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Divorce Statistics: Over 115 Studies, Facts and Rates for 2018

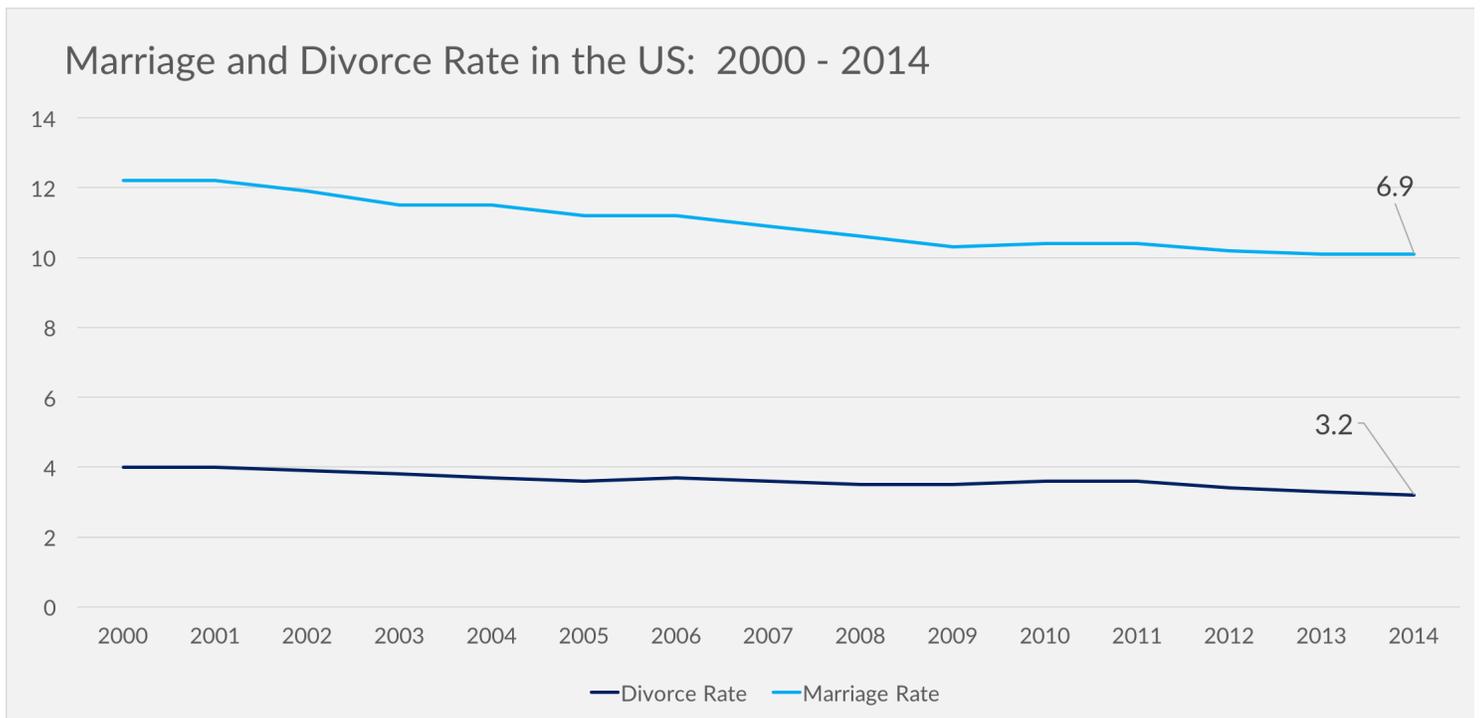
If you spend enough time perusing the internet, you'll find no shortage of studies, statistics, facts about divorce.

There seems to be a study looking into almost every possible factor that might affect marriages and lead to divorce. These studies have yielded some extremely interesting and – in some cases – downright shocking information about divorce in both the United States and the rest of the world.

Just in case you don't have 20 hours to spare (it may or may not have taken this long to create this list), we have compiled a nearly exhaustive list with every divorce statistic, study, and fact that we could find. As we move through 2018, our [San Diego divorce lawyer](#) team has provided everything you need to know – and quite possibly more – about divorce.

