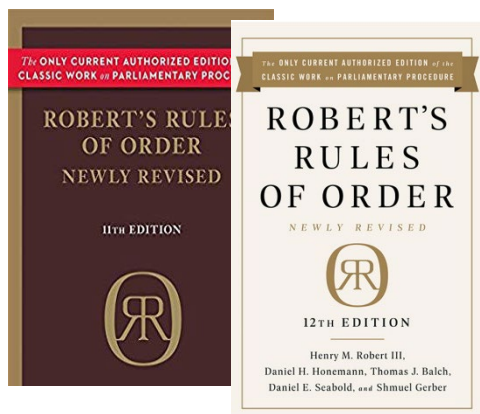




# Parliamentary Procedures Rules Booklet



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INDEX

	Page
INTRODUCTION.....	1
Terms to Know.....	2
Objectives.....	3
Formal or Informal.....	3
Basic Principles.....	4
<b>INFORMAL DELIBERATION.....</b>	<b>5</b>
MOTIONS.....	6
What is a Motion.....	6
Process for Motions.....	6
1. Asking for the floor	
2. The chair gives the floor to the speaker	
3. Making a motion	
4. Seconding a motion	
5. Repeating the motion	
6. Process a motion.....	7
7. Voting on a motion	
8. Outcome results.....	8
AMENDMENTS	
MOTION TYPES.....	9
Main Motions Secondary Motions	
1. Tabling a Motion	
2. Previous Question or Closing a Debate	
3. To limit or extend the debate.....	10
4. To postpone for a set time	
5. To refer to a committee	
6. To amend	
7. To table indefinitely Privileged motions	
1. To adjourn the session	
2. For a recess	
3. Point of Privilege	
Incidental Motions.....	12
1. To Suspend the Rules	
2. Motion by Item Order	
3. Appeal Chair's Decision	
4. Withdrawing a motion	
Motions without classification.....	13
1. Consideration	
2. Withdrawing	
3. To take from table	
TABLE OF FREQUENTLY USED MOTIONS.....	14

## **INTRODUCTION**

*Based on the 11th and 12 Edition*

The 12<sup>th</sup> edition embodied a codification of the present day general parliamentary law, it is also designed as a manual to be adopted by organization or assemblies as their parliamentary authority. When Robert's Rules of Order has been adopted, the rules within it, together with any special rules of procedure are binding upon the body and constitute that body's rules of order.

The "Robert's Rules of Order" is the oldest and most commonly consulted parliamentary doctrine today. General Henry M. Roberts of the United States Armed Forces, engineering platoon, first recorded this book as literary property in 1876. Since then, this book has been renewed many times and hundreds of thousands of copies have been sold.

Many organizations have adopted certain variations of these standards as a basic guide. The parliamentary procedure enables groups of people to reach decisions and plan work in short periods with time and without confusion. It should be implemented in such a way that it can determine and carry out the will of the majority while respecting the rights and privileges of the minority, thereby protecting the democratic system.

Parliamentary law originally was the name given to the rules and customs for carrying on business in the English Parliament that were developed through a continuing process of decision and precedent somewhat like the growth of the common law. The kind of gathering in which parliamentary law is applicable is known as a deliberative assembly. A deliberative assembly is a body of persons meeting to discuss and determine upon common action.

### **Rules for Electronic Meetings**

As noted in Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, \* there is an increasing preference among some organizations to transact business at "electronic meetings," in which some or all of the members communicate through electronic means such as the Internet or by telephone.

Regarding the proper authorization of such meetings, and their limitations, please refer to the subsection entitled Electronic Meetings [RONR (11th ed.), pp. 97–99], and [RONR (12th ed.), pp. 88–91] wherein it is stated that when electronic meetings are authorized—which, in the case of a board or other assembly, always requires a bylaw provision—additional rules should be adopted to govern their conduct. Depending on the nature of the rules and the specific provisions of the bylaws, such additional rules may be placed in the bylaws, adopted as special rules of order or standing rules, or contained in instructions from a superior body.

