

Robert's Rules of Order Quick Reference Sheet

Robert's Rules can be confusing to people who have never encountered it before. However, it is the most efficient way to handle business at a large meeting. Robert's Rules of Order protects the rights of the majority, of the minority, of individual members, of absentees, and all of these together.

The following points and chart should cover all you need to know to effectively participate during a meeting.

- Only voting delegates may make motions or vote on motions.
- Non-voting delegates may participate in the debate on a motion.
- State your name and the Chapter you represent (also add that you are a non-voting delegate, if necessary) when speaking or making a motion.
- Stand in line at one of the microphones to obtain the floor.
- You do not need to obtain the floor to second a motion or to make one of the motions that allow you to interrupt the speaker (although the chair may ask you to go to a microphone).
- Attempts to use point of order, point of information, or parliamentary inquiry to participate in the debate will be ruled out of order.
- Address your comments to the chair and not to another member (don't directly engage in debate with another member).
- An amendment to a motion may be amended, but an amendment to an amendment to a motion may not!

	You want to...	You say...	Can you interrupt a speaker?	Does your motion need a second?	Is your motion debatable?	Can someone amend your motion?	Applies to which motions?	Vote Required
D	alert the chair to an urgent matter affecting the assembly or of personal privilege.	I rise to a question of {privilege affecting the assembly, personal privilege}.	Yes	No	No	No	None	None
E	have the Convention follow the agenda.	I call for the orders of the day.	Yes	No	No	No	None	No vote
G	end debate and vote on the motion.	I move the Previous Question.	No	Yes	No	No	Any debatable or amendable	2/3
J	send a matter to committee.	I move to commit the motion...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No subsidiary motion	Majority
K	modify a pending motion.	I move to amend...	No	Yes	Yes (usually)	Yes	All amendable	Majority
M	bring business before the Convention.	I move...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	None	Majority
S	alert the chair to some error.	Point of order.	Yes	No	No	No	Any error	No vote
T	disagree with the ruling of the chair.	I appeal from the decision of the chair.	Yes	Yes	Yes (usually)	No	Decision of the chair	Majority or tie
X	have the vote counted using a rising vote.	I call for a division.	Yes	No	No	No	Voice or hand vote	None
Y	obtain information on parliamentary law or rules of the organization.	A parliamentary inquiry, please.	Yes (if urgent)	No	No	No	Any motion	No vote
Z	request information relating to the business at hand.	A point of information, please.	Yes (if urgent)	No	No	No	Any motion	No vote

ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

PRINCIPAL RULES GOVERNING MOTIONS

<i>Order of Precedence</i>	<i>Can interrupt speaker?</i>	<i>Requires a second?</i>	<i>Debatable?</i>	<i>Amendable?</i>	<i>Vote required?</i>	<i>Applies to what motions</i>	<i>Motion can have what applied to it (in addition to withdraw)?</i>	<i>Can be renewed?</i>	<i>Rule Section</i>
I. PRIVILEGED MOTIONS									
A. Fix the time to which to adjourn - (when privileged; only when another question pending).	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	None	Amend	Yes	16
B. Adjourn - (loses privilege if in any way qualified or if effect is to dissolve assembly).	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	None	None	Yes	17
C. Take a Recess - (privileged only when other business is pending).	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	None	Amend	Yes	18
D. Raise a Question of Privilege.	Yes	No	No	No	No vote	None	None	Yes	19
E. Call for the Orders of the day.	Yes	No	No	No	No vote	None	None	Yes	20
II. SUBIDIARY MOTIONS									
F. Lay on the Table .	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	I-D, E, II-K, III, appeal	None	Yes	28
G. Previous Question .	No	Yes	No	No	2/3	Any debatable or amendable	None	Yes	29
H. Limit or Extend Limits of Debate .	No	Yes	No	Yes	2/3	Any debatable pending motion	Amend	Yes	30
I. Postpone to a certain time.	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Main	Amend, limited debate	Yes	31
J. Commit or Refer.	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	No subsidiary motion	Limit debate, amend	Yes	32
K. Amend .	No	Yes	Not always, not when main motion not debatable	Yes	Majority	All but those that cannot be amended	Any	No	33
L. Postpone indefinitely.	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	Main	No subsidiary motion	No	34
III. MAIN MOTIONS									
M. General.	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	None	Any	No	10
N. Take from Table.	Yes	Yes	No	No	Majority	Motion tabled	No subsidiary motion	Yes	35
O. Reconsider.	Yes, by one of majority	Yes	Yes, except when main motion not debatable	No	Majority	Specified	Limit debate, postpone definitely	No	36
P. Rescind, Repeal, or Annul.	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	All main	All subsidiary motions	No	37
Q. Renewal.	In general at another session	38							
R. Ratify.	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Approval of action	None	No	39
IV. INCIDENTAL MOTIONS									
S. Point of Order.	Yes	No	No	No	No vote	Any error	None	No	21
T. Appeal.	Yes	Yes	No	No	Majority or tie	Decision of chair	Yields to privileged motion & to motion to lay on table	No	21
U. Suspension of rules.	No	Yes	No	No	in.	None	None	No	22
V. Object to consideration of question.	Yes	No	No	No	2/3 opposed to consideration	Any main	None	Yes	23
W. Division of a Question.	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	Main & amendments	None	No	24
X. Division of Assembly.	Yes	No	No	No	None	Voice or hand vote	None	No	25

ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

(Hints on how to use them)

Robert's Rules of Order are used to direct debate and keep discussions moving. You are encouraged to participate but should always behave in an orderly and professional manner. When speaking, identify yourself by name and chapter.