U.S. Divorce Rate

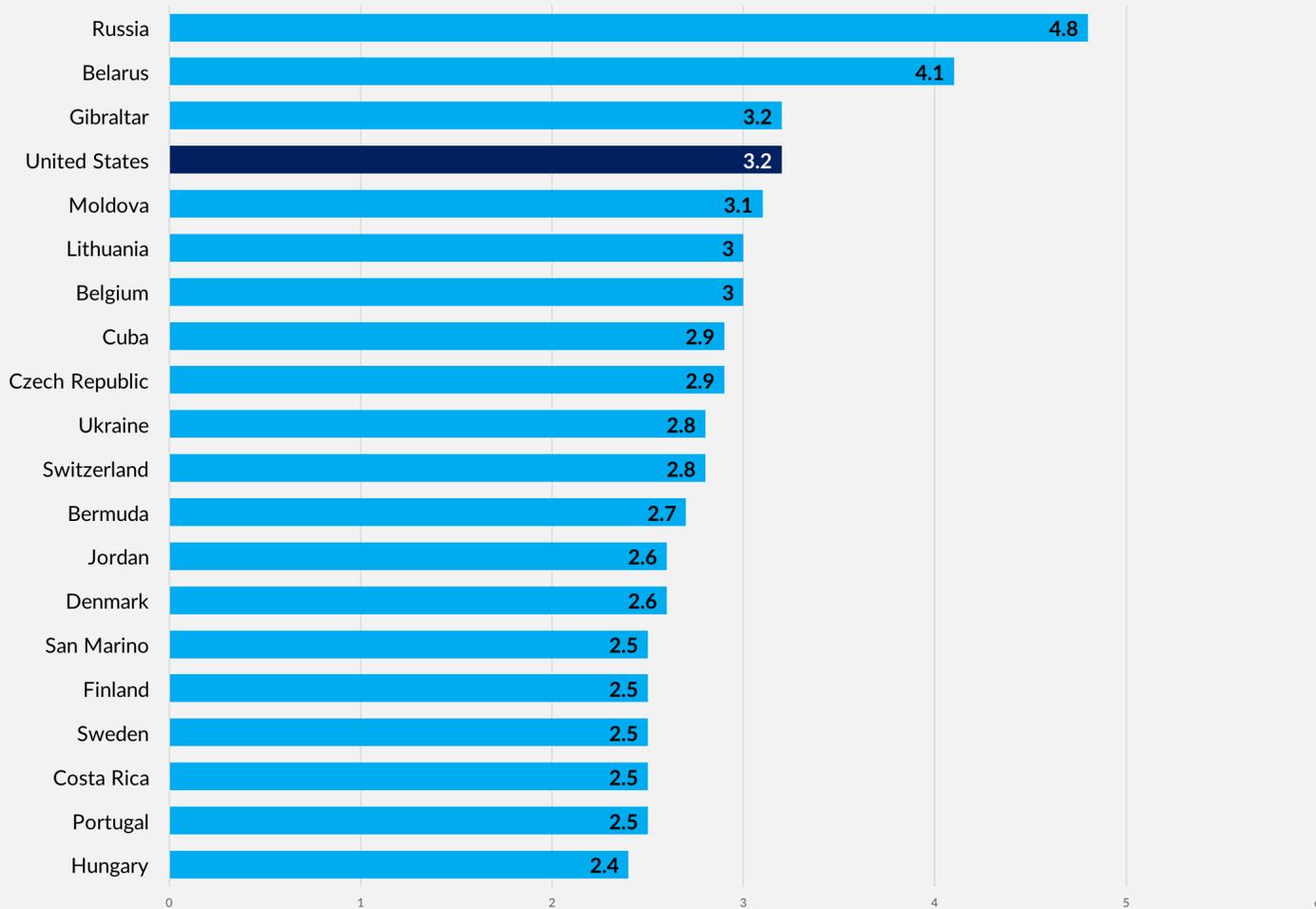
U.S. Divorce and Marriage Rates by Year



1. As of 2016, both marriage rates AND divorce rates in the US are decreasing. Recent studies have shown that millennials are choosing to wait longer to get married and staying married longer and are the main driver in the decline of both the marriage and divorce rate in the US.
 2. The marriage rate in the United States is currently 6.8 per 1,000 total population.
 3. The divorce rate in the U.S. is 3.2 per 1,000 population (as of 2014 the latest year of data from the CDC, (with 44 states and D.C. reporting) This is known as the "crude divorce rate". Although useful for describing changes in divorce rates over time, the crude divorce rate does not provide accurate information on the percentage of first marriages that end in divorce.
- U.S. Divorce Rate per 1000 Married Women**
4. Currently, the divorce rate per 1000 married women is 16.9. Many experts feel that this is a much more accurate measure of true divorce rate than the crude rate.
 5. The divorce rate per 1000 married women is nearly double that of 1960, but down from the all-time high of 22.6 in the early 1980s.
 6. Almost 50 percent of all marriages in the United States will end in divorce or separation.
 7. Researchers estimate that 41 percent of all first marriages end in divorce.
 8. 60 percent of second marriages end in divorce.
 9. 73 percent of all third marriages end in divorce.
 10. The United States has the 6th highest divorce rate in the world. Here is a chart of the top twenty:

Countries with the Highest Divorce Rates in the World: Top 20

Countries with the Highest Crude Divorce Rate



How Often Divorce Takes Place in the U.S.

11. Every 13 seconds, there is one divorce in America.
12. That equates to 277 divorces per hour, 6,646 divorces per day, 46,523 divorces per week, and 2,419,196 divorces per year. That means:
13. There are 9 divorces in the time it takes for a couple to recite their wedding vows (2 minutes).
14. More than 554 divorces occur during your typical romantic comedy movie (2 hours).
15. 1,385 divorces happen during the average wedding reception (5 hours).
16. There are 19,353,568 divorces over the course of an average first marriage that ends in divorce (8 years).
17. Over a 40 year period, 67 percent of first marriages terminate.
18. Among all Americans 18 years of age or older, whether they have been married or not, 25 percent have gone through a marital split.
19. 15 percent of adult women in the United States are divorced or separated today, compared with less than one percent in 1920.
20. The [average first marriage](#) that ends in divorce lasts about 8 years.

Median duration of first marriages that end in divorce:

Males: 7.8 years
Females: 7.9 years

Median duration of second marriages:

Males: 7.3 years
Females: 6.8 years

21. People wait an average of three years after a divorce to remarry (if they remarry at all).
22. In 2011, only 29 out of every 1000 of divorced or widowed women remarried.

Who is Getting Divorce, When, and Why?

Who is Getting Divorced?

23. The average age for couples going through their first divorce is 30 years old.
24. 60 percent of all divorces involve individuals aged 25 to 39.
25. Wives are the ones who most often file for divorce at 66 percent on average. That figure has soared to nearly 75 percent in some years.
26. 5 Professions with highest divorce rate:
 - Dancers – 43
 - Bartender s- 38.4
 - Massage Therapists – 38.2
 - Gaming Cage Workers – 34.6
 - Gaming Service Workers – 31.3
27. 5 Professions with lowest divorce rate:
 - Farmers – 7.63
 - Podiatrists – 6.81
 - Clergy – 5.61
 - Optometrists – 4.01
 - Agricultural Engineers – 1.78

U.S. Divorce Rate by Occupation

Occupation	Divorce Rate
Dancers	43
Bartenders	38.4
Massage Therapists	38.2
Gaming Cage Workers	34.6
Gaming Service Workers	31.3
Food and Tobacco Machine Operators	29.7
Telephone Operators	29.3
Textile Machine Operators	29
Nurses	28.9
Home Care Aids	28.7
Entertainers	28.4
Bellhops and Concierges	28.4
Telemarketers	28.1
Waitstaff	27.1
Roofers	26.8
Maids	26.3
Corrections Workers	21.3
Law Enforcement	14.47
Doctors and Surgeons	9.23
Mechanical Engineers	9.22
Medical Scientists	9.11
Other Scientists	8.79
Legislators	8.74
Audiologists	7.77
Dentists	7.75
Farmers	7.63
Podiatrists	6.81
Clergy	5.61
Optometrists	4.01
Agricultural Engineers	1.78

*bonus: Law enforcement and police divorce rate is 14.47, while the rate for corrections workers is 21.3.

28. For instance, the groups with the most prolific experience of marriage ending in divorce are downscale adults (adults making less than \$20,000 annually) (39 percent), Baby Boomers (38 percent), those aligned with a non-Christian faith (38 percent), African-Americans (36 percent), and people who consider themselves to be liberal on social and political matters (37 percent).

29. Among the population segments with the lowest likelihood of having been divorced subsequent to marriage are Catholics (28 percent), evangelicals (26 percent), upscale adults (adults making more than \$75,000 annually) (22 percent), Asians (20 percent) and those who deem themselves to be conservative on social and political matters (28%).