## TERMS TO KNOW

- **ADJOURN**- Close or end a meeting.  
(RRO 11<sup>th</sup> edition Pg. 82-83, 93-94 RRO 12<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 220 21:1)
- **ASSEMBLY** –Body of people who assemble in a meeting that is the event of their being assemble to transact business.  
(RRO 11<sup>th</sup> edition pg.2 &10 – RRO 12<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 2 1:3)
- **ABSTAIN**- Mean not to vote at all, and a member who make no response if abstentions are called for abstains just as much as one who responds to that effect.  
(RRO 11<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 45 – RRO 12<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 40 4:35)
- **APPEAL** - When a member disagree with a ruling and they wish for the body to vote on. There must be a second.  
(RRO 11<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 255– RRO 12<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 242 24:1)
- **APPEAL CHAIR DECISION**- . This motion allows members to express their disagreement with a decision of the chair and for the membership to render a decision.  
(RRO 11<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 255– RRO 12<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 62 6:17 (1-2))
- **CALL FOR THE ORDER OF THE DAY**- A member requires the group to resume the scheduled business (agenda) immediately, unless the members decide otherwise by a two-thirds vote. This is a privilege motion and does not need a second.  
(RRO 11<sup>th</sup> edition pg.67 – RRO 12<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 208 18:4)
- **CHAIRMAN/PRESIDENT**- The presiding officer of an assembly.  
(RRO 11<sup>th</sup> edition Pg. 82-83, 93-94- RRO 12<sup>th</sup> edition PG. 426 47.5)
- **COMMIT OR REFER** – Used to send a pending question to a relatively small group so that the question (motion) may be carefully investigated and brought back to the assembly to consider.  
(RRO 11<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 168 - RRO 12<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 157 13:1)
- **DEBATE** – In a deliberative assembly, the term applies to discussion on the merits of a pending question.  
(RRO 11<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 376 - RRO 12<sup>th</sup> edition pg.365 43:1)
- **DELIBERATIVE ASSEMBLY** – The kind of gathering to which parliamentary law is generally understood to apply. A group of people having or assuming freedom to act in concert to discuss and take action.  
(RRO 11<sup>th</sup> edition Pg. 1, RRO 12<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 466 50:1)
- **DILATORY MOTION** –a motion to obstruct or thwart the will of the assembly as clearly indicated by the existing parliamentary situation. (Simple way to explain: A motion whose effect is to interrupt the business under discussion at the time.)  
(RRO 11<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 342-343- RRO 12<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 325 39:1)
- **LAY ON THE TABLE/TABLE**- In parliamentary law, it allows the body to set aside a pending motion for possible act later.  
(RRO 11<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 209 & 217 – RRO 12<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 198 17:1)

- MAJORITY VOTE - More than half of the total members eligible to vote.  
*(RRO 11<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 400 – RRO 12<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 379 44:1)*
- MOTION – A proposal so that the body takes certain action.  
*(RRO 11<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 27 – RRO 12<sup>th</sup> edition pg.28 4:4)*
- OBTAINING THE FLOOR – The privilege of speaking before the assembly.  
*(RRO 11<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 42 - RRO 12<sup>th</sup> edition pg.26 3:30)*
- PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY - A question directed to the presiding officer to obtain information on a matter of parliamentary law or rules of the origination bearing this matter.  
*(RRO 11<sup>th</sup> edition pg. – RRO 12<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 276 33:3)*
- PENDING QUESTION- The motion in process.  
*(RRO 11<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 32 – RRO 12<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 28 4:3)*
- PREVIOUS QUESTION- or “I call for the question”– Name given to a **motion** to close debate, and to take an immediate vote on the pending question. This action cannot be debated nor amended.  
*(RRO 11<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 197 – RRO 12<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 187 16:1)*
- QUORUM – Number or proportion of members required to be present at a meeting so business can be legally acted on.  
*(RRO 11<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 21, 345-351 – RRO 12<sup>th</sup> edition 328 40:1 & 40:2)*
- RECONSIDER- A motion that enable a majority in an assembly to bring back a motion for further consideration that has already been voted on.  
*(RRO 11<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 315 – RRO 12<sup>th</sup> edition PG. 298 37:1)*
- RIGHT TO ABSTENTION- It is the duty for every member to who has an opinion on a question (*motion*) to express it by vote, the member can abstain and cannot be compel to vote.  
*(RRO 11<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 407 - RRO 12<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 385 45:3)*
- SECOND- For a motion to be considered by a group, it must have the "support" i.e., a second merely implies that the seconder agree that the motion should come before the meeting and not that they necessary favor the motion.  
*(RRO 11<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 36 – RRO 12<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 32 4:11)*
- STAND AT EASE – The chairman/President without objection, simply permit a brief pause without declaration of a recess.  
*(RRO 11<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 82 – RRO 12<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 74 (4))*
- STANDING SUBCOMMITTEES – A committee to perform a continuing function and remain in existence permanently or for the life of the assembly that established them.  
*(RRO 11<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 490 – RRO 12<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 467 50:7)*
- SUSPENSION OF RULES- the assembly may set aside a rule that prevents them from acting and that does not conflict with the bylaws.  
*(RRO 11<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 260 – RRO 12<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 246 25:1)*

