

The Basics of Robert's Rules of Order





History of Robert's Rules of Order

- **British Parliamentary Procedures**
 - Birthplace for Robert's Rules of Order
- **Came to North America with the British**
- **1801: Thomas Jefferson**
 - Drafted *The Manual of Parliamentary Practice*.
 - Uniform system of rules.
 - Prevent needless haggling over government procedures.
 - Evolved to assist government decision making.
- **1876: General Henry Robert**
 - Wrote a standard form of rules.
 - “Based...upon the rules and practices of Congress.”

Purpose of Robert's Rules of Order

are based on **common sense** and **logic**...

The rules protect:

- (a) the rights of the majority to decide
- (b) the rights of the minority to be heard
- (c) the rights of individual members
- (d) the rights of absentees

The benefits of the rules:

- (a) Justice and courtesy for all.
- (b) Maintenance of order
- (c) Consideration of one item at a time.
- (d) All sides get heard.
- (e) Ability for each member to provide input.
- (f) Majority rule.
- (g) Protection of the rights of all members including the minority.

The Ten Basic Rules

- 1. The rights of the organization supersede the rights of the individual members.**
- 2. All members have equal rights, privileges, and obligations. Everyone has the right to be heard.**

Those rights are...

- To attend meetings
- To make motions and speak
- To know what the immediately pending question is and to have it restated before a roll call vote is taken.
- To full and free discussion of every main motion.
- To nominate.
- To vote.
- To hold office.



- 3. A quorum as defined by the board/Committee bylaws must be present for business to be conducted.**
 - The chairman should not take the chair until a quorum is present, or there is not a prospect of there being a quorum.
 - The only business that can be transacted in the absence of a quorum is to take measures to obtain a quorum, or to adjourn.
- 4. A majority decides a question except when basic rights of members are involved, or a rule provides otherwise.**
 - A 2/3 vote is required for any motion that deprives a member of rights in any way (i.e., cutting off debate).

- 5. Silence gives consent.**

- Those members that do NOT vote AGREE to go along with the decision of the majority by their silence.

- 6. An impartial chairperson must be present.**

- The chairperson allows everyone to voice their opinions, and ensures everyone is seen, heard, and considered.

- 7. Only one item of business at a time may be considered, and only one person may have the floor at any one time.**
 - This gives the chance for a full and fair discussion, dissuades topic tangents, and maintain order.
 - Motions must be related to matters under consideration.
 - Once a member has been “recognized” this individual has been granted “the floor” and may not be interrupted by another member.
- 8. Motions must receive full debate.**
 - The meeting chair may not put a motion to vote if members wish to debate it.
 - Ending the debate can only be cut short by a 2/3rds vote.
- 9. Once a decision is made, an identical motion may not be brought forward at the same meeting.**
 - Such a motion shall be ruled out of order by the meeting chair.
- 10. Personal remarks in a debate are ALWAYS out of order.**
 - Debate should be directed to motions.
 - Debate should NOT be directed to motives, principles, or personalities.





Roles and Duties

Chair

- * In Debate he/she is referred to by his official title and is addressed by prefixing Mister or Madam as the case may be, to that title.
- * To call the meeting to order at the scheduled time.
- * To announce the business that is to come before the body in the order in which it is to be acted upon.
- * To recognize members who wish to speak.
- * To state and put to vote all questions that come before the body.
- * To announce the result of the vote.
- * To enforce the rules relating to debate
- * To expedite business in an orderly manner
- * To decide all questions of order
- * To declare the meeting adjourned
- * To protect the “minority” from any disruptive behavior from the majority
- * Should ensure the rights of all members are protected.
- * To see that everyone gets a chance to speak and that everyone gets a chance to vote.
- * To be familiar with parliamentary usage and set the example of strict conformity thereto.

but he should be a man/woman of executive ability, capable of controlling the room.

- * He/she should set an example of courtesy and should never forget that to control others it is necessary to control oneself.
- * Whenever an improper motion is made, instead of simply ruling it out of order, it is well for the chair to suggest how the desired object can be accomplished.



Helpful Tips for Chair

- * While in Chair have beside you the rules of order and agenda.
- * The chair should memorize the list of ordinary motions arranged in their order of precedence and should be able to refer to the Table of Rules so quickly that there will be no delay in deciding all points contained in it.
- * Notice that there are different ways of doing the same thing, all of which are allowable.
- * They should know all the business to come regularly before the board/committee and call for it in its regular order.
- * When a motion is made, do not recognize any member, or allow anyone to speak until the motion is seconded and you have stated the question; or, in case of there being no second and no response to your call for a second.