30. Divorce Rate By Ethnicity (for women):

Year	25-29 yrs	30-34 yrs	35-39 yrs	40-49 yrs	50-59 yrs	60-69 yrs	70+
White							
1996	19.7	26.1	32.2	40.8	36.1	26.6	17.2
2001	19.9	24.4	33.5	40.6	41.8	29.6	18
2004	12.4	23.2	30.5	39.1	44.3	33.9	18.1
2009	14.2	22.1	27.6	36.3	41.1	36.9	21.9
Black							
1996	14.7	28	40.7	44.5	42	35.6	21.9
2001	20.6	24.5	37.3	42.2	44.7	33.8	25.4
2004	11	20.1	37.1	39	47.8	37.2	26.7
2009	14.6	23.9	32.7	35	48.2	40.3	27.8
Asian							
1996	9.3	12	14.3	22.8	23.2	4.9	8.5
2001	4.1	10.7	18.1	17.5	22.7	9.9	5
2004	1.9	6.1	11.4	20.1	19.9	9.6	9.1
2009	1.3	7.8	13.2	20.6	18.5	16	11.3
Hispanic							
1996	15.5	17.4	24	33.2	31.7	25.6	20.3
2001	12.5	15.5	26.5	28.5	34	26.5	21.5
2004	8.8	16.3	24.7	24.4	33.1	23.9	19.5
2009	10.5	16.3	18.1	23.7	30.2	25	24.2

Military Divorce

- 31. According to the Pentagon, the military divorce rate is 3.4 percent in the 2013 fiscal year. However, the rate was significantly higher in military women at 7.2 percent.
- 32. The divorce rate among enlisted troops was 3.8 percent. Among officers, the divorce rate was 1.9 percent.
- 33. The Air Force has the highest divorce rate among enlisted troops of any military branch at 4.3 percent.
- 34. The divorce rate among U.S. Navy Seals is over 90 percent.

Divorce Rate in Specific Population Segments

- 35. The divorce rate among people 50 and older has doubled in the past 20 years, according to research by Bowling Green State University.
- 36. The divorce rate among couples where one spouse is in jail or prison for one year or more is 80 percent for men and close to 100 percent for women.

Same-Sex Divorce Statistics

- 37. About 1 percent of married same-sex couples get divorced each year, while about 2 percent of married straight couples divorce.
- 38. According to figures from the [UK's Office of National Statistics](#), lesbian couples are nearly twice as likely to end a marriage or civil union than gay male couples are.
- 39. In the United States, the divorce rate is 3.1 per 1000 people that allow same-sex marriage, and 3.9 in states that prohibit it.

When Do People Divorce?

- 40. The average length of a marriage that ends in divorce is 8 years.
- 41. January is considered "divorce month". People start looking for information before the New Year starts, but they can't do much until the attorneys are back in the office. January 12-16 seems to be the magic week for filings.

Why People are Divorcing in the United States

- 42. Lack of commitment is the most common reason given by divorcing couples according to a recent national survey. Here are the reasons given and their percentages:
 - Lack of commitment 73%
 - Argue too much 56%
 - Infidelity 55%
 - Married too young 46%
 - Unrealistic expectations 45%
 - Lack of equality in the relationship 44%
 - Lack of preparation for marriage 41%
 - [Domestic Violence](#) or Abuse 25%

(Respondents often cited more than one reason, therefore the percentages add up to much more than 100 percent)

What Makes People More or Less Likely to Divorce?

Your Age

43. 48 percent of those who marry before the age of 18 are likely to divorce within 10 years, compared to 25 percent of those who marry after the age of 25.
44. 60 percent of couples married between the age of 20–25 will end in divorce.
45. Those who wait to marry until they are over 25 years old are 24 percent less likely to get divorced.

If you or your Partner Have Been Married Before

46. If both you and your partner have had previous marriages, you are 90 percent more likely to get divorced than if this had been the first marriage for both of you.

Religion and Divorce

47. If a person has strong religious beliefs, the risk of divorce is 14 percent less and having no religious affiliation makes you 14 percent more likely to get divorced.
48. If you're an evangelical Christian adult who has been married, there's a 26 percent likelihood that you've been divorced—compared to a 28 percent chance for Catholics and a 38 percent chance for non-Christians.
49. [According to Dr. Jennifer Glass](#), one of the strongest factors predicting divorce rates (per 1000 married couples) is the concentration of conservative evangelical Protestants in that county. The correlation can be seen on this figure: (insert divorce counties image)

Education and Intelligence

50. High School dropouts are 13 percent more likely to get divorced.
51. Individuals who have attended college have a 13 percent lower risk of divorce.
52. Those with “below average” IQs are 50 percent more likely to be divorced than those with “above average” IQs.

