

Quick Reference Guide:
Robert's Rules of Order

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE TO ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

	ORDER OF MOTIONS	MOVER MUST BE RECOGN'D	REQUIRES A SECOND	AMEND-ABLE	DEBA-TABLE	VOTE REQUIRED	MAY BE RECON-SIDERED
PRIVILEGED	Fix time of next meeting	YES	YES	YES	NO	Majority	YES
	Adjourn	YES	YES	NO	NO	Majority	NO
	Take a recess	YES	YES	YES	NO	Majority	NO
	Question of privilege	NO	NO	NO	No, but a resulting motion is	Chair	NO
INCIDENTAL	Point of order	NO	NO	NO	NO	Chair	NO
	Appeal	NO	YES	NO	Usually	Majority	YES
	Consider by paragraph or Seriatum	YES	YES	YES	NO	Majority	NO
	Suspend the rules	YES	YES	NO	NO	2/3	NO
SUBSIDIARY	Withdraw (or renew)	YES	NO	NO	NO	Majority	Negative only
	Table	YES	YES	NO	NO	Majority	NO
	Previous question	YES	YES	NO	NO	2/3	YES
	Limit or extend debate	YES	YES	YES	NO	2/3	YES
	Postpone definitely	YES	YES	YES	YES	Majority	YES
	Refer or commit	YES	YES	YES	YES	Majority	YES
	Amend	YES	YES	Yes, once	YES	Majority	YES
	Postpone indefinitely	YES	YES	NO	YES	Majority	Affirmative only
	Main Question (or motion)	YES	YES	YES	YES	Majority	YES
	Take from the table	YES	YES	NO	NO	Majority	NO
MOTIONS BRING AGAIN	Reconsider	NO	YES	NO	YES *	Majority	NO
	Rescind	YES	YES	YES	YES	2/3 Vote	Negative Only

*NO if the motion is undebateable

Parliamentary Procedure

Parliamentary Procedure

PRESENTING A MOTION

(WITHOUT AMENDMENTS)

PURPOSE. *A motion is the means by which action is attained.*

Informal discussion helps develop opinions, but to get action, a motion must be introduced, seconded by another member (*except for nominations and privileged motions*), and re-stated by the Chair. All motions should be expressed in the affirmative.

AMENDING A MOTION

There are four basic methods of amending a motion: (1) to amend by inserting. (2) To amend by adding or placing at the end. (3) to amend by striking out and inserting. (4) To amend by substituting a paragraph.

- A. **FORM:** "I move to amend the main motion by (inserting/adding/striking out and inserting)." The Chairman conducts the discussion and then says: "**All in favor of the amendment to (stating change) say 'aye'; all those opposed say 'nay'. The 'ayes' prevail and the amendment is carried (or vice versa).**" The question now is on the total resolution: "**Resolved that...**" Chairman reads the resolution as amended.
- B. **AMENDING AN AMENDMENT.** The main motion can be amended and the amendment may in turn be amended. Amendments can only go to the second degree. For example, the main motion is proposed: "**I move that the Club donate \$100 to Boys Town.**" A motion can be made to amend the main motion by striking out \$100 and inserting \$50. An amendment of the amendment is proposed that \$50 be stricken out and \$25 be inserted. This amendment is in order but no amendments relative to the \$25 can be offered at this time.
- C. **ROLE OF THE CHAIR.** The Chairman can avoid confusion by simplifying the amendments and by using set forms when putting the question to a vote. Using the example above, the Chair would put the following issues before the group: (1) Does the group wish the \$25 to be the amendment? "**It has been moved and seconded that the amendment be amended by striking out \$50 and inserting \$25. All in favor of the amendment reading \$25 say 'aye'; those opposed say 'nay'.**" (4) The amended motion is then open to discussion and other amendments using the same process.

DEBATING A MOTION. A Debate ensues only if the motion is classified as **debatable**.

- A. **RULES.** (1) No member can speak without first being recognized by the Chair. (2) The Chair should first recognize the original mover of the motion, if he wishes to speak. The Chair should try to alternate the speakers, pro and con. (3) No member should speak a second time until all members who wish to speak have had one chance.
- B. **CHAIRMAN'S OPINIONS.** The Chairman cannot discuss the merits of the motion nor enter the debate without first appointing a temporary Chairman and vacating

- C. **TERMINATING THE DEBATE.** (1) The Chairman can attempt to terminate the debate by asking: "**Is the membership ready to act on the question?**" If there is opposition, he may call for a voice vote or a show of hands. The chair should not act until he feels that the question has been debated adequately. (2) A member may move to close the debate by saying after being recognized by the Chair: "**I move the previous question.**" Such a motion must be seconded, cannot be debated and must be put to vote immediately. It requires a 2/3 vote.

VOTING PRINCIPLES

- A. **MAJORITY VOTE.** Usually used in normal procedures with no complications.
- B. **TWO-THIRDS VOTE.** Used in all situations where some right of the membership is curtailed and/or a change of law or constitution is proposed.
- C. **CHAIRMAN'S VOTE.** Chairman always has the right to vote but usually does not (except in case of a tie or if his vote will affect the outcome).

AFTER THE VOTE

As soon as the vote is counted by the tellers and the Secretary, the Chairman addresses the appropriate statement to the members: "**The 'ayes have it.**" "**The resolution is adopted.**" "**The motion has been defeated.**" "**Mr. Smith has been elected.**", etc. (2) The Chairman also announces the exact number of votes cast, numbers of yeas and nays or, in an election, the number of votes received by each candidate.

- A. **CHALLENGING THE VOTE.** If the Chairman or any member questions a vote, he may demand a recount. If there is further dispute, a roll call vote may be used or new ballots distrusted.
- B. **TIE VOTES.** The votes defeat the motion or resolution except in the following: (1) A tie vote sustains the Chairman when one of his decisions is challenged by the membership. (2) The tie vote endorses an action already taken by an officer.
- C. **CHANGE OF VOTE.** (1) A vote in written form can never be withdrawn or changed once it is in the hands of the teller or has been dropped into the ballot box. (2) If a tie vote is the result of division of the house, any member may rise and change his vote. (3) A member can rise to change his vote after the house has been divided if the results have not yet been announced. However, if the tally is not a tie, a member may be permitted to change his vote only if given silent assent by those present. If there is an objection, the member turns his request into a motion. It must be seconded and carried by a majority.
- D. **FOLLOW-UP ACTION.** (1) If the motion is carried, the Chairman institutes the necessary action, committees, changes, etc., to carry out the intent of the motion. (2) All aspects concerning the matter under consideration are continued until all related motions have been debated and voted again. Then the Chairman progresses to the next order of business in the agenda.