



Roberts Rules of Order (Simplified)

The Main Ideas

- Everyone has the right to speak once if they wish before anyone may speak a second time.
- Everyone has the right to know what is going on at all times.
- Only urgent matters may interrupt the speaker.
- The group may discuss only one thing at a time.

How To Do Things

- If you want to **bring up a new idea**, after recognition present your motion. A second is required for the motion to be considered and debated.
- If you want to **kill a motion** just made by another person, without recognition simply state “I object to consideration.” This must be done before any debate; requires no second; is not debatable; and requires a two-thirds vote to pass.
- If you want to **slightly change the wording** of a motion under debate, after recognition move to amend by: adding words; striking words; or striking and inserting words.
- If you like the idea of a motion under debate but need to **reword it beyond simple changes**, move to substitute your motion for the original. If seconded, debate will continue on both motions and eventually the body will vote on which one they prefer.
- If you want **more study and/or investigation** given to an idea under debate, move to refer to committee (with specific instructions). This requires a second and majority vote.
- If you want **more time to consider** the proposal under debate, move to postpone to a definitive date or time. This requires a second and majority vote.
- If you want to **postpone a motion** until a later time, move to table the motion (requires a second and majority vote). The motion may be reconsidered (taken from the table) after one other item of business has been conducted. If the motion is not reconsidered by the end of the next meeting, it is dead.
- If you are **tired of the current debate**, move to limit debate to a set period of time or number of speakers. This requires a second and majority vote.
- If you have **heard enough debate**, move to close the debate (requires a second and two-thirds vote) or move to the previous question. This cuts off debate and brings the group to a vote on the pending question only (requires a second and two-thirds vote).
- If you are unsure the presiding officer has announced the **results of a vote correctly**, without being recognized call for a “division of the house.” At this point a standing vote will be taken.
- If **you are confused** about a procedure being used and want clarification, without recognition call for a “Point of Information” or “Point of Parliamentary Inquiry.” The presiding officer will ask you to state your question and will attempt to clarify the situation.
- If you have **changed your mind** about something that was voted on earlier in the meeting and for which you were on the winning side, move to reconsider. If the majority agrees, the motion comes back as though no vote had been taken.
- If you want to **change an action** voted on at an earlier meeting, move to rescind. If previous notice was given a simple majority is required (if not, must have a two-thirds vote).
- If you want to **take a short break**, move to recess for a set period of time.
- If you want to **end the meeting**, move to adjourn.



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You May Interrupt a Speaker Only for These Reasons

- To get information about what’s going on (point of information)
- To get information about the rules (parliamentary inquiry)
- If you can’t hear, safety concerns, comfort, etc. (question of privilege)
- If you believe there is a breach of the rules (point of order)
- If you disagree with the presiding officer’s ruling (appeal)

Summary Table of Parliamentary Motions

MOTION	PURPOSE	REQUIRES SECOND	DEBATE	AMEND	VOTE REQUIRED
PRIVILEGED MOTIONS					
13. Adjourn to specific time	To arrange time of next meeting	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
12. Adjourn	To dismiss	Yes	No	No	Majority
11. Take a recess	To dismiss meeting for a specific time	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
10. Raise a question	To make a request during debate	No	No	No	Chair
SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS					
9. Lay on the table	To postpone temporarily	Yes	No	No	Majority
8. Call for the previous question	To cease debate and vote immediately	Yes	No	No	2/3
7. Limit or extend limits of debate	To modify freedom of debate	Yes	No	Yes	2/3
	To create a special order	Yes	Yes	Yes	2/3
6. Postpone to a certain time	To create a general order	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
5. Refer to committee	To modify a motion	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
4. Amend an amendment	To modify an amendment	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
3. Amend or substitute	To modify a motion	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
2. Postpone indefinitely	To suppress action	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
PRINCIPAL MOTION					
1. A main motion	To introduce business	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Specific main motions:					
Reconsider	To consider again	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
Rescind	To repeal	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Take from the table	To resume	Yes	No	No	Majority
INCIDENTAL MOTIONS					
Appeal decision of the chair	To correct or reverse chairman	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
Suspend the rules	To act contrary to procedural rules	Yes	No	No	2/3
Object to consideration	To suppress action	No	No	No	2/3
Raise a point of order	To correct a parliamentary error	No	No	No	Chair
Parliamentary inquiry	To request information	No	No	No	None
Modify or withdraw a motion	To modify or remove motion	No	No	No	Majority
Divide a motion	To modify a motion	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
Call for a division of the house	To verify an indecisive vote	No	No	No	None