- **TAKE FROM THE TABLE-** A motion to lay a pending question aside temporarily when something else of immediate urgency has arisen or something else need to be addressed.  
*(RRO 11<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 209 – RRO 12<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 189 17:1)*
- **TWO THIRD VOTE-** At least two third of the votes cast by persons entitled to vote, excluding blanks or abstentions.  
*(RRO 11<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 401 –RRO 12<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 385 45:3)*
- **VOTE BY PROXY -** A vote made on behalf of an absent member.  
*(RRO 11<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 428 – RRO 12<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 406 45:70)*
- **WITHDRAWAL-** To take back, remove a motion, or second before the motion is restated by the chairperson.  
*(RRO 11<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 295 – RRO 12<sup>th</sup> edition pg. 278 33:11)*

## OBJECTIVES

Parliamentary procedures provide an orderly method for holding any type of meeting. Four goals are achieved with this procedure:

1. Be able to plan and conduct business quickly and easily.
2. Protect the rights of individual members.
3. Reinforce and preserve harmony in the group.
4. To make decisions by agreement of the majority of the group in the shortest possible period of time and without confusion.

Some of the best parliamentary rule books have been written for legislative bodies to use. These books assume that the assembly is divided into two or more groups or parts, each seeking to achieve the advantages of the debate and the action taken. The extremely strict use of the rules by chairs or parliamentarians who follow the law word by word without considering the principle on which they are based has caused some biased towards the rules. When practiced correctly, parliamentary procedure arises naturally and with ease.

### Amendment

The parliamentary procedure must never be used just because. In small, informal groups, such as school advisory councils, strict parliamentary procedures are not necessary or desired by agreement between members. As the level of the organization grows or the size of the group increases, stricter parliamentary standards will be required. In the district-level advisory committee, the parliamentary procedure will be more formal. At the national level, parliamentary rules will be strictly followed.

On local councils in which members know each other, it would not make sense for the member to be given the floor by saying: "Mr. Richard Johnson of E.B.R.P." However, this would be necessary at a national level meeting. At the local club, it is enough for the member to raise his/her hand and say: "Mr. Chair" and in once obtaining the floor to begin by saying "I propose a motion so that..." How much do members know about parliamentary procedure? This is a factor that must be taken into consideration. If members know very little about parliamentary procedures, they will be able to achieve more through a more informal approach. A small group with an in-depth knowledge of parliamentary procedure would probably achieve more with a formal approach. One of the best ways to learn is through practice, this also applies to parliamentary procedures. Plan a formal meeting where parliamentary procedures are strictly followed. Parliamentarians must be ready to "ask for the floor to raise a point of order" each time the procedure is not followed. Another method of teaching parliamentary procedure would be to demonstrate by involving members.

## BASIC PRINCIPLES

There are five principles of parliamentary procedure:

1. Only one matter will be considered at a time. New matters cannot be presented or discussed until action has been taken on the matter under consideration. Business is transacted through motions proposed and processed. In baseball, another batter cannot replace the batter at bat until the batter has had their turn, be it by striking out or making a play.
2. Each proposal allows each member to discuss a matter freely and in its entirety. Everyone has the right and duty as a member of the organization to understand the matter before the group. Do not be afraid to ask for information or express disagreement.
3. The will of the majority must be carried out, but the rights of the minority are protected. The individual rights of the majority and minority of members must be protected. Some examples of the rules that protect these rights are:
  - A two-thirds majority vote is required to stop the debate or suspend the rules.
  - A two-thirds majority vote is required to close nominations, but nominations are opened only by majority vote.
  - A quorum is required to act upon matters. A quorum is the number of more than half of the voting members, if the organization's bylaws do not establish the specified amount.
4. All members have equal rights. Each member has the same right to present, debate and vote on matters at the meeting. Individual expressions should be made during the meeting, not after the meeting. Democratic groups need to find out what their members honestly think and want. Every player on a baseball team has his turn at bat, even if some are better than others.
5. Good rules of courtesy should be observed in the deliberation of matters. You should wait to be given the floor, all matters should be addressed to the "chair", you should not talk to other members when someone has the floor. In baseball, each player has their turn to bat, rather than trying to pile up in front of others.



## **INFORMAL DELIBERATION**

It is perfectly appropriate to deliberate before making a motion. The chair simply stipulates an informal deliberation. The parliamentary procedure, which was developed to guide legislative bodies, assumes that this preliminary deliberation has been conducted in a committee earlier. One of the main causes for difficulties in meetings is not having had this preliminary discussion.

The preliminary deliberation makes it possible to decide whether the matter falls to the whole group, find, and consider possible solutions to the matter and finally to present the motion based on the opinion of the whole group. This can avoid too many amendments and amendments to the amendments.

An item proposes in a motion requires that such a motion be put to the vote, and also that any amendments and amendments to the amendments be put to the vote. An issue presented through informal deliberation only requires the decision (vote) by the group.

