen minutes, nothing to prepare, no obligation. Plain English, at your pace, never judged.

Book a 15-minute intro call: calendly.com/alexi-kore/15min

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