Before any discussion can begin, a motion must be made and seconded. Seconding does not necessarily imply support of the motion but does allow the motion to be discussed.

Before a motion can be made, the maker must be recognized by the Chair of the Convention. (All statements and discussion are directed to the Chair.)

- After the motion is seconded but before discussion, the Chair restates the **QUESTION**. (The motion just made is now called the **QUESTION**.)
- The maker of the motion is asked to speak to the motion first before general discussion.
- Everyone can participate in the discussion, but you must wait to be recognized. Usually if you have spoken once in the discussion, you must wait until everyone else who wishes to speak has spoken once before being recognized again.

To **END DEBATE** you can: move the previous question, "I move the previous question,"
 call the question, "I call the question,"
 call for the question, "I call for the question,"
 move to end debate, "I move we end the debate,"
 " move to vote, "I move we vote."

- Calls of "Question!" by members from their seats are not motions for the previous question and are considered disorderly, especially if another member is speaking or seeking recognition.
- After the motion, if there appears to be consensus, the Chair may elect to decide that the debate has ended and that the assembly will vote directly on the Question. Otherwise, the vote taken immediately after this motion has been moved and seconded decides whether to end discussion or not. The Question still requires a vote.

VOTING:

- Before voting, the Chair should restate the Question. The vote is usually a voice vote; those in favor vote "aye," and those opposed vote "no." The Chair will usually make a decision on which side prevails based on his/her impression of the majority.
- If you want a number count on a close vote, you call immediately for **DIVISION** of the assembly. The vote will then be taken again, and the votes will be counted.

If you have a **REQUEST or INQUIRY** to make, you may do so at any time as follows. You can even interrupt a speaker if your request or inquiry relates to the business being discussed.

- Parliamentary Inquiry - directed to the Chair in order to obtain information on parliamentary procedure, e.g., to make an appropriate motion, raise a proper point of order, understand the parliamentary situation, or understand the effect of a motion.
 - Say, "A parliamentary inquiry, please," and wait to be recognized before stating your inquiry.
- Point of Information - directed to the Chair or through the Chair to another member; relates to business at hand but not to parliamentary procedure.
 - Say, "A point of information, please," and wait to be recognized.
 - You may ask the Chair a question or ask the Chair if the person who has the floor or any other member will accept a question from you.

Question of **PRIVILEGE** - relates to personal privileges of the assembly, e.g., comfort (heating, air conditioning), lighting, noise, etc.

- Say, "I rise to a question of privilege affecting the assembly."
- You should only interrupt the speaker when the matter is urgent, e.g., "Mr. Chairman, I don't think we will be able to hear if we don't use a microphone," or Ms. Chairwoman, I think this is a question that should be considered in a closed meeting."

ORDERS OF THE DAY - this is the agenda.

- Calling for orders of the day requires the assembly to conform to the agenda, e.g., a time certain item.

LAY ON THE TABLE - puts a pending question aside TEMPORARILY when something else of urgency has arisen.

- No set time to bring it up again.
- Consideration can be resumed at the will of the majority.

TAKE FROM THE TABLE - can be moved when no other question is pending.

POSTPONE INDEFINITELY - used to dispose of a question without a direct vote.

COMMIT or REFER — sends a pending question to a committee.

AMEND — Amendments to the question can insert or remove words, paragraphs, etc.; may be used to correct grammar or spelling, but should not be used to make a positive statement negative, since you can vote "no" on a positive statement.

- Sometimes people use the term "friendly" amendment if the maker of the main motion accepts the amendment without requiring the assembly to discuss and vote on it.

RECONSIDER — Allows the assembly to bring back a motion for further consideration.

- It can be moved only by a member who voted with the prevailing side, and that must be stated when the motion is made.
- Reconsideration can be moved at any time, but motions such as "previous question" must be reconsidered immediately.

RESCIND, REPEAL, or ANNUL — Use to rescind or amend something previously adopted.

RENEWAL — Main motions are limited by the basic principle that an assembly cannot be asked to decide twice during one session the same, or substantially the same, question except through a motion to reconsider the vote.

- Use to renew Orders of the Day, etc.

RATIFY — Used to confirm or make valid an action already taken that cannot become legally valid until approved by the assembly.

POINT OF ORDER — Used when a member thinks the rules of the assembly are being violated.

- Say "Point of Order," or "Raise a Question of Order."
- The Chair can decide or refer the point of order to the assembly for debate.

APPEAL — Applies to the ruling of the Chair.

- Don't be afraid to appeal if you disagree with the Chair. This can relieve the Chair of responsibility in a tough decision by putting it before the assembly.
- Chair states the question to the assembly, "Shall the decision of the Chair be sustained?"

SUSPENSION OF RULES — Used to suspend one or more parliamentary rules, e.g. Orders of the Day.

OBJECTION TO CONSIDERATION OF A QUESTION - This enables the assembly to avoid a particular original main motion altogether when it believes it would be strongly undesirable for the motion even to come before the assembly.

DIVISION OF A QUESTION — If a main motion contains several points relating to a single subject, each of which is capable of standing on its own, the parts can be considered separately.

- When making the motion you must clearly state the manner in which the question is to be divided.