Through the use of informal deliberation, a group decision can be reached, rather than just a majority vote. The motion to propose a matter becomes a dominant factor and offers a solution, rather than urging the group to a debate. To begin informal deliberation, a member must, after the "chair" gives the floor, inform on a problem or issue to be addressed. "The council needs to form a committee to increase membership." The problem was established but no solution was offered. The chair could then ask for suggestions or ideas. Any member could offer advice. Possible solutions (making phone calls, having more interesting meetings, prizes) could be considered and a general agreement could be reached. At this point, the chair may ask the secretary of the group to get general agreement on a proposal. The proposal can also be offered by asking for the floor, or it can be made by the chair. This proposal is a verbal solution. It is not presented for decision-making, but rather for consideration in order to ensure that it contains what the group had in mind. Changes or improvements can be suggested. The group will only be ready to make the motion after the proposal is reviewed. Someone may propose the following "I move that the council offers prizes to increase membership." This motion would then follow the steps required for any motion under the parliamentary procedures.

# MOTIONS

## WHAT IS A MOTION?

A motion is the means to propose a certain issue for the group to decide upon. Motions are the backbone of methods for conducting orderly meetings. A motion is a formal statement of a "proposal" or input." It is the way to present the final "suggestion" or deliberation and the action that the group will take.

## MOTION PROCESS

### 1. *Asking for the floor*

A member who wishes to propose a matter, deliberate on a motion, ask a question, or provide information related to the subject should only address the meeting's presiding officer in the following ways: Saying "Mr. Chair," by their special title if they have one and you should never address it him/her by name. In the case of a lady, you should address her by saying "Madam Chair." It is preferred to use the title of chairperson. Presiding officer is also common.

You should never try to ask for the floor when someone else is speaking, except when their proposition is inadmissible or in case of a real emergency. In very small, informal groups, members do not need to stand up to address the chair. In larger groups, where members do not know each other well, the person who wishes to obtain the floor needs to give his or her name and perhaps add additional identifying information, so that chair, the secretary, and other members of the group recognize who is speaking. The correct way to do it, is through the following: "Mr. Chair, Richard Johnson of Capitol High School."

### 2. *The chair gives the floor to the speaker*

The presiding officer shall give the floor to this person (if he or she knows him/her personally) by calling him/her by name as follows: "Mr. Smith" or "Sam Smith." If the presiding officer does not know him/her, he can grant the floor by saying: "The Speaker" or "The Chair gives the floor to the person on his right." The first person who asks for the floor, the person will proceed to explain the matter.

### 3. *Making a motion*

The member proposes the motion by saying: "I make a motion..." "I propose that," is the appropriate expression for submitting a proposal or a matter, then this becomes a motion. It is not correct to say, "I motion" or 'Also say." In proposing a motion, this is equivalent to "I think that" or "I think it should be done as is." The person proposing the motion is supposed to be in favor of it, so he/she is not allowed to contradict it. However, because deliberation can change your mind, the proponent can then vote against it.

Motions must be made in an affirmative manner to avoid confusion arising from the negative vote on a motion that was made in a negative manner. For example, if you say: "I propose that the council have a social meeting," those voting in favor of the motion would be voting against the council and those voting "no" would be voting in favor of this.

#### 4. *Seconding a motion*

All ordinary motions must be seconded. This is done to confirm that there are two people who want the matter to be discussed. Generally, motions should be seconded immediately. The Chair does not need to give the floor. In small groups there is no need to stand up or address the chair, it is only to be said. "I second the motion," or "I second it." In large meetings it is appropriate to stand up and say: "Mr. Chair, I second the motion."

#### 5. *Repeating the motion*

The chair then proposes the motion again and asks: "Are you ready to conduct this business?" The purpose of repeating the motion is to give the secretary the opportunity to correctly record the motion in the minutes and to make the motion clear to members before the debate begins.

#### 6. *Process a motion*

Next, the motion is processed. Any member has the right to do so after the chair repeats it again. The Chair must give the floor and ask that the debate to begin.

- The first person who asks for the floor usually gets it. The debate should focus on the issue presented "to the parliamentary group."
  - This step should never be omitted. Everyone should have an opportunity to express his/her opinion or to ask questions that may clarify the motion.
  - The following is an example of correctly making a motion: Mr. Jones (standing up): "I second the motion."
  - Chairperson: "Mr. Jones."
  - Mr. Smith (standing up): "I second the motion."
  - Chairperson: "The motion has been proposed for the interior dining room to be painted and this has been seconded. Is there debate?"
  - Next, the motion is processed.

