



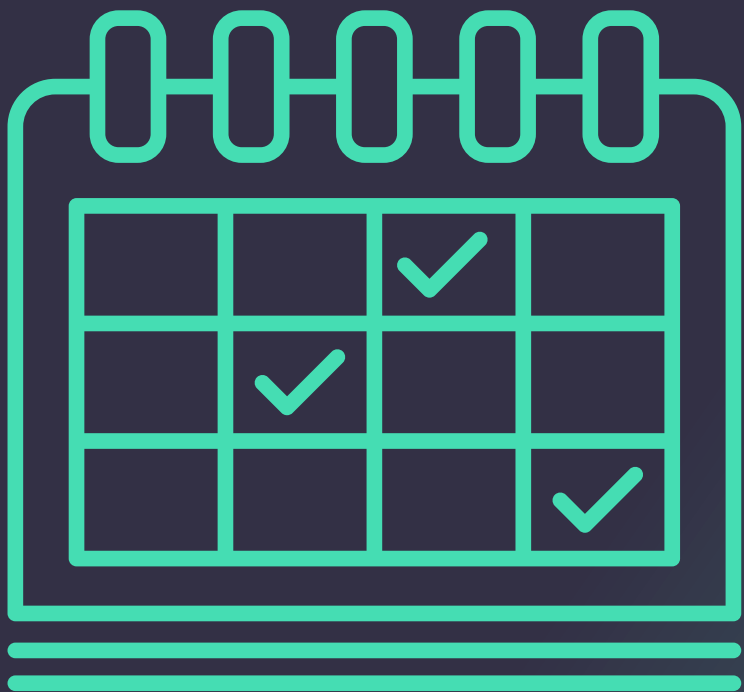
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Tips from the **Divorce Support Club**

Handling the Summer
Holidays Mid Divorce

1 Plan ahead

Avoid putting off conversations through fear of it being difficult. Enter into those conversations that need to be had as soon as you can.



The summer holidays might be in July, but you want to start having those conversations as early as January/February, to avoid any tension and to sort out any issues that arise when planning.

Leaving those conversations until May/June may seem like the easier option, but in the long term it will cause much more stress for you.

There is a lot more planning to co-parenting through the holidays than you might expect!

2 Your **role** as a parent

When you were together, it's more than likely that you had different roles as parents, whether that be intentional or not. Now that you're separated, there will be things that you will do that you didn't before.

- If you were the parent to organise holidays and child care, that likely won't have changed. The other parent won't step into that role straight away, and likely doesn't realise how much planning really goes into it.
- If you were the parent that didn't do much planning, now is your time to shine. Using language such as "I'd like to book this holiday for this date, please let me know by Friday if there is an issue, or I will go ahead and book" allows you to set some boundaries and have a certain amount of control.



3 It's okay to make mistakes

If this is your first summer co-parenting, don't worry, you won't get it all right the first time around!



Take notes this year. Note what works and what doesn't work.

Start thinking about what you can do differently next year.

Perhaps it's just a case of planning further in advance, or perhaps you need a little bit more assistance, such as mediation.

4 Set your intention

You can only really control your part of co-parenting. How do you want to behave? Who do you want to be in these discussions?

- > If you want to be polite, dignified and civil, that goes a long way in leading the direction of those discussions. It's important to try and treat your ex as you would want to be treated.
- > Remember to recognise them not as your ex, but as the other parent of your child. Keep them informed, let them know about any plans you have and let them stay in touch when your child is in your care for a longer period of time.



5 How to **handle it**

It can be difficult, adapting to your new way of doing summer holidays, but it will eventually become your normal.



Don't put your struggles of being away from your children on them. Talk to your friends, a coach or a therapist.

Give your child permission to enjoy their time with the other parent without feeling guilty "Have fun, I'll be here when you get back".

Some of the main traits to try and instil in yourself are flexibility, patience and compassion.