

ADVANTAGES & DISADVANTAGES OF THE CIVIL COURTS

ADVANTAGES

1. A legally qualified judge will decide the case.
2. The doctrine of judicial precedent will be applied by the judge, which leads to a reasoned decision.
3. There is an appeal system if a party is unhappy with the decision of the trial judge.
4. Legal aid is available for those on a low income.

DISADVANTAGES

1. The civil courts are expensive. Many cases cost more than is being claimed.
2. There are delays in waiting for the trial. For example:
 - 12 months for the county court
 - 3 years for the High Court
 - 19 months for the Court of Appeal

3. The procedures are complex.

The above were the most important criticisms prior to the civil justice reforms of 26 April 1999.

4. The courts are open to the public and press, which could lead to adverse publicity.
5. The judge will not have technical expertise.
6. The court service chooses the trial date.