- * If you have made a mistake and assigned the floor to the wrong person, or recognized a motion that was not in order, correct the error as soon as your attention is called to it.
- * If a member makes an improper motion, do not rule it out of order, but courteously suggest the proper one.
- * Never interrupt members while speaking, simply because you know more about the matter than they do.
- * Never get excited.
- * Never be unjust.
- * Never be technical, or stricter than is necessary for the good of the meeting.

Vice-chair

- * Must be competent to perform the duties of the chair.
- * The vice-chair, in the absence of the chair, must preside over matters before the board/committee.
- * In case of illness or resignation of the chair, the vice-chair becomes chair for the remainder of the unexpired term, unless by-laws specify how vacancies shall be filled.

Secretary

- * The secretary is the recording officer of the board/committee and the custodian of its records.
- * Their records shall be accessible to members of the board/committee, and members of the public.
- * It is the duty of the secretary to keep a register, or roll, of the members and to call the roll when required.
- * To notify officers, committees, and delegates of their appointment.
- * Maintaining the official documents of the organization, including bylaws, rules of order, standing rules, and minutes. The secretary keeps the bylaws and other governing documents up to date with any changes made through the amendment process and brings these documents to the meetings.
- * To send out proper notices of all called meetings.
- * To conduct the correspondence of the board/committee, except as otherwise provided.
- * Before each meeting, make out an order of business, showing in their exact order what is coming before the board/committee.
- * He/she should have at each meeting a list of all standing committees, and such special committees as are in existence at the time, as well as the by-laws of the board/committee and its minutes.
- * In the absence of the chair and vice-chair, it is the duty of the secretary to call the meeting to order, and to preside until the election of a chairman pro tem, which should take place immediately.
- * He/she should keep a record of the proceedings, stating what was done and not what was said, and never making criticisms, favorable or otherwise, on anything said or done.



- * He/she should cooperate with all members and be of service to the entire board/committee.
- * Be Assertive. It is important that you clarify anything you don't understand as soon as possible.
- * Don't be afraid to talk up in the meeting and ask someone to repeat a point or to explain it further.
- * It is in everyone's interests that the minutes are accurate.



Agendas

- * Preparing an agenda in advance will allow everyone involved in the meeting to know what they can expect when walking in.
- * An agenda is useful, as it will save the meeting from going off-course.
- * Agendas are road maps for the board, telling them what business is coming before them.
- * Agendas are road maps for the public, telling them what business will be conducted before the board/committee.

Motions

- * A motion is a formal proposal that the entire membership act on or stand on an issue.
 - Any individual member can: move a motion, second a motion, amend motions, debate motions, and vote on motions.
- * A motion must be placed prior to being discussed.
- * Positive (action) motions are permitted (i.e. I move that we adopt this Staff Report.). Negative motions are not permitted (i.e. I move that we do not adopt this Staff Report.).
- * A motion contains:
 - Who: the maker of the motion
 - What: the action to be taken
 - Example: "I Move to adopt Staff Report FZC-00-00 as Findings of Fact"
- * Use motions properly.
- * Allow motions that are in order.
- * Have Members obtain the floor properly.
- * Speak clearly and concisely.
- * Obey the rules of debate.
- * Most importantly, *BE COURTEOUS*.





Classes of Motions

1. Main Motion
2. Subsidiary Motion
3. Incidental Motion
4. Privileged Motion

Main Motions

* A main motion

- Introduce items to the membership for their consideration.
- They cannot be made when any other motion is on the floor.
- It takes precedence of nothing, and it yields to all privileged, subsidiary, and incidental motions.

Secondary Motions

* A secondary motion:

- Takes precedence over a main motion.
- Is considered while the main motion is pending.
- Must be acted upon **prior** to addressing the main motion.

* Three types of secondary motions:

- Subsidiary Motion
- Incidental Motion
- Privileged Motion



Secondary Motions - Subsidiary

- * Subsidiary motions change or affect how a main motion is handled.
- * They are voted on before a main motion.

