

YouGov / Sunday Times Survey Results

Fieldwork: 24th - 30th November 2006

For full results from cohabittees [click here](#)

For full results from those on 1st marriage [click here](#)

For full results from divorcees [click here](#)

For full results from those on 2nd marriage or later [click here](#)

Men and women who are...			
Cohabiting	In 1st marriage	Divorced	in 2nd or later marriage
%	%	%	%

Overall, how happy are you with your life these days?

Extremely happy	14	18	8	21
Mostly happy	54	54	40	49
Sometimes happy, sometimes unhappy	28	25	38	25
Mostly unhappy	3	3	12	4
Extremely unhappy	1	0	3	1

Which of these statements comes closest to your view?

The best way to bring up a child is in a family where their parents are happily married	25	62	36	54
The best way to bring up a child is in a family with both parents, but it does not matter greatly whether the parents are married	52	24	28	29
A child can be brought up as well by one loving parent as by two	20	12	34	16
Don't know	3	2	3	1

And which of these statements comes closest to your view?

When a couple get married, they should commit themselves to stay together 'till death us do part'	66	77	49	60
It's perfectly reasonable these days for people to stay married for a while, and then move on	24	17	36	30
Don't know	10	6	15	11

Men and women who are...			
Cohabiting	In 1st marriage	Divorced	in 2nd or later marriage
%	%	%	%

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

'Divorce in Britain should be made more difficult to obtain than it is now'

Agree strongly	13	24	15	14
Just agree	23	27	20	25
Neither agree nor disagree	36	34	31	34
Just disagree	17	12	17	17
Disagree strongly	11	4	16	10

How important is each of the following to a successful marriage?

Agreement on politics

Very important	2	3	2	3
Quite important	24	18	23	19
Not very important	52	55	53	56
Not at all important	22	24	21	22

Faithfulness

Very important	90	87	85	83
Quite important	9	12	14	16
Not very important	1	1	1	2
Not at all important	0	0	1	0

Good housing

Very important	17	17	21	19
Quite important	66	66	62	67
Not very important	15	16	16	13
Not at all important	1	2	2	1

Happy sexual relationship

Very important	44	33	51	39
Quite important	51	59	46	55
Not very important	5	7	3	6
Not at all important	0	1	1	0

					Men and women who are...				
					Cohabiting	In 1st marriage	Divorced	in 2nd or later marriage	
					%	%	%	%	
Having children	Very important		8	11	8	8			
	Quite important		32	39	29	33			
	Not very important		39	38	44	39			
	Not at all important		21	12	20	20			
Mutual appreciation and respect	Very important		88	85	87	87			
	Quite important		11	14	12	13			
	Not very important		1	1	0	0			
	Not at all important		0	0	0	0			
Same social background	Very important		5	6	7	9			
	Quite important		38	42	43	45			
	Not very important		46	44	42	41			
	Not at all important		12	8	8	6			
Shared religious beliefs	Very important		5	8	8	7			
	Quite important		28	32	31	31			
	Not very important		47	43	42	43			
	Not at all important		21	18	20	20			
Sharing household chores	Very important		27	23	32	30			
	Quite important		58	62	59	58			
	Not very important		12	13	8	12			
	Not at all important		2	2	1	1			
Tastes and interests in common	Very important		26	19	25	23			
	Quite important		62	61	62	63			
	Not very important		11	19	12	13			
	Not at all important		1	1	1	1			

Men and women who are...			
Cohabiting	In 1st marriage	Divorced	in 2nd or later marriage
%	%	%	%

Understanding and tolerance

Very important	76	80	81	83
Quite important	23	20	18	16
Not very important	0	1	1	0
Not at all important	0	0	0	0

Some people have said that some of the following are lacking in their marriage...

Which, if any, of the following do you feel are/were lacking in your marriage? (If you have been married more than once, please think about your current marriage)

Happy sexual relationship	17	45	21
Sharing household chores	9	29	11
Tastes and interests in common	7	34	10
Understanding and tolerance	7	46	10
Mutual appreciation and respect	7	49	9
Shared religious beliefs	2	8	8
Having children	3	7	7
Agreement on politics	1	6	6
Good housing	3	7	6
Same social background	2	12	5
Faithfulness	3	50	5
None of these are/were seriously lacking in our marriage	63	0	52

Men and women who are...			
Cohabiting	In 1st marriage	Divorced	in 2nd or later marriage
%	%	%	%

The following questions are about your experience of marriage. For the following questions please think about your first marriage...

