

Jennifer Aniston's Celebrity Engagement: How Long is Too Long?



By Dr. Jane Greer

Actors [Jennifer Aniston](#) and Justin Theroux celebrated their [celebrity engagement](#) in August of 2012, and their wedding has been much-anticipated by their many fans. However, reports last week revealed the two have been fighting and are now living separately. Justin has asked Jennifer to be patient, but being no closer to a celebrity wedding date after being engaged for over two years “makes her feel like a fool.” Couple that with the fact that they both have incredibly busy schedules, and it’s no surprise that they are having a hard

time scheduling their wedding.

The fact that this celebrity couple has been planning to get married for over two years raises the question, how long is too long? Is there a shelf life to an engagement?

What's holding you back?

That may depend on whether the issues getting in the way are practical ones or emotional ones, and if the couple will be able to give themselves time to work through and get past them. Consider first what is holding you back from setting a date and walking down the aisle. If you both have full-time jobs, for example, or are celebrities like Jennifer and Justin, the demands of the office and of upcoming projects might make it very difficult to plan a wedding.

Where will you live?

On top of that, there's the expectation that once you are married you will share a home base. If you are living in separate parts of the country or world, or have a work assignment far away from where your partner spends most of his or her time, deciding where to call home might not come so easily. Sometimes that requires one person to compromise and make a choice that could end up feeling like a sacrifice he or she isn't ready to make. So whether it is a work commitment, or even an illness in the family that is time-consuming, and thereby keeping you from saying, "I do," you might find yourself in a perpetual state of engagement.

Are you used to your long engagement?

You may even adjust to a long engagement, and it can become what you are used to. So if it works for both of you, then there may not be any rush. Sometimes the end goal of marriage is no longer front and center, and you might not feel compelled to take the next step. You are each happily doing your thing, and haven't taken the time to figure out how to officially merge lanes. Getting married would be nice, but right now it doesn't feel necessary. If that is the case, the shelf life on an engagement can be evergreen.

Are your feelings in the right place?

If the thing that is holding you back has more to do with your feelings than with logistics, take stock of what is going on so you can better understand it and deal with it. Has one of you been married before, maybe even suffered a betrayal as was the case with Jennifer, and therefore may be feeling afraid to take the plunge for fear something similar might happen again? Or, like Justin, has one of you never been married? If that is the case there is the possibility that the fear of a change in identity and the concern over what there is to lose, such as personal freedom, is what is creating the roadblock.

Practical vs. Emotional

Layer the two together, the practical piece and the emotional piece, possibly even throwing in a financial piece, and it is no wonder some people take longer to get to the altar. If one of you is pushing to do it sooner than the other, things might get complicated. But if you are both willing to wait it out, and you are able to work through some or all of these issues, then there is really no downside to waiting. The bottom line is, there is no clear expiration date on an engagement unless you plan to call off the relationship itself. As long as you are on the same team, and are aware of what is keeping you from taking the plunge, you could stay engaged for years or

even decades.

Only time will tell if Jennifer and Justin fall into the category of both being okay with the long engagement, or if they will start to move apart in terms of what they each wish for. Hopefully, though, they will be able to move forward in their joint life together, proving their commitment to each other is enduring whether they are married or not.

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