#### 7. *Voting on a motion.*

The chairperson "takes the motion to a vote." When everyone who wanted to speak has done so, or when the chair considers that all aspects of the matter have already been discussed, he or she may ask: "Is there still a topic to debate?" or "are you ready to vote on the matter?" It is not necessary to answer the chair by saying "take matter to a vote"

Affirmative and negative votes must be cast. Chair Says: "Everyone in favor of the motion (will state the motion again so that members know exactly what they are voting on), say yes, those who oppose say no." If the verbal vote on a matter is contested, the chair may request that the vote be made by raising his hand or standing up. These methods can count the votes and discard doubt on whether or not the motion has been adopted. Voting can be carried out by roll call vote so to record each individual vote. This is the slowest procedure and is rarely used, except in the case of controversial matters. Voting by ballot is not common except for matters which members hesitate to vote openly.

## 8. *Outcome results*

After the vote is cast, the chair must announce the result of the vote. The most common way to do it is by saying: "The affirmative votes have prevailed, and the motion has been adopted" or "the negative votes have prevailed, and the motion has been dismissed." Immediately after the chair announces the vote, a new matter or motion is moved.

## **AMENDMENTS**

The three methods for amending a motion are:

1. Strike through certain words.
2. Insert or add a certain word or words or a complete sentence.
3. Replace, remove something, and put something else in place. The substitution can be a word, a phrase, a sentence, or a whole new paragraph.

Amendments may be contrary to the original intent of the motion. However, it must be related to the same subject. An amendment can also be amended. However, the amendment to an amendment cannot be further corrected. Amendments to a pending matter only require a majority vote to be adopted, even if the pending matter requires a two-thirds vote of the members.

Example of an amendment (using the example of the community dining room to be painted):

Mr. Brown (standing up): Mr. Chair; Chairperson: "Mr. Brown."

Mr. Brown: "I propose that the motion be amended by adding the words "during the month of November."

Mr. Wall: I second the motion."

Chairperson: "Amendment has been made and seconded to add the words "during the month of November" The motion would then be "the council will paint the inside of the dining room during the month of November." Is there debate?"

The amendment is always voted on first. If it is adopted, the motion is voted on with the amendment. If the amendment was not adopted, the original motion is voted on.

For instance:

Chairperson: "Is there any further debate? If there is none, all those in favor of the amendment of the motion by adding the words "during the month of November" state it by saying yes and all those who oppose it, say no; or those who oppose it would express it in the same way.

"The amendment has been approved. The motion before the membership is the following: The council will paint the inside of the dining room during the month of November, are you ready to vote on the matter?" If no one answers, the chair proceeds to put the matter to the vote; that is, "all those in favor, state it by saying yes and all those who oppose, say no." The affirmative votes have prevailed, and the motion has been adopted.

## TYPES OF MOTION

Motions can be classified according to their specific purposes. There are four basic classification of motions, Main, Subsidiary, privileged and Incidental motions.

A motion that presents the main matter to the group is called the main motion. Once such a motion is presented to the group, it must be dealt with before another motion can be transacted. There are other motions, however, that can be considered before the main motions. These are procedural motions, known as secondary motions, privilege motions, and incidental motions.

Secondary motions serve to modify, submit for consideration, remove, or otherwise resolve the main motion. They can be brought while the main motion is pending and take precedence. Privilege motions differ from secondary motions in that they deal with matters relating to the order of business and the rights and welfare of members. They have higher hierarchy than main or secondary motions.

Incidental motions relate mainly to procedural matters such as closing the nomination, voting, requesting information, etc. Unlike other types of motions, incidental motions do not have an order of preference among themselves. They do not take precedence over the motions from which they originate.

The precedence of one motion before another means that it can be considered before a lower-ranking motion. There is a hierarchy of motions to ensure the greatest efficiency in conducting business. The motions that have the greatest urgency have a higher hierarchy. The motion affecting the schedule of the next meeting has a higher rank than that of adjourning the session because it is more pressing. The reference motion has a higher hierarchy than the amendment motion because when a motion includes many details, it is better for it to be dealt with in a committee rather than for the whole group to do so through the amendment process.

### *MAIN MOTIONS*

The main motions are the method of presenting an important matter to the parliamentary group. It may be a simple proposal, such as a motion to invite a speaker to the next meeting, or it may be a complex resolution. Regardless of size or complexity, only one such motion can be transacted at a time. Another main issue cannot be proposed until the issue has been resolved.

### *SUBSIDIARY MOTION*

Sometimes, in order to transact a main motion appropriately, it is necessary to propose a secondary or subsidiary motion. Naturally, these motions must be voted on before the main motion can be debated. The most common motions of this kind are amendments, reference to a committee and tabling.

This assistance or modification motions are discussed in order of precedence:

1. **Tabling** This motion would terminate consideration of the matter or outstanding matters. It is often used when members are eager to transact another more indispensable matter.

