

HER BEST MOVE NOW · RESOURCE

Your Personal Boundaries

A quiet, practical guide for the time before you are ready to talk

Before you tell anyone what you are considering, it is worth taking some time to create a little space that is just yours. Not secretive, not confrontational — simply personal. A private corner from which to think clearly, gather information, and make decisions on your own terms. This guide helps you do that, quietly and at your own pace.

A NOTE BEFORE YOU BEGIN

None of what follows is about conflict or suspicion. It is about something much simpler: having a space to think that is entirely your own, and ensuring that what you do and what you read during this time stays private if you want it to. That is a reasonable thing to want — and a sensible thing to arrange.

Your Digital Space

The steps below help ensure that your research, communications, and decisions remain private. They are straightforward to put in place and require no technical knowledge.

Use private or incognito browsing for any research related to your situation

On most browsers — Chrome, Safari, Edge — open a new private or incognito window before searching. Searches and visited pages are not saved to your browser history. For complete privacy, use mobile data rather than shared home Wi-Fi.

Create a personal email address that is yours alone

A free Gmail, Outlook, or Apple account takes minutes to set up. Use it for correspondence with solicitors, financial advisers, or services related to this time. Do not access it from a shared or family computer.

Review the devices you use — and which are shared or accessible to others

If your phone, tablet, or laptop is accessible to anyone else, ensure your browser is set to private mode, or use a separate device for sensitive browsing if available.

Check whether your location is shared — and with whom

Many phones share location automatically through family sharing, Find My, Google Maps, or messaging apps. Review your settings and decide whether you want to continue sharing.

Store documents and notes digitally in an account that is yours alone

Google Drive, iCloud (with its own Apple ID), or Dropbox are all free and accessible from any device. Use a strong password and enable two-factor authentication.

Review your financial accounts — check whether online banking notifications go to a shared email or phone

If account alerts or statements go to a shared email address, consider updating these to your personal address. Your bank can advise how to do this.

Consider your passwords — particularly for financial and email accounts

If passwords are saved in a shared browser, or if others know your passwords, now is a sensible time to update them. Reliable password managers include 1Password, Bitwarden, and Apple Keychain.

Be thoughtful about conversations via text or messaging apps

Text messages can be read if a device is unlocked and accessible. For sensitive conversations, consider using an app with end-to-end encryption such as Signal.

Your Physical Space

Simple, practical steps to ensure that what you gather and decide during this time is accessible to you — and not inadvertently accessible to anyone else.

Identify somewhere secure and private to keep documents and notes

This might be with a trusted friend, a personal storage space, a locked drawer, or a bag that stays with you. It does not need to be elaborate — it simply needs to be yours.

Think about your mail — financial statements, legal correspondence, and other documents

If mail is delivered to a shared address and regularly seen by others, consider whether there is any correspondence you would prefer to redirect — to a trusted friend's address, or a post office box.

Be mindful of what you print — and where you print it

Home printers often store recent print jobs. If you are printing anything sensitive, use a library or print shop printer rather than a shared home device.

Consider where you have your important personal conversations

Conversations with a solicitor, financial adviser, or a close friend are best had somewhere private — away from the home, and where you will not be overheard or interrupted.

Know where your own important documents are kept — and ensure you can access them

Passport, birth certificate, Medicare card, personal financial records. These belong to you. Knowing where they are, and that you can access them, is simply good preparation.

Your Confidences

Thinking carefully about who you tell, and when, is not about isolation — it is about protecting yourself while you are still finding your footing.

Choose carefully who you confide in during this early stage

Well-meaning people can inadvertently share information. A trusted friend who will keep your confidence is invaluable. A wider circle of confidants, before you are ready, can complicate things.

Understand that conversations with a solicitor are confidential — entirely

A solicitor acting for you is bound by professional privilege. They cannot share what you tell them. Seeking legal advice — even a single initial consultation — does not commit you to any course of action.

Know that you do not have to have all the answers before you seek advice

Many women delay making a first call to a solicitor or financial adviser because they feel they are not ready. The first conversation is simply about information — you can ask questions and decide what to do next at your own pace.

Be thoughtful about social media during this time

What is posted publicly can be seen, screenshotted, and shared. A period of quieter social sharing during a significant life transition is a reasonable and private choice.

There is no urgency here.

These steps do not need to be taken all at once, and not all of them will be relevant to your situation. Move through them at your own pace — the goal is simply to give yourself a little more space, a little more privacy, and a little more room to think.

The time before you are ready to speak is not wasted time. It is often where the clearest thinking happens. Having a space that is entirely yours — to read, to consider, to gather what you need — means that when you are ready to move forward, you do so from solid ground.

Disclaimer: The information here is general in nature. It reflects common questions and considerations that arise during life transitions — it does not constitute legal, financial or professional advice, and it is not tailored to your individual circumstances. Where your situation is complex or the stakes are high, speaking with a qualified professional is likely to be worthwhile. Use what is useful. Leave what isn't.

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