

# Methods of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

Resolving disputes, especially in situations like divorce, often feels overwhelming. The good news is there are many paths to resolution, each with its own balance of control, cost, and complexity. From a DIY approach, where you have the most control, to litigation, where you have the least, understanding your options can help you make informed decisions.

## Do It Yourself (DIY)

The couple completes the steps of divorce process on their own.

### Pros:

- Most control over the outcome.
- Least expensive option.
- No third-party involvement

### Cons:

- High potential for emotional conflict.
- Risk of overlooking legal or financial details.
- Difficult to navigate

### Best for:

Couples who are amicable, have minimal assets to divide and can communicate effectively without outside help.

## With a Divorce Coach

An individual hires a coach for support and guidance.

### Pros:

- Costs less than lawyers
- Helps you manage emotions and stay goal-oriented.
- Provides custom strategies for you.

### Cons:

- Doesn't offer legal advice.
- Not suitable for highly contentious disputes.
- Can't represent you in court.

### Best for:

Individuals feeling overwhelmed or stuck who need clarity, guidance, and emotional support during the process of divorce.

## Pro-se Mediation

The couple hires a neutral 3rd party to facilitate reaching an agreement.

### Pros:

- Neutral guidance keeps discussions productive.
- More structured than DIY.
- More cost-effective than litigation.

### Cons:

- Requires willingness from both parties to collaborate.
- Agreements may lack legal thoroughness without attorney input.

### Best for:

Couples who need help structuring their conversations but are committed to resolving issues amicably

## Mediation with Attorneys

Attorneys represent each party during mediation.

### Pros:

- Combines professional mediation with legal oversight.
- Ensures agreements are legally sound.
- Less costly than court.

### Cons:

- Higher costs than pro-se mediation.
- Can become contentious if attorneys take a more aggressive stance.

### Best for:

Couples with complex financial or custody issues who want to resolve matters collaboratively but need legal input.

## Early Neutral Evaluation

An evaluator reviews your case, provides an assessment.

### Pros:

- Expert guidance for misunderstandings & expectations.
- Encourages compromise without a lengthy process.

### Cons:

- Higher costs due to evaluator fees.
- Less control over the outcome compared to mediation.

### Best for:

Couples needing expert insight to overcome impasses in negotiations.

## Collaborative Law

Attorneys and teams of professionals are involved.

### Pros:

- Structured process.
- Comprehensive support for complex issues.
- Avoids the courtroom.

### Cons:

- Expensive.
- Requires full cooperation from both parties; if fails, you must start over with new attorneys.

### Best for:

Couples seeking a holistic, team-based approach to resolve disputes without going to court.

## Arbitration

A neutral arbitrator acts as a private judge.

### Pros:

- Binding decision without court delays.
- More control over the process than litigation.
- Private and confidential.

### Cons:

- Expensive, especially with legal representation.
- Limited ability to appeal the arbitrator's decision.

### Best for:

Couples who want a decisive resolution but prefer to avoid the public nature of court proceedings.

## Litigation

Involves attorneys and the court system.

### Pros:

- Provides a final resolution when other methods fail.
- Court enforces decisions, ensuring compliance.

### Cons:

- Least control—judges make decisions.
- Expensive and time-consuming.
- Highest conflict and stress.

### Best for:

Cases with high conflict, power imbalances, or uncooperative parties where no other resolution method is feasible.



## Resolution Options

When deciding on a resolution method, consider these factors:

- **Control:** DIY gives you the most control, while litigation offers the least.
- **Cost:** The less formal, the lower the cost.
- **Emotional Impact:** Collaborative methods reduce conflict and preserve relationships.

Need help deciding what process is best for you? Schedule a [free initial consultation](#) with me, and I will help you make the best decision.