A motion may also be tabled when the group does not favor it and does not want it to be recorded in the minutes as having rejected it. In fact, this step eliminates the motion. The member that proposes the motion does so by saying: "I propose that the matter be tabled" or simply "I propose a motion to table." This motion must be seconded. It cannot be discussed or amended. The president must put it to the vote immediately after someone seconds it. A motion to take from the table may be made at any time during the meeting at which a motion is tabled, or during the subsequent meeting.

2. Previous Question or Closing a Debate. This is often called calling the "previous question." It serves to close the debate and to immediately vote on the pending matter. The most common way to do this is by: "I propose a motion to close the debate and vote immediately on the pending matter" or simply "Previous question." This motion must be seconded and cannot be amended. It must be put to the vote immediately without debate. A two-thirds majority vote is required.
  
3. To limit or extend the debate. If a group wishes to keep the discussion of a main motion within a certain time limit, or the debate. Such a motion, in most cases, would avoid the possibility of obstructing the proposed motion. On the other hand, if the discussion of a main motion is to be prolonged, the motion will be used to extend the debate.  

The motion to set the time limits for the debate and to vote would be: "I motion to close the debate and to raise the matter in the form of a motion at 2:45 p.m." Another way to limit the length of debate would be to say, "I propose a motion to limit the debate on this motion to 15 minutes." A motion such as "I make a motion to limit the discussion of the pending matter to 3-minutes for each member" which can restrict the number and duration of the statements in the debate. Such motions require a second and can be amended. They must be voted on without debate and require a two-thirds majority vote to be approved.
  
4. To table for a set time This motion is used whenever the group wishes to deal with a matter that is more urgent than the one being considered or when members wish to study the matter for more time. If it is approved, it simply tables the consideration of the matter to a certain time. The person that proposes the motion does so by saying: "I make a motion to table the consideration of the pending matter until 2:00 p.m. today." This motion requires a second and can be amended. This motion can be debated and requires a majority vote.
  
5. To refer to a committee. Sometimes a proposed motion that has been generally under consensus by the group but needs to be studied further than what can be done at an open meeting, or perhaps more information is needed before a final decision can be reached. In such cases, someone should propose a motion to refer the matter to a committee.  

If the matter relates to the activities of an existing committee, it should be referred to that committee. For example, a motion to schedule a convenient date for a conference should be referred to a planning committee. If an ad hoc committee is to be appointed, the motion may establish how many members it should have and how they should be appointed, "I make the motion to refer the matter to a three-member committee, which will be appointed by the chair."

Sometimes the motion to refer is used to delay the processing of a matter. This motion needs someone to second and can be amended and debated. It requires a majority vote.
  
6. To amend this is one of the most commonly used secondary motions. This is the primary method for changing the content of main motions. Amendments may be used to guide, add, or structure some part of the main motion.

If the main motion is "to hold a meeting on Tuesday night," an amendment can be made as follows: "I propose a motion to cross the word Tuesday and to include the word Wednesday".

An amendment motion may, in turn, be amended (the amendment of an amendment), but the amendment process cannot extend beyond this point. The amendment mentioned above may be amended "I propose a motion to amend the amendment including the words: will begin at 7 p.m."

The amendment process can be complicated, so the chair must be very careful to be sure what has been accepted. Informal discussions prior to the motion will help resolve this problem. Once the motion to amend the amendment, which has been duly seconded and restated by the chair, the debate is restricted only to this matter. If approved, the debate is limited to the first amendment as amended: by striking out the word "Tuesday" and inserting "Wednesday, starting at 7 p.m.". If the amendment to the amendment is not adopted, the debate proceeds to the first amendment to the original motion. Although an amendment can be amended only once, a motion can be amended only once as necessary. However, it is appropriate to reject a motion that requires too many amendments and to propose a new motion.

7. To table indefinitely. The purpose of this motion may be to annul the main motion or to inquire about the group's opinion on the main motion. If the motion is accepted (majority required) the deferred matter cannot be considered again until the next meeting, except that a motion to take from the table is adopted. The motion can be made in the following manner: "I make a motion to postpone indefinitely the consideration of the pending matter." This motion requires a second. It cannot be amended but can be debated.

#### *PRIVILEGED MOTIONS*

Privileged motions are not related to the pending issue, but they are important enough to require them to be resolved immediately. They cannot be debated.

1. To adjourn the session. If approved by a majority of the members present, this motion ends the meeting. It can be proposed at any time except when: (a) a vote is being taken, (b) a member was given the floor, (c) a motion is pending to set the schedule for the next meeting. The motion is simply proposed by saying, "I make a motion to adjourn the meeting."