Did you live with your spouse before getting married?

Yes	51	49	33
No	49	51	67

(Those who lived with their spouse before marriage) For how long did you live with your spouse before getting married?

Up to six months	13	22	25
More than 6 months, up to 1 year	22	27	33
More than 1 year, up to 2 years	27	25	24
More than 2 years, up to 5 years	25	19	14
More than 5 years, up to 10 years	10	5	3
More than 10 years	3	1	0

(To all) Which, if any, of the following are the MAIN reasons why you decided to get married? [Please tick up to three]

Knew my partner was the 'one'	60	26	29
Wanted to make the commitment	53	45	42
Wanted to start a family	24	20	15
Wanted to show others that we had made the commitment	19	14	17
Always been my ultimate goal/ dream	12	11	10
Could afford to have wedding	4	2	2
Family pressure	3	8	8
Financial reasons	3	2	2
It was an arranged marriage	1	0	0
Other	6	16	15
None of these	6	10	14

Men and women who are...			
Cohabiting	In 1st marriage	Divorced	in 2nd or later marriage
%	%	%	%

Do you think that, in general, when partners stay together for a number of years, which is better: being married or living together without being married – or is neither better than the other

Being married is better	16	59	27	51
Living together without being married is better	10	3	15	4
Neither is better than the other	69	35	54	43
Don't know	6	4	4	2

Please imagine when you were experiencing problems in your marriage (either as a direct result of your marriage or as a result of external factors e.g. work pressures)...

Did you seek advice from a marriage guidance counsellor?

Yes, I did	23	23
No, I did not	77	71
Don't know	1	5

Did you try and solve the problems with your spouse?

Yes, I did	84	83
No, I did not	14	16
Don't know	1	1

Did you feel comfortable talking to your spouse about your feelings?

Yes, I did	49	57
No, I did not	48	39
Don't know	4	4

Men and women who are...			
Cohabiting	In 1st marriage	Divorced	in 2nd or later marriage
%	%	%	%

The next few questions are about sex. If there are any questions you prefer not to answer, please tick the final box in each question.

How often do you have sex with your spouse?

Most days	5	6
Once or twice a week	27	24
1 to 3 times a month	23	21
Less often	13	17
We never have sex these days	13	19
Prefer not to answer	20	14

(TO all except never / prefer not to say) When you have sex, who normally initiates it?

I normally initiate it	23	23
My spouse normally does	23	19
It's about equal	51	56
Prefer not to answer	3	1

Normally, how enjoyable would you say sex with your spouse is these days?

Very enjoyable	49	54
Fairly enjoyable	42	37
Not very enjoyable	6	6
Not at all enjoyable	1	2
Prefer not to answer	3	1

Did you and your spouse have sex with each other before you were married?

Yes, we did	87	97
No, we did not	12	3
Prefer not to answer	2	1

Men and women who are...			
Cohabiting	In 1st marriage	Divorced	in 2nd or later marriage
%	%	%	%

(TO all who had sex before they were married) **At what stage in your relationship did you have sex most often?**

Before we were married	48	59
Soon after we were married	35	28
When you had been married for a time	7	4
Nowadays	8	6
Prefer not to answer	2	3

(TO all) **These days, how do you divide up the following between you and your spouse / partner?**

Cooking

I do it most/all of the time	35	42	41
We both do it about equally	37	24	26
My spouse does it most/all of the time	26	34	32
Someone else normally does it	1	0	0
Not applicable	0	1	0
Not sure	0	0	0

Gardening

I do it most/all of the time	23	29	31
We both do it about equally	27	29	30
My spouse does it most/all of the time	18	30	29
Someone else normally does it	3	4	3
Not applicable	28	8	7
Not sure	0	0	0

Cleaning the home

I do it most/all of the time	27	34	32
We both do it about equally	47	31	33
My spouse does it most/all of the time	23	29	29
Someone else normally does it	2	5	6
Not applicable	1	1	0
Not sure	0	0	0