Political Affiliation

53. Political affiliation and it's impact on divorce: Conservatives are the least likely to be divorced: **Conservative 28 percent, Liberal 37 percent, Moderate 33 percent.**
54. If you live in a red (Republican) state, you are 27 percent more likely to get divorced than if you live in a blue (Democrat) state.

Cohabitation – If you lived with your partner before you got married

55. 60 percent of cohabiting couples will eventually marry. However, living together prior to marriage can increase the chance of getting divorced by as much as 40 percent.
56. If you are a female serial cohabiter – a woman who has lived with more than one partner before your first marriage – then you're 40 percent more likely to get divorced than women who have never done so.

Where You Met

57. According to this study at least, if you met your spouse in high school, college, or grad school, you are 41 percent less likely to get divorced.
58. The other major difference was couples who met in bars were 24 percent more likely to get divorced than expected.

Your Sexual History

59. Women who lost their virginity as a teenager are more than twice as likely to get divorced in the first 5 years of marriage than women who waited until age 18 or older.
60. A 2011 study at the University of Iowa found that for both men and women, the loss of virginity before age 18 was correlated with a greater number of occurrences of divorce within the first 10 years of marriage.
61. When compared to women who began sexual activity in their early 20s, girls who initiated sexual activity at ages 13 or 14 were less than half as likely to be in stable marriages in their 30s. – (in this study a stable marriage was defined as a marriage of over five years).

THE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF EARLY SEXUAL ACTIVITY AND MULTIPLE SEXUAL PARTNERS AMONG WOMEN

62. Women with 6 or more premarital sexual partners are almost 3 times less likely to be in a stable marriage.

Where You Live Impacts Your Likelihood to Be Divorced

63. [According to the CDC](#), the five states with the highest divorce rates are:

- Nevada at 5.6
- West Virginia at 5.2
- Arkansas at 5.3
- Idaho at 4.9
- Oklahoma at 5.2

64. The five states with the lowest divorce rate are:

- Iowa at 2.4
- Illinois at 2.6
- Massachusetts at 2.7
- North Dakota at 2.7
- Pennsylvania at 2.8

65. **Arkansas has the highest rate of individuals married 3 or more times.** Men and women in Arkansas are twice as likely to be married 3 or more times than the national average.

Your Habits, Your Marriage

66. The risk of divorce was said to be almost doubled – 97 per cent higher – when the mother went out to work but her husband made a “minimal contribution” to housework and childcare.
67. In 2011, Facebook was cited as a major contributor to 1/3 of divorce petitions examined by one U.K. study.
68. In a study by the University of Rochester, researchers said that watching romantic movies and having a conversation around it helps in lowering the divorce rates from 24 to 11 percent in marriages of three years.
69. Pornography addiction was cited as a factor in 56 percent of divorces according to a recent study.

Your Parent's Relationship

70. If your parents are happily married, your risk of divorce decreases by 14 percent.
71. If your parents married others after divorcing, you're 91 percent more likely to get divorced.
72. According to Nicholas Wolfinger in “Understanding the Divorce Cycle”, the risk of divorce is 50 percent higher when one spouse comes from a divorced home and 200 percent higher when both partners do.
73. In addition, children of divorce are 50 percent more likely to marry another child of divorce.
74. Certain studies have shown that daughters of divorced parents have a 60 percent higher divorce rate in marriages than children of non-divorced parents while sons have a 35 percent higher rate.

If you Have Kids or Not

75. The divorce rate for couples with children is as much as 40 percent lower than for those without children.
76. Half of all children in the United States will witness the ending of a parent's marriage.
77. Of this half, close to 50 percent will also see the breakup of a parent's second marriage.
78. If you have twins or triplets, your marriage is 17 percent more likely to end in divorce than if your children are not multiples.
79. If you have a daughter, you're nearly 5 percent more likely to divorce than if you have a son.
80. When there are as many as three daughters that difference spiked to 10 percent.
81. Fathers are significantly – 3 percent – less likely to be living with their children if they have daughters versus sons.
82. Having a baby before marriage can increase the risk of divorce by 24 percent.

