

# Do's And Don'ts In The Courtroom

By David Pedrazas

Having to appear in family court places plaintiffs and defendants in an emotionally charged situation. When you visit the Law Office of David Pedrazas at UtahDivorce.biz, you will discover we recommend acceptable rules pertaining to presenting yourself in a proper as well as effective manner. These simple tips will help you focus on the important issues at hand, while experiencing less anxiety.

## Things You Should Do in the Courtroom

- **Be on time.** It is a good idea to arrive at the courthouse at least 30 to 45 minutes before your appointment, so you can collect yourself. Being late for your appointment will leave a bad impression upon the matrimonial judge, coupled with the fact it might throw off the other cases schedule on the court docket for that day. If an emergency arises beyond your control, immediately call the court clerk's office to let them know what has occurred.
- **Dress professionally.** You must show respect for the court, wearing anything but neat and clean clothing is unacceptable. You do not have to dress formally, but having professional apparel such as a dress shirt, tie and slacks is suitable for men. For women, blouses, dresses and skirts at an appropriate length is the proper wardrobe for your day in court. If you are coming to the courthouse straight from working a casual job, it would be a good idea to have a change of clothes in your vehicle. If this is not possible, your clothes still should be presentable and it would be wise to share with the judge about your situation, they will understand.
- **Speak clearly and confidently.** Make sure to think about what you want to say before you begin speaking; this will help you to be self-possessed. If your mouth is dry and water is not available, do not be timid in requesting it.
- **Direct your answers to the person who asked the question.** Always look at the individual when you respond to their inquiry. If you did not comprehend or hear the question correctly, do not be afraid to ask the person to repeat it.
- **Come prepared with all the paperwork you need.** You should have all your documents, legal pads, pens, and all other necessary items ready and in order at least several days before your court date. Make sure to double-check before leaving for the courthouse.

## Things You Should Not Do in the Courtroom

- **Yell, scream, etc.** Maintain your composure, no matter how much pressure you are experiencing; it is unprofessional to engage in this type of behavior, and in extreme circumstances, it could cause a person to be held in contempt.
- Make sure you are courteous; waiting to let the other parties finish their statements, even if they are rude. In the end, being patience will serve you well, you will also be viewed as polite and respectful.
- **Make faces, roll your eyes, etc.** Grown-ups having the demeanor of a child is generally not welcome anywhere, especially in a court of law. Try to keep a pleasant look on your face, even if your spouse is being hurtful.
- **Chew gum.** Do not chew gum, it would be annoying to hear smacking sounds during the proceedings.

- **Use your cell phone.** The courtroom is not a place for receiving or making phone calls, texting, or otherwise using your cell phone. This activity would be an immense distraction. Completely turning your mobile off is encouraged.

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