

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE AT A GLANCE



	May you interrupt speaker?	Do you need a Second?	Is it debatable?	Can it be amended?	What Vote is needed?	Can it be reconsidered?
Suspend further consideration of an issue	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
End debate and comments	No	Yes	No	No	2/3	No
Postpone discussion	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
Give closer study of issue	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
Amend a motion	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
Introduce new business	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
Remove a matter previously tabled	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No

INTRODUCTION TO ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

Parliamentary procedure is a set of rules for conduct at meetings that allows everyone to be heard and to make decisions without confusion. Parliamentary Procedure is important because it's a time-tested method of conducting business at meetings and public gatherings. Today, Robert's Rules of Order newly revised is the basic handbook of operation for most clubs, organizations and other groups.

The method used by members to express themselves is in the form of moving motions. A motion is a proposal that the entire membership take action or a stand on an issue. Individual members can:

- 1) Call to order.
- 2) Second motions.
- 3) Debate motions.
- 4) Vote on motions.

There are four basic types of motions:

- 1) **Main Motions:** The purpose of a main motion is to introduce items to the membership for their consideration. They cannot be made when any other motion is on the floor and yield to privileged, subsidiary, and incidental motions.
- 2) **Subsidiary Motions:** Their purpose is to change or affect how a main motion is handled and is voted on before a main motion.
- 3) **Privileged Motions:** Their purpose is to bring up items that are urgent or important matters unrelated to pending business.
- 4) **Incidental Motions:** Their purpose is to provide a means of questioning procedure concerning other motions and must be considered before the other motion.

How are Motions Presented?

- 1) Obtaining the floor
 - a) Wait until the last speaker has finished.
 - b) Rise and address the chairman by saying, "Mr. Chairman, or Mr. President."
 - c) Wait until the chairman recognizes you.
- 2) Make your motion
 - a) Speak in a clear and concise manner.
 - b) Always state a motion affirmatively. Say, "I move that we ..." rather than, "I move that we do not ...".
 - c) Avoid personalities and stay on your subject.
- 3) Wait for someone to second your motion
- 4) Another member will second your motion or the Chairman will call for a second.
- 5) If there is no second to your motion it is lost.
- 6) The chairman states your motion
 - a) The chairman will say, "It has been moved and seconded that we ..." Thus, placing your motion before the membership for consideration and action.
 - b) The membership then either debates your motion or may move directly to a vote.
 - c) Once your motion is presented to the membership by the chairman it becomes "assembly property" and cannot be changed by you without the consent of the members.
- 7) Expanding on your motion
 - a) The time for you to speak in favor of your motion is at this point in time, rather than at the time you present it.
 - b) The mover is always allowed to speak first.
 - c) All comments and debate must be directed to the chairman.
 - d) Keep to the time limit for speaking that has been established.

- e) The mover may speak again only after other speakers are finished, unless called upon by the chairman.
- 8) Putting the Question to the Membership
 - a) The chairman asks, "Are you ready to vote on the question?"
 - b) If there is no more discussion, a vote is taken.
 - c) On a motion to move the previous question may be adapted.

Voting on a motion:

The method of vote on any motion depends on the situation and the by-laws of policy of your organization. There are five methods used to vote by most organizations, they are:

- 1) Voice - The Chairman asks those in favor to say, "aye." those opposed to say "no." Any member may move for an exact count.
- 2) Roll call - Each member answers "yes" or "no" as his name is called. This method is used when a record of each person's vote is required.
- 3) General consent - When a motion is not likely to be opposed, the Chairman says, "if there is no objection ..." The membership shows agreement by their silence, however if one member says, "I object," the item must be put to a vote.
- 4) Division - This is a slight verification of a voice vote. It does not require a count unless the chairman so desires. Members raise their hands or stand.
- 5) Ballot - Members write their vote on a slip of paper. This method is used when secrecy is desired.

There are two other motions that are commonly used that relate to voting.

- 1) Motion to table - This motion is often used in the attempt to "kill" a motion. The membership may reconsider a motion later by "taking it from the table."
- 2) Motion to postpone indefinitely - This is often used as a means of parliamentary strategy and allows opponents of motion to test their strength without an actual vote being taken. Also, debate is once again open on the main motion.

Parliamentary Procedure Motions Chart

Adjourn	S	M			
Recess	S	A	M		
Table	S	M			
Close debate	S	2/3	R		
Limit debate	S	A	2/3	R	
Postpone to later time	S	D	A	M	R
Refer to committee	S	D	A	M	R
Amend amendment	S	D	M	R	
Postpone indefinitely	S	D	A	M	R
Main motion	S	D	A	M	R

S = must be seconded
2/3 = requires a 2/3 vote

D = debatable
R = may be reconsidered or rescinded

A = amendable
M = requires majority vote