Examples of Subsidiary motions (in order of precedence):

- Lay on the Table – To end consideration of the main motion and any pending subsidiary motions.
- Postpone – Including postponing definitely, or postponing to a different time, to delay the consideration of the main motion and any pending subsidiary motions.
- Postpone Indefinitely –to “Kill” a motion. This allows you to stop any conversation around the main motion and to stop the vote on it. Technically it’s not postponed; the consideration of it is cancelled altogether.
- Amend - to change or alter the main motion before voting on it.

Secondary Motions - Privileged

- * Privileged motions bring up urgent items about special or important matters unrelated to pending business.
 - They should be allowed to interrupt the consideration of anything else.
 - They are not debatable.

- * Examples of Privileged Motions:
 - Point of personal privilege – a motion welfare-related: It's too loud, too hot, too cold, or uncomfortable. Does not require a second.
 - Point of Order – pointing out a breach in assembly rules. Does not require a second.
 - Point of Information – you need to share additional information to help the Board/Committee make a fully informed decision before voting. Does not require a second.
 - Point of Inquiry – a motion to ask a question for clarity. Does not require a second.
 - Call for the orders of the day – a motion to enforce the agenda. i.e., A member of the Board/Committee is discussing something unrelated to the main motion. Does not require a second.
 - Amend – a motion to alter or change a motion before it's voted on. Requires a second.
 - Recess – a motion to take a short break before continuing. Requires a second.
 - Adjourn – a motion to end a meeting immediately. Requires a second.



Secondary Motions - Incidental Motions

- * Incidental motions provide a means of questioning procedure concerning other motions and have priority.
 - They are used as “housekeeping”.
 - They take precedence over main motions, subsidiary motions, and any pending question.
 - They yield to privileged motions, and generally to the motion to lay on the table.
 - These are undebatable motions.

- * Examples of Incidental Motions:
 - Point of Order – pointing out a breach in assembly rules.
 - Appeal the decision of the Chair – disagreeing with the Chair's ruling.
 - Request permission to withdraw or change a motion before taking a vote.
 - Suspend the Rules – Temporarily set aside the rules of the assembly.

Robert's Rules of Order Motions Chart

Part 1, Main Motions. These motions are listed in order of precedence. A motion can be introduced if it is higher on the chart than the pending motion.
 § indicates the section from Robert's Rules.

§	PURPOSE:	YOU SAY:	INTERRUPT?	2ND?	DEBATE?	AMEND?	VOTE?
§21	Close meeting	I move to adjourn	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
§20	Take break	I move to recess for ...	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
§19	Register complaint	I rise to a question of privilege	Yes	No	No	No	None
§18	Make follow agenda	I call for the orders of the day	Yes	No	No	No	None
§17	Lay aside temporarily	I move to lay the question on the table	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
§16	Close debate	I move the previous question	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
§15	Limit or extend debate	I move that debate be limited to ...	No	Yes	No	Yes	2/3
§14	Postpone to a certain time	I move to postpone the motion to ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
§13	Refer to committee	I move to refer the motion to ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
§12	Modify wording of motion	I move to amend the motion by ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
§11	Kill main motion	I move that the motion be postponed indefinitely	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
§10	Bring business before assembly (a main motion)	I move that [or "to"] ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority

Part 2, Incidental Motions. No order of precedence. These motions arise incidentally and are decided immediately.

§	PURPOSE:	YOU SAY:	INTERRUPT?	2ND?	DEBATE?	AMEND?	VOTE?
§23	Enforce rules	Point of Order	Yes	No	No	No	None
§24	Submit matter to assembly	I appeal from the decision of the chair	Yes	Yes	Varies	No	Majority
§25	Suspend rules	I move to suspend the rules	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
§26	Avoid main motion altogether	I object to the consideration of the question	Yes	No	No	No	2/3
§27	Divide motion	I move to divide the question	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
§29	Demand a rising vote	I move for a rising vote	Yes	No	No	No	None
§33	Parliamentary law question	Parliamentary inquiry	Yes if urgent	No	No	No	None
§33	Request for information	Point of information	Yes if urgent	No	No	No	None

Part 3, Motions That Bring a Question Again Before the Assembly.

No order of precedence. Introduce only when nothing else is pending.