This motion cannot be debated or amended and requires a majority vote. The vote on this motion cannot be revoked, but the motion can be withdrawn before action is taken. Before making the motion to adjourn the meeting, the chair must ensure that there are no important matters yet to be addressed. If there is any matter that requires action, it should be made known and the person who proposed the motion to adjourn the session should withdraw it. If there are announcements, they should be made before the vote is taken or at least before the vote is announced.

The fact that the motion to adjourn the session cannot be debated should not prevent any organization from obtaining information about matters that require action. It is rude to start talking or standing before the chair has adjourned. The common way is to say: "The motion has been accepted and the meeting is adjourned."

2. For a recess. This motion causes the meeting to be temporarily suspended. The proponent says: "I make a motion for a 15-minute break." This motion cannot be debated but can be amended as to the duration of the recess. It takes effect immediately after it is approved. If the program already includes a recess, when the time comes the chair simply announces that the session is adjourned or that the break begins for the specified time. The group can postpone a recess with a two-thirds vote.

3. **Point of Privilege.** This motion corresponds to matters such as comfort of members, security, disorderly conduct, or statements, etc. The member standing up for this purpose does not expect to be given the floor for example, if there is poor ventilation in the meeting room, a member can proceed as follows: "Mr. chair, I ask for the floor on a matter of privilege." The chair then asks the person to explain the matter. "Can we open some of the windows? This room is too enclosed." If the matter requires immediate action, the member who has the floor may be interrupted, as in the case when a report is being read and not heard well throughout the room. In all other cases, the motion should not interrupt a member when they have started speaking.

### ***INCIDENTAL MOTIONS***

Some of the motions are incidental to the issue being transacted. They are allowed every time they are needed.

1. **Suspend the Rules.** The rules of procedure for any organization can be found in certain bylaws and other rules. Let us assume that our Executive Committee has a rule that says the chair, vice-chair, and the corresponding secretary must sign all correspondence. The vice-chair has just resigned and there will be no one replacing him for several weeks. The body must send notification of a meeting that will take place in a week. Because the nature of this case requires immediate action, a member stands up and proposes the following: "I make a motion to suspend the executive committee rule that all correspondence be signed by the vice-chair." This motion cannot be discussed or amended and requires a two-thirds vote of the members. If approved, the discussion about sending the notification opens.

If the group believes that matters should be dealt with more quickly if the rules are not so strict, one of the members may then propose a motion for the rules to be suspended. The motion needs two-thirds vote of the members to be approved and the suspension of the rules applies only to the matter under consideration. The motion to suspend the rules cannot apply to the composition of a body or to the basic principles of parliamentary rule, but they can apply to the rules governing priorities and the manner in which a meeting is conducted. Often, the chair can simply ask whether there are objections to the suspension of the rules. If there are none, it is assumed that there is consensus.

2. ***Point of Order.*** Each time a member believes that a procedural rule has been violated, he or she may "ask for the floor to raise a point of order." After raising the matter, the chair may approve or reject the objection or put it to a vote. A member can stand up and say: "I ask for the floor to raise a point of order." The chair will say: "Raise the issue." The member can then say: "The speaker is speaking without the chair giving him the floor." Chair then could say: "Your issue is well raised," and then proceed to tell the member that it is not their turn to speak.
3. ***Appeal Chair's Decision.*** This motion allows members to express their disagreement with a decision of the chair and for the membership to render a decision. Member says: "Mr. Chair, I don't agree with the decision." The chair can then give the reasons why they have reached that decision. If they believe that their decision should prevail, they should put it to the vote of the members. For example, if the vote on a matter has been contested and the chair announces a questionable decision, a member should stand up and say, without being given the floor: "Mr. Chair, I appeal the chair's decision." This appeal requires a second. The chair announces that an



appeal has been made, submits to another vote, and announces the result. The purpose of this motion is to safeguard the rule of majorities and to prevent the chair from controlling the body.

Example RRO pg. 245 24: 9 & 24:10:

A member desiring to appeal rises and, without waiting to be recognized, addresses the chair as follows:

*Member A: I appeal from the decision of the chair. (Second)*

*Chair: The decision of the chair is appealed from...*

The chair after stating clearly the exact question at issue, and the reason for the decision if he thinks and explanation necessary, states the question on the appeal as follows:

*Chair: The question is, "Shall the decision of the chair be sustained?"*

4. *Withdrawing a motion.* A motion has been made and seconded, but so far it has not been put to the vote. If the person who makes the motion decides to withdraw it, he/she can do so after ensuring that the chair gives him/her the floor by saying: "I want to withdraw my motion." The chair may reply, "If there is no objection, Mr. Brown may withdraw his motion." If no one objects, the request to withdraw the motion must be put to the vote.

