

Parliamentary Procedure for Meetings

Robert's Rules of Order is the standard for facilitating discussions and group decision-making. Although they may seem long and involved, having an agreed upon set of rules makes meetings run easier. Robert's Rules will help your group have better meetings, not make them more difficult. Your group is free to modify them or find another suitable process that encourages fairness and participation, unless your bylaws state otherwise.

KEYS TO BEING A GOOD MEMBER & PRACTICING PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

- Attends meetings regularly and serves willingly to the best of one's ability
- Speaks up during the meeting, bringing out important points and contributing from one's experiences.
- Learns to be brief, because brevity wins the goodwill of other members.
- Refrains from being technical or more strict than is absolutely necessary for the good of the meeting.
- Participates with good humor; brightens up the meeting and makes way for differing viewpoints.
- Respects members of the assembly and faces opposition without taking offense or feeling there was personal criticism where none was intended.

TO INTRODUCE A MOTION:

- Address the Chair by the proper title and wait until the chair recognizes you.
- Now that you have the floor and can proceed with your motion say "I move that...", state your motion.
- Another member may second your motion. A second merely implies that the seconder agrees that the motion should come before the assembly and not that he/she is in favor of the motion.
 - If there is no second, the Chair says, "The motion is not before you at this time." The motion is not lost, as there has been no vote taken.
 - If there is a second, the Chair states the question by saying "It has been moved and seconded that ... (state the motion). . . , is there any discussion?"

DEBATE OR DISCUSSING THE MOTION:

- The member who made the motion is entitled to speak first, followed by the member who seconds.
- The Chair should open the motion to debate and call members in order to speak.
- Every member has the right to speak in debate.
 - A member is limited to speak once to a motion.
 - A person may speak a second time in debate with the assembly's permission.
- All questions should be directed to the Chair, avoid using a person's name in debate.
- Asking a question or a brief suggestion is not counted in debate.
- Thereafter, if you:
 - approve the idea of the motion but want to change it, amend it. (m, s, and maj)
 - feel there is more urgent business, lay the motion on the table to be picked up later. (m, s, and maj)
 - want advice or information to help you make your decision, move to refer the motion to an appropriate committee with instructions to report back. (m, s, and maj)
 - want time to think the motion over, move that consideration be deferred to a certain time. (m, s, and maj)
 - think that a matter introduced is not relevant to the matter at hand, raise a point of order. (m)
 - think that further discussion is unnecessary, call the question. (m, s, and tt)
 - approve the motion as is, vote for it when the time comes.
 - disapprove the motion, vote against it when the time comes.
 - do not agree with a decision rendered by the chair, appeal the decision to the assembly. (m and s)

VOTING ON A MOTION:

- Before a vote is taken, the Chair puts the question by saying "Those in favor of the motion that ... (repeat the motion)... say "Aye." Those opposed say "No." Wait, then say "The motion is carried," or "The motion is lost."
 - A majority vote is more than half of the assembly by persons entitled to vote
 - A 2/3 vote means at least 2/3 of the votes cast by persons entitled to vote.
 - If a member is in doubt about the vote, they may call for a roll call vote.
 - A tie vote is broken by the Staff Senate President