§	PURPOSE:	YOU SAY:	INTERRUPT?	2ND?	DEBATE?	AMEND?	VOTE?
§34	Take matter from table	I move to take from the table ...	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
§35	Cancel previous action	I move to rescind ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	2/3 or Majority with notice
§37	Reconsider motion	I move to reconsider ...	No	Yes	Varies	No	Majority

Making a Motion

Steps to making a motion:



1. A member obtains the Floor and makes a motion.
 - EX: To make a motion: “I move that ...” or “I move to ...”
 - Motions should be well thought out before being introduced.
 - Until the chair states the question, the maker has the right to modify as he/she pleases or to withdraw it completely.
 - After the question has been stated by the chair, the motion becomes the property of the Board, and the maker cannot modify or withdraw their motion without the unanimous consent of the Board or going through the amendment process.
2. Must be seconded by another member.
 - A second implies that the motion should be discussed by the body – the person who seconds does **not necessarily** support the motion itself.
3. The chair restates the motion: “It is moved by (name of the individual) and seconded by (name of the individual) that Is there any further discussion?”
4. Members debate and discuss the motion.
 - The person who makes the motion has the right to speak first in discussion.
 - The member making the second has the right to speak second in discussion.
 - All members of the board/committee have an equal right to be heard, although they don’t have to speak if they don’t want to.
 - The chair will preside over this and implement any rules as needed throughout.
 - No one is allowed to speak a second time until everyone else has had the opportunity to speak.
5. After the discussion, the chair puts the motion to a vote.
 - The chair restates the motion.
 - The chair calls for a roll call vote.
6. Roll Call Vote
 - In all manners of voting, a member has the right to change his/her vote up to the time the result is finally announced. After that, he/she can make the change only with unanimous permission of the Board.
7. After the vote is tallied, the chair announces the results.

Motions & Discussion – Helpful Tips

- * Any voting member may make a motion or second a motion.
- * A main motion must be moved, seconded, and stated by the chair before it can be discussed.
- * A motion that proposes action outside the scope of the Board’s jurisdiction as defined in the bylaws is out of order.
- * If you approve of the motion as is, vote for it: yes/aye.
- * If you disapprove of the motion as is, vote against it: no/nae.
- * If you approve the idea of the motion but want to change it or amend it: “I move that this motion, be amended by....”
- * If you think that the board/committee should give further consideration to a matter already voted upon, move that it be reconsidered: “I move we now reconsider or action relative to...”
- * If you think that a matter introduced is irrelevant to the matter at hand, a point of order may be raised: “Point of order”.
- * Without a “second” a motion dies on the floor.
- * Discussion/Debate is permitted only with reference to the pending motion.
- * Each member has the right to speak twice on the same question on the same day but cannot make a second speech on the same question so long as any member who has not spoken on that question desires the floor. Once speaking on the same question twice on the same day, a member has exhausted his/her right to debate that question for the day.
- * Debate must be confined to the merits of the pending question. Address your remarks to the Chair, maintaining a courteous tone, and avoid introducing personal notes into debate.
- * The Chair cannot close debate so long as any member who has not exhausted right to debate desires the floor, except by order of the assembly, which requires a 2/3rds vote.

Nominations

Nominations from the Floor – Sometimes called open nominations.

The process of making floor nominations is subject to the following rules:

- * The chair calls for nominations from the floor.
- * A person can nominate himself or herself.
- * A member shouldn’t offer more than one nomination to a position, if there are several seats for the same office, (such as for nominees to a board or a committee), until all other members have had the opportunity to make nominations.
- * Nominees do not have to leave the room during the nominations, when the vote is taken, or when the vote is counted.
- * The presiding officer can continue to be presiding, even if he or she is one of the nominees for the office.
- * A member can rise and decline the nomination during the nominating process.
- * After each nomination, the chair repeats the name to the board/committee.

- * Nominations are taken for successive offices in the order they are listed in the bylaws.
- * A motion to close nominations is usually unnecessary because the nominations process simply continues until no one wishes to make further nominations. When the nominations stop, the chair just declares nominations closed after making sure that no more nominations are forthcoming. Customarily (although it's not required), the chair accomplishes this by calling three times for more nominations.

A Motion relating to Nominations.

- * Can't interrupt a speaker who has the floor or a member making a nomination.
- * Must be seconded.
- * Is not debatable.
- * Can be amended.
- * Requires a majority vote (except the motion to close nominations, which requires a 2/3rds vote).

Voting

In democratic societies, citizens have the right to assemble, the right to speak, and the right to vote. The right to assemble allows people of common interests to join together to accomplish a goal or common purpose. The Right to speak allows members of that assembly to voice their opinions and concerns and to persuade others that their opinions and concerns are valid and to take action. The right to vote is the assembly's way of allowing all members to decide an issue, in a democratic manner, after they have assembled and heard their fellow members' opinions and concerns.