## **MOTIONS WITHOUT CLASSIFICATION**

Some commonly used motions cannot be properly classified as main, secondary, privileged, or incidental.

1. *Reconsideration.* Whenever further deliberation seems necessary in a matter for which action has been taken, one member may say, "I make a motion for reconsideration of the decision to... ." This motion must be made by one of the people who originally voted with the majority. This motion may only be made at the session at which the original motion was made, or at the next. This motion must be seconded and can be debate. A majority vote is required for approval. The fact that a group votes to reconsider a matter does not mean that the decision has been revoked.
2. *Withdrawal.* The adoption of this motion constitutes the revocation, or withdrawal, of the original decision. It requires a majority vote to be approved if members have been notified that such a motion has been proposed. In other cases, a two-thirds vote of the members is necessary. The motion to annul does not apply if there is still the possibility of reconsidering the action taken. The manner in which this motion is to be made is as follows: "I make a motion to annul the voting result of the group for the resolution that a representative be sent to the training workshop." The real effect of this motion is not only to cancel the vote, but also to cancel the motion that received that vote. Any action taken by an organization may be annulled at any time, provided that no action has been taken that cannot be reversed. The motion may not be annulled if an invoice has been paid, a contract is signed, or if the person involved in the action has already been informed of it.
3. *To take from table.* To practice this motion, it is necessary for a previous motion to have been tabled. In practice, someone can stand up and say: "I make a motion to take from the table the motion that proposed that our Executive Committee be the promoter of talent show." The motion must be seconded, cannot be debated, and put to the vote immediately. If the motion is adopted, the debate on the original motion opens. Motions that have been tabled may be resubmitted to members if the motion to take from the table is approved by a majority vote. If the motion to take from the table is not approved at the meeting following the meeting where the motion was tabled, the motion is considered to be eliminated.

## TABLE OF MOST COMMON MOTIONS

MOTION	Requires second	Can be amended	Can debated	Requires vote To approve
main motion	yes	yes	yes	majority
<b>SECONDARY MOTION</b>				
Withdraw	yes	no	no	majority
Close debate	yes	no	no	two-thirds
Limit or extend debate	yes	yes	no	two-thirds
Table for Specific time	yes	yes	yes	majority
Refer to committee	yes	yes	yes	majority
Amend	yes	yes	yes	majority
Table indefinitely	yes	no	yes	majority
<b>PRIVILEGED MOTIONS</b>				
To adjourn the session	yes	no	no,	majority
Recess	yes	yes	no,	majority
Matter of privilege	no	no	no	none
<b>INCIDENTAL MOTIONS (under same hierarchy)</b>				
Point of Order	No	No	No	None
Chair decision's appeal	yes	no	no	majority
Suspension of rules	yes	no	no	two-thirds
Withdraw motion	no	no	no	majority
Reconsider	yes	no	yes	Majority
annulment	yes	no	no	two-thirds
Take from table	no		no	majority

1. Only the first amendment of a motion can be amended, and it is only debatable if the original motion is.
2. It is not possible to debate if there is another motion pending. If no motion is pending, it is processed as a main motion.
3. The point of order is decided by the Chair. If the chair's decision is not satisfactory, the members may appeal the chair's decision.

## DEBATE

When debate is called for, use the following table, which lays out the debatable motions and provides you with some key information about each one. You may find it ironic that meetings are all about discussing ideas and taking action, yet the list of debatable motions is really quite short. The good thing about the short list is that you don't really have to remember too much to know what's debatable and what's not.

<b>Debatable Motions</b>			
<b>Motion</b>	Key Point	<b>Postpone to a Certain Time (or Definitely)</b>	Discussion is limited to merits and details of postponing.
<b>Main motions</b>	Debate is limited only by rules for length and number of speeches, and, of course, rules of decorum.	<b>Appeal</b>	Discussion is limited to the subject matter of the appeal. (But if debate serves no purpose and gets in the way of business, as is sometimes the case when the underlying motion is undebatable, then the motion to appeal isn't debatable.)
<b>Postpone Indefinitely</b>	Discussion can encompass the merits of the main motion.	<b>Request to be Excused from a Duty</b>	Discussion is not limited because each situation in which this motion is used is unique, and it's vital to have the information necessary to make a proper decision.
<b>Amend</b>	Debate is limited to merits of the proposed amendment. (Motion to amend is undebatable if the underlying motion is undebatable.)	<b>Rescind or Amend Something Previously Adopted (and Discharge a Committee)</b>	Discussion can go fully into the merits of the subject matter.
<b>Commit</b>	Discussion is limited to merits and details of referring.	<b>Reconsider</b>	Discussion can go fully into the merits of the motion to be reconsidered unless that motion is undebatable