

# Bella speaks to two women about the pros and cons of marital contracts...

## Priscilla Walsh-Smith, 51, from London, found out too late about the small print of her prenup

The problem with women is that we follow our hearts. I should know – I've been married three times. We're all into love and happy ever after, and it's rubbish. My last divorce left me with a £27,000 credit-card bill, huge legal costs and eviction from my apartment. I was married to Phil for eight and a half years. We lived in the States and, when I signed the prenup before our wedding,

I wasn't even thinking about money and was given some bad legal advice.

I was young, naive and in love – a recipe for disaster. When our marriage broke down, I was devastated.

I went to see a lawyer and discovered that our prenup had a termination clause, which meant Phil could evict me from our apartment within 30 days.

I got about £632,000 in the divorce settlement, but after legal costs I was left with hardly anything.

The prenup was a slap in the face. I hadn't married Phil for money – I genuinely loved him with all my heart.

It goes to show you can't bank on wedded bliss. I doubt I'll ever get married again, but if I do, I won't be signing a prenuptial agreement.



## Businesswoman and mum of two Lindsey Agness, 50, from Kent, says she wouldn't marry again without a prenuptial agreement

When I got married in 1988, my husband and I both had nothing. So even if we'd heard about prenups back then, we wouldn't have signed one.

We broke up 12 years later and everything was split fairly easily.



Then in 2005, I set up the Change Corporation – a business consultancy and personal-development company. Now

I enjoy a comfortable lifestyle and own three properties.

If I married again, I'd

want my partner to sign a prenup so it was clear how we would divide everything up. And assuming he put no money into my business, I'd want to keep that 100 per cent.

It may sound unromantic, but you have to be practical when there's a lot at stake.

I'm safeguarding my children's future. I want to protect my financial assets so they can benefit from them in years to come.

If my new husband had children too, I'd want him to sign a prenup even if he had more money than me – for their sake.

On one of the courses I run, I teach mid-life women how to look after their finances if, for instance, their husband has left them. Because when you're older, you have more to lose.

● [www.agewithattitude.co.uk](http://www.agewithattitude.co.uk)

# THING?

## Advice from TV divorce lawyer Vanessa Lloyd Platt



She says: 'I'm a great supporter of prenups when people want to protect their assets for their children from a previous marriage. But I'm not happy when it's a first marriage and people sign away too many of their rights. More lawyers are advising couples to draw up a prenup, but if the courts consider someone was under duress to sign, they wouldn't make it binding.'

# DEAL OR NO DEAL?

## The celebs who signed...

**Britney Spears** paid just \$1 million to her former husband Kevin Federline thanks to a prenuptial agreement.

If **Catherine Zeta Jones** were to divorce Michael Douglas, she would get £1 million for each year of their marriage.

**Rachel Hunter** is thought to have received less than £5 million from Rod Stewart's estimated £100 million fortune.

## And those who didn't

**Jennifer Lopez** didn't have a prenup for her marriage to Cris Judd and paid him £10 million.

**Sir Paul McCartney**, having not drawn up a prenup, paid out £24.3 million to Heather Mills after their divorce last year.

**Mel Gibson** married his wife Robyn in 1980 when he was a struggling actor. She filed for divorce this year and is entitled to half his estimated £640 million fortune.