There are three principles that require consideration when a vote is taken:

- * Is the vote taken in a fair and impartial manner?
- * Does everyone who wants to vote get to vote?
- * Does the announced result represent the way the members voted?

Roll Call Voting

- * The chair directs the secretary to call the roll.
- * After one person has answered the roll call, it is too late to renew debate.
- * The Secretary calls the roll, and each member, as his/her name is called, answers "yes" or "no", or "abstain" if he/she does not wish to vote, and the secretary notes the answers in separate columns.
- * The chair then announces the results.
- * An entry must be made in the minutes of the names of all voting in the affirmative, and of those in the negative, and those who answered "abstain".

Handling Tie Votes

- * A tie vote is not a majority, consequently if your motion requires a majority vote, the motion is lost if it receives a tie vote. Therefore, a tie vote is as much of a decision as majority vote in opposition.

Two-Thirds Vote

- * A two-thirds vote means two-thirds of the votes cast.

Keeping Minutes

Minutes are a record of what was done at a meeting, not a record of what was said.

- * Minutes need to be informative and easy to navigate for whatever the reader needs to know six months from now.
- * Minutes do not contain interjected personal comments or someone's opinion about what happened.
- * Create a minute template. You should add all the relevant information that doesn't change such as the board/committee name. You can also prefill the standard running order. Then you can simply drop items from the agenda into the template ahead of the next meeting. This way your documents will be consistent and look professional with minimum effort.
- * Simple organization of the facts and use of unpretentious language are the best attributes you can give your minutes.
- * You want your minutes to be readable; you also must be precise in the information you give.
- * The minutes provide the record of the action taken at the meeting, so they need to clearly memorialize the facts.
- * Write the minutes as soon as possible after the meeting while the meeting is fresh in your mind.
- * Corrections to minutes are noted in the minutes being corrected; they are not detailed in the minutes of the meeting at which the corrections were adopted. The minutes of the meeting at which the corrections were made should merely state that the minutes of the previous meeting were approved and corrected.
- * The minutes should state what action was taken on business that carried over from the previous meeting.
- * If a motion was laid on the table and not taken from the table at the same meeting, record this fact in the minutes.
- * The minutes of one meeting are normally approved at the next regular meeting, following the call to order, and opening ceremonies.
- * Minutes may be corrected whenever an error is found, regardless of the time that has elapsed. To correct the minutes after they have been approved requires two thirds vote unless previous notice has been given.
- * Draft minutes ahead of time are not the official minutes until the members approve them. As changes may be made in the minutes before they are approved, it is good practice for the secretary to note somewhere on the distribution copy that it is a "draft for approval".
- * Nothing is ever erased from the minutes. When material is to be officially removed, a line is drawn through those specific words rather than eradicating them. Crossed out material should still be readable.
- * Once the minutes have been approved, the secretary writes "approved and the date to the record."
- * Carefully reviewing minutes for accuracy, spelling, and grammar before putting them in their final form is always a good idea.

What should be in the minutes?

- * The kind of meeting (i.e. regular, special, annual)
- * The name of the organization
- * Date/time/location of the meeting
- * List of attendance (including roll call)
- * A mention of whether the previous meetings' minutes were read and approved & the date of that meeting.
- * Name and address of any person giving public testimony.
- * Brief description of the substance of all matters proposed, discussed, or decided.
- * Recording of all motions
 - Who was the motion moved by.
 - Who seconded the motion.
 - Results of the roll call vote
- * Time of adjournment



Tips and Reminders for Chairpersons

The following tips and reminders will help chairpersons run a successful and productive meeting without being run over or running over others.

- * Follow the agenda to keep the group moving toward its goals.
- * Let the group do its work — don't over-command.
- * Control the flow of the meeting by recognizing members who ask to speak.
- * Let all members speak once before allowing anyone to speak a second time.
- * When discussions get off-track, gently guide the group back to the agenda.
- * Model courtesy and respect and insist that others do the same.
- * Help to develop the board's skills in the parliamentary procedure by properly using motions and points of order.
- * Encourage members to present motions positively rather than negatively.
- * Give each speaker your undivided attention.
- * Keep an emotional pulse on the discussions.



Meeting Management

Here are some helpful techniques for managing a meeting so that you can accomplish what you set out to do in an efficient, timely manner.

