

The 10 Reasons Marriages Fail

A one-page reference chart — what each pattern is, and the early sign it is starting.

	REASON	WHAT IT ACTUALLY LOOKS LIKE	THE EARLY WARNING SIGN
1	Communication breakdown	Conversations become logistics only — schedules, bills, kids. The emotional layer drops out.	You start rehearsing what you want to say, then decide it is not worth it.
2	Unresolved conflict patterns	The same argument, on loop, for years. Nothing is ever concluded, only paused.	You can predict the entire fight before it happens — and you have it anyway.
3	Infidelity and betrayal	A breach of the agreement the marriage runs on. Not always sexual — financial and emotional betrayals count.	Secrecy appears where there was none: a passcode changed, a purchase hidden.
4	Financial stress and disagreement	Money conflicts are rarely about money. They are about safety, control, and whose priorities count.	One of you stops mentioning purchases to avoid the reaction.
5	Incompatibility and unmet expectations	Two people who assumed the same future and never checked. Children, location, ambition, faith.	You catch yourself thinking “I assumed we would have sorted this by now.”
6	Untreated mental health issues	Depression, anxiety, addiction or trauma running the relationship from the passenger seat.	The relationship organises itself around one person’s bad days.
7	Growing apart over time	No single rupture. Two people drift into separate lives inside one house.	You have nothing to say at dinner that is not about the household.
8	Criticism and contempt	Complaints about behaviour turn into verdicts about character. Contempt is the strongest single predictor of divorce.	Eye-rolling, sarcasm, or the phrase “you always / you never.”
9	Loss of emotional or physical intimacy	Touch, affection and disclosure fade. Roommates who share a mortgage.	Affection has become something you schedule or avoid, not something that happens.
10	Unwillingness to seek help	One or both partners refuse counselling until the marriage is already over.	“We can fix this ourselves” — said for the third year running.

How to use this chart: read down the right-hand column first. Early warning signs are easier to be honest about than reasons. Mark the ones you recognise, then have one conversation about the highest-scoring row — not all of them at once.