

7 Things To Know Before Legally Changing Your Name



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People legally change their first, middle, or last names for a variety of reasons: Major life changes—getting married, divorced, or undergoing a gender reassignment—might catalyze a name change, or people might just hate the name they were born with.

“The biggest thing to keep in mind about any name change is that it is a process, rather than a one-stop shop,” says Anna Phipps, VP of Experience at [HitchSwitch](#), a name change service geared towards newlyweds. Obtaining a legal document such as a marriage certificate, divorce decree, or court granted petition will allow you to change your name but won't make your name change official, explains Phipps. “You won't be legally recognized by your new name until you've submitted applications with the Social Security Administration, DMV, etc.”

If you're considering getting a legal name change, here are seven things you should know.