					Men and women who are...				
					Cohabiting	In 1st marriage	Divorced	in 2nd or later marriage	
					%	%	%	%	
Cleaning the car(s)		I do it most/all of the time		24	33	34			
		We both do it about equally		21	16	19			
		My spouse does it most/all of the time		22	30	29			
		Someone else normally does it		7	9	9			
		Not applicable		23	10	8			
		Not sure		1	1	1			
Shopping for food		I do it most/all of the time		28	34	31			
		We both do it about equally		59	48	52			
		My spouse does it most/all of the time		12	17	17			
		Someone else normally does it		1	0	0			
		Not applicable		1	1	0			
		Not sure		0	0	0			
Washing clothes		I do it most/all of the time		38	44	43			
		We both do it about equally		33	18	19			
		My spouse does it most/all of the time		28	37	37			
		Someone else normally does it		1	1	1			
		Not applicable		1	1	0			
		Not sure		0	0	0			
Dealing with finances (bank, insurance, mortgage etc)		I do it most/all of the time		41	52	47			
		We both do it about equally		42	31	34			
		My spouse does it most/all of the time		16	16	18			
		Someone else normally does it		0	0	0			
		Not applicable		2	1	0			
		Not sure		0	0	0			

Men and women who are...			
Cohabiting	In 1st marriage	Divorced	in 2nd or later marriage
%	%	%	%

How do you and your spouse organise the money that comes into your household?

I manage all the money and give my partner his/ her share	7	12	11
My partner manages all the money and gives me my share	3	4	6
We pool all the money and each takes out what we need	24	53	44
We pool some of the money and keep the rest separate	36	19	22
We each keep our own money separate	31	12	17

Still thinking about your current marriage / relationship...

Please imagine if/ when you were experiencing problems in your marriage/relationship (either direct result of your marriage / relationship or as a result of external factors e.g. work pressures)...

Would/ did you seek advice from a marriage guidance counsellor?

Yes, I would/ did	25	27	33
No, I would not/ did not	50	50	52
Don't know	25	23	15

Would/ did you try and solve the problems with your spouse?

Yes, I would/ did	96	94	94
No, I would not/ did not	2	3	4
Don't know	3	3	3

Would/ did you feel comfortable talking to your spouse about your feelings?

Yes, I would/ did	84	77	85
No, I would not/ did not	9	15	12
Don't know	7	8	4

Men and women who are...			
Cohabiting	In 1st marriage	Divorced	in 2nd or later marriage
%	%	%	%

How often would you say you and your spouse argue with each other these days?

Most days	6	5	4
Once or twice a week	21	14	11
1 to 3 times a month	27	25	21
Less often	33	38	39
We never argue these days	13	16	24
Prefer not to answer	1	1	1

Men and women who are...			
Cohabiting	In 1st marriage	Divorced	in 2nd or later marriage
%	%	%	%

(All except never prefer not to answer) **Which of the following do you tend to argue about? [Please tick all that apply]**

Money/ spending/ investing	44	35	24
Spouse's / partner's insensitivity	20	22	24
Bringing up children/ children's behaviour	12	20	22
Other kinds of behaviour	23	15	18
Sex	23	12	10
Parents/ grand-parents/ in-laws	13	12	9
Drinking too much	16	11	12
What to watch on television	13	10	10
Other relatives/ friends	9	8	15
Not coming home/ meeting each other at the agreed time	15	7	6
Food/ cooking	13	6	5
Where to live	9	5	4
Arguments at Christmas	6	5	5
Arguments when on holiday	5	5	6
Going out together	11	4	6
Staying out late/ overnight	11	4	2
Politics	7	4	5
Where to go on holiday	3	4	3
Whether to stay / get married	5	3	4
Whether to have children/ whether to have more children	3	1	1
Drug-taking	2	1	1
Which school to send your child(ren)	1	*	1
None of these	13	23	24

Men and women who are...			
Cohabiting	In 1st marriage	Divorced	in 2nd or later marriage
%	%	%	%

(To all) How likely is it that you might contemplate divorce in the next few years?

Very likely	2	2
Fairly likely	5	3
Not very likely	18	15
Not at all likely	72	77
Not sure	3	3

There is the view that 'Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus' that men and women are from different planets and thus do not understand each other.

How strongly do you agree or disagree with this view?

Strongly agree	7	7	13	11
Agree	31	33	33	30
Neither agree nor disagree	30	33	31	30
Disagree	22	18	17	19
Strongly disagree	8	7	5	9
Don't know	2	2	1	1

Thinking back to your childhood, which of these applies to you?

I was brought up throughout my childhood by both my parents,	73	82	79	78
I was brought up throughout my childhood by both my parents,	1	1	0	1
My parents split up when I was 11 or older	10	6	7	6
My parents split up when I was 5-10	8	4	5	4
My parents split up before I was five	5	3	4	4
One of my parents died during my childhood	4	6	7	5
I was brought up throughout my childhood by mother alone	4	3	3	2
None of these applies to me	2	2	2	2