

Most divorces due to household chores

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Most people believe that the biggest grounds for divorce are either infidelity or arguments over money. However, a new report from British law firm Gateley suggests otherwise. According to its analysis of 350 divorce cases, seven

out of ten divorces occur because of disputes over who does what household chores. Twenty per cent of divorces are due to unfaithfulness. Gateley says gone are the days when the wife did all the cooking and cleaning. Dual income marriages now mean split responsibilities for vacuuming, doing the dishes and tidying. Gateley advised couples to discuss who does what before walking down the aisle. A spokeswoman said that, "going into a marriage blind could be a recipe for disaster".

Conversely, a study in Norway suggests that couples who share household chores are more likely to split up. Thomas Hansen, co-author of the report 'Equality in the Home,' said the divorce rate among couples who shared housework equally was 50 per cent higher than for those where women did all the work. Mr Hansen said that in Norway women did most of the housework in 70 per cent of marriages, and were "largely happy" to do so. An adverse side effect of marital discord is that many families are now "too poor to split up". The U.K. charity Relate said that in many middle-income families, couples stay together because they can't afford to divorce. Relate says this results in a "toxic" home environment.

Sources: Telegraph / Daily Mail

Writing

Married couples should sign a legal contract that states who does what household chores. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of this.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

most people / grounds for divorce / infidelity / household chores / tidying / marriage / split up / equality in the home / side effect / middle income / toxic home environment

True / False

- 350 UK marriages ended in divorce over who did what household tasks. T / F
- Around one in five UK divorces are because of infidelity. T / F
- A law firm says the age of women doing all the housework is over. T / F
- The firm said disaster could happen when cooking with bad recipes. T / F
- In Norway, couples who share housework are likelier to divorce. T / F
- The Norway study said most women weren't happy to do housework. T / F
- A UK charity said divorce was a side effect of family life. T / F
- In the UK, middle income families cannot afford to get divorced. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------|
| 1. grounds | a. differently |
| 2. infidelity | b. harmful |
| 3. otherwise | c. friction |
| 4. chores | d. fairness |
| 5. recipe | e. reasons |
| 6. split up | f. formula |
| 7. equality | g. poisonous |
| 8. adverse | h. adultery |
| 9. discord | i. separate (verb) |
| 10. toxic | j. tasks |

Discussion – Student A

- How could housework be made more exciting?
- What do you think of household chores being a major factor in divorces?
- Do you do your fair share of household chores?
- Who do you know who is lazy when it comes to household chores?
- Who should do the chores of both partners work?
- Should the sharing of housework and who does what be agreed upon before marriage?
- What is your most hated household chore, and why?
- Is not discussing housework before marriage "a recipe for disaster"?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 1. the biggest grounds | a. to unfaithfulness |
| 2. disputes over who does | b. discord |
| 3. Twenty per cent of divorces are due | c. be a recipe for disaster |
| 4. walking down | d. who shared housework |
| 5. going into a marriage blind could | e. the aisle |
| 6. couples who share household chores | f. effect |
| 7. the divorce rate among couples | g. what household chores |
| 8. An adverse side | h. home environment |
| 9. marital | i. for divorce |
| 10. this results in a "toxic" | j. are more likely to split up |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think of housework?
- What do you think of the study that says shared housework leads to more divorce?
- What do you think of 70% of Norwegian women being "largely happy" to do most of the housework?
- What happens when families are "too poor to split up"?
- Is the issue of household chores becoming a bigger problem?
- Are many generally lazy around the house?
- What's the best "system" to split up the housework?
- What questions would you like to ask a divorce expert?

Spelling

- the biggest orndgus for divorce
- either nfdeiitlyi or arguments over money
- dtspsieu over who does what
- divorces are due to hslfntsuaafneiu
- ncvugiaum, doing the dishes and tidying
- ... could be a epceir for disaster
- voyesrlnec, a study in Norway suggests...
- yituelqa in the home
- An svareed side effect of marital discord
- The U.K. thraicy Relate
- they can't rfaodf to divorce
- a "toxic" home eonnvtneri

Answers – Synonym Match

1. e	2. h	3. a	4. j	5. f
6. i	7. d	8. b	9. c	10. g

Role Play

Partner A - You spend 40 hours a week at work and come home and do most of the housework. You think this is unfair. Tell your partner three reasons why. You have a bad back and find it difficult to bend down. You think you should do the cooking, washing and ironing only. You want a divorce.

Partner B - You spend 50 hours at work and earn double the money your partner gets. You think you should do little housework. Tell your partner 3 reasons why. You have no time for housework, what with work, training for and running marathons and going out regularly with friends. You love cooking.

Counsellor - You believe modern marriages are a 50-50 relationship. All household chores must be shared. Tell the others 3 reasons why. Anyone who does not do their share does not love their partner. Tell Partner B this. Solution – Partner B does the cooking, cleaning and dusting. Partner A does the rest.

Partner A's mother - You are shocked at how much work your son / daughter has to do. A full-time job and 99% of the housework. Marriage is forever, so divorce is not an option. Tell Partner A three reasons why. Tell Partner B not to be so lazy. Marriage and togetherness is more important than friends and running.

Speaking - Housework

What's your most hated chore? Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the most hated at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| • cooking | • tidying |
| • ironing | • food shopping |
| • vacuuming | • dusting |
| • washing the dishes | • hanging the washing out |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	T	d	F	T	X	f	F	g	F	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.