Your Finances and Their Effect on Divorce Rates

83. An annual income of over \$50,000 can decrease the risk of divorce by as much as 30% versus those with an income of under \$25k.
84. Feeling that one's spouse spent money foolishly increased the likelihood of divorce 45 percent for both men and women.
85. Couples that argue about finances at least once a week are 30 more likely to get divorced.
86. The same study also found that couples with no assets at the beginning of a three-year period are 70 percent more likely to divorce by the end of that period than couples with \$10,000 in assets.

Addiction, Mental Illness and Divorce

87. Couples are an astonishing 76-95% more likely to get divorced if only one of them smokes. The amount increases when the wife is the partner with the habit.
88. While couples who both smoke have it a bit better, a 1998 study found they are still 53% more likely than non-smoking couples to end their marriage.
89. Each liter of alcohol consumed raises the chance of divorce by 20%! Factor in that the average American drinks 9.4 liters of Alcohol per year, raising their divorce likely hood by 188%!
90. According to a 9-year study by the University of Buffalo, couples who have similar heavy drinking patterns – either both are heavy drinkers or both are not- are more likely to stay together.
91. However, if one spouse is a heavy drinker and the other is not, they are 60 percent more likely to get divorced.
92. A multi-national study of mental disorders, marriage and divorce published in 2011 found that a sample of 18 mental disorders all increased the likelihood of divorce – ranging from a 20 percent increase to an 80 percent increase in the divorce rate. Addictions and major depression were the highest factors, with PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) also significant.
93. A recent study of divorce petitions found that nearly 15 percent of them cited video game addiction as a major factor in the decision to get divorced.

Divorce, Child Support and Child Custody

94. Forty-three percent of children in the United States are being raised without their fathers.
95. When the parents are happily married, the risk of divorce of their children decreases by 14 percent.
96. 90% of divorced mothers have [custody of their children](#).
97. Over 79 percent of custodial mothers receive a [child support](#) award, while just under 30 percent of custodial fathers receive one.

98. 65% of divorced mothers receive no child support.

99. Over 46 percent of non-custodial mothers completely default on child support, compared to only 27 percent of non-custodial fathers.

Friend's and Relative's Impact on Divorce

100. If a close friend gets divorced, you are 147% more likely to become divorced and 33% more likely if a friend of a friend is divorced.

101. Studies at the University of California and Brown University cite that when a married person works with someone who is in the process of divorcing, it increases the married person chances of divorce by 75%.

102. These same studies also found that people with divorced sisters or brothers are 22% more likely to get divorced than if siblings are not divorced.

103. In a large-scale Canadian survey, 19 percent of men reported a significant drop in social support post-divorce.

The Financial Effects of Divorce

104. The average total cost of divorce in the United States is \$15,000.

105. Families with children that were not poor before the divorce see their income drop as much as 50 percent.

106. Almost 50 percent of the parents with children that are going through a divorce move into poverty after the divorce.

107. 27% of recently divorced women had less than \$25,000 in annual household income compared with 17% of recently divorced men.

108. 60% of people under poverty guidelines are divorced women and children.

The Toll a Divorce Takes

109. A new study entitled "Divorce and Death" shows that broken marriages can kill at the same rate as smoking cigarettes. Indications that the risk of dying is a full 23 percent higher among divorcees than married people.

110. One researcher determined that a single divorce costs state and federal governments about \$30,000, based on such things as the higher use of food stamps and public housing as well as increased bankruptcies and juvenile delinquency.

111. The nation's 1.4 million divorces in 2002 are estimated to have cost the taxpayers more than \$30 billion.

112. An article in the [New York Times](#) stated that -- of couples who seek marriage counseling -- 38 percent end up divorced just two years later.

Bonus

The Five Most Expensive Divorces of all Time

According to an article on [Divorce Help 360](#) here are the most expensive divorces of all time as well as the most expensive celebrity divorces of all time:

- Harold and Sue Ann Hamm -- \$5.3 billion
- Rupert and Anna Murdoch -- \$1.7 billion
- Bernie and Slavka Eeckelstone -- \$1.2 billion
- Adnan Khashoggi and Sonya Khashoggi -- \$875 million
- Craig and Wendy McCaw -- \$460 million

Most Expensive Celebrity Divorces

- Mel and Robyn Gibson -- \$425 million
- Arnold Schwarzenegger and Maria Shriver -- \$250-\$300 million
- Michael and Juanita Jordan -- \$168 million

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