



# Canadian Divorce Statistics

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It is commonly repeated that half of all marriages end in divorce. In fact, most marriages do not end in divorce, though the divorce rate is much higher now than before the introduction of no fault divorce laws in 1968.

- The crude divorce rate (number of divorces in Canada per population in Canada in a given year) has decreased (per 100,000 population) from a high of 364 in 1987 to 211 in 2008.<sup>1</sup>
- In Nova Scotia, Ontario, British Columbia, the Yukon, and Nunavut the total number of new divorce cases has declined 6% over the four year period ending in 2008/2009.<sup>2</sup>
- The percentage of marriages in a given year that will end in divorce before their 30th wedding was 40.7 per cent in 2008.<sup>3</sup>
- In 2003, the risk of divorce decreased slowly the longer a couple stayed married beyond three years.<sup>4</sup>
- The divorce rate for first marriages is lower than the divorce rate for all marriages (including second, third and so on); “first marriages have a 67% chance of lasting a lifetime.”<sup>5</sup>
- “20% of all divorces in Canada are a repeat divorce for at least one of the spouses.”<sup>6</sup>
- Approximately 42 per cent of divorces finalized in 2008 were for marriages that lasted 9 years or less.<sup>7</sup>
- The median age of men divorcing in 2008 was 44 years old while the median age of women divorcing in the same year was 41 years old.<sup>8</sup>

## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> Milan, A., Keown, L.A., & Urquijo, R. (2011, December) Families, Living Arrangements and Unpaid Work. *Women in Canada: A gender-based statistical report 2010-2011*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Retrieved from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-503-x/2010001/article/11546-eng.htm#a7> Crude divorce rate is arrived at by dividing the number of divorces in Canada by Canada's population in a given year.

<sup>2</sup> Kelly, M.B. (2010). The processing of divorce cases through civil court in seven provinces and territories. Ottawa: Statistics Canada. pp. 5, 20. Retrieved from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2010001/article/11158-eng.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Milan, Keown & Urquijo.(2011).

<sup>4</sup> Statistics Canada. (March 9, 2005). Divorces: The Daily. Retrieved from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/050309/dq050309b-eng.htm>

<sup>5</sup> Lambert, Anne-Marie. (2009). Divorce: Facts, Causes and Consequences. 3rd Edition. Ottawa: Vanier Institute of the Family. p. 6. Retrieved from <http://www.thefamilywatch.org/doc/doc-0073-es.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>7</sup> Milan, Keown & Urquijo.(2011).

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*