- * Give attendees as much notice as possible.
- * Start the meeting on time. Don't allow latecomers to waste the time of those who arrive promptly.
- * Allot a reasonable amount of time to accomplish the meetings' objectives and stick to the schedule. Follow the agenda to cover each item as quickly as possible. Don't allow discussion to get off the subject of the agenda.
- * Know what your responsibility and authority is in the meeting.
- * Be sure that you have the authority to make decisions about the issues being discussed at the meeting.
- * Foresee what is likely to happen in the meeting and prepare for it.
- * When giving directions or assigning tasks to others, make sure that they understand what they are expected to do and when it is to be done.
- * Make sure that the leader of the meeting does what a leader is supposed to do: He/she should know the agenda items as well as what decisions and action plans are going to be proposed.
- * The chair should be impartial but have the facts surrounding any proposed action plans.
- * The chair should allow debate on the agenda items but make sure that discussion sticks to the agenda, doesn't wander, or waste time on irrelevant issues.
- * The chair should follow the agenda and keep the meeting moving.



Evaluating Your Meetings

After a meeting, evaluate what happened so that you can plan better meetings in the future. The following checklist helps you identify mistakes and avoid future ones:

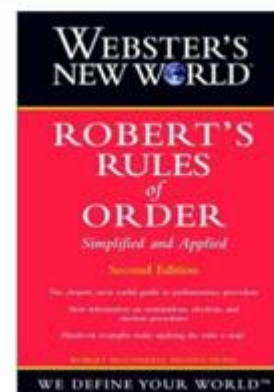
- * Was a detailed meeting agenda provided so that everyone knew what was supposed to happen?
- * Did everyone receive sufficient notice of the meeting so they could plan to attend?
- * Did the presiding officer follow the agenda?
- * Did the chair announce the results of the votes and the effect that the votes would have?
- * Did the chair keep the discussion on track? Or did members raise and discuss unrelated issues?
- * Did members listen to the discussion and wait for their turn to speak? Or was crosstalk allowed to disrupt and distract the business at hand?
- * Did the members and the chairman follow the rules of parliamentary procedure? Or did they make up the rules as they went along?
- * Did the chair allow the speakers to make their statements? (The chair should interrupt only to call the meeting to order, to call time, or to redirect the discussion to the business at hand.)
- * Did everyone speak and participate? Or was discussion dominated by one, two, or a few members?
- * Were any decisions made in haste and without sufficient consideration?
- * Was the room comfortable for the meeting? Or was it too hot, too cold, too large, too small, too noisy, too bereft of chairs or tables, or deficient in any other way?
- * Was the seating arrangement appropriate for the meeting?
- * Did the audio and video equipment (if any) operate properly?
- * Were there any other problems that could be identified and corrected in future meetings?



Frequently Asked Questions



- ◆ Is a second required for nominations?
 - No second is required.
- ◆ What happens if no one seconds a motion?
 - The motion does not carry.
 - If no one seconds a motion, it can be reintroduced another time.
 - If a motion requires a second but didn't receive one and was still discussed or voted on, it's too late to object or rescind the vote based on that.
- ◆ Can the chairman vote?
 - The chairman is a member of the board/committee and has the same rights and privileges as all other members have, including the right to make motions, speak in debate and to vote on all questions.
- ◆ Can a member vote on or second a motion to approve the minutes of a meeting that he did not attend?
 - Yes.
 - It should be noted that a member's absence from the meeting for which the minutes are being approved does not prevent the member from participating in their correction or approval.
 - By voting to approve a set of minutes, you are not attesting that you were in attendance during that meeting.
 - You are voting to approve the minutes based on the trusted accounts of your counterparts and your review of the formatting of those minutes.
 - Therefore, you are absolutely permitted to vote in favor of approving minutes for a meeting even if you were not in attendance.
- ◆ Can a member nominate themselves for an office?
 - A person can nominate himself or herself.
- ◆ How long can a member speak in debate?
 - No one can speak longer than ten minutes at a time without permission of the board/committee.
- ◆ Can a meeting be adjourned if there is still business pending?
 - The chairman cannot make a motion to adjourn when business is still pending.
- ◆ What is a quorum?
 - A minimum number of members who must be present at a meeting to legally conduct business, usually specified by the bylaws. If not specified in the bylaws, then a quorum is a majority of the entire membership.



- ◆ Is it true that, once a quorum has been established, it continues to exist no matter how many members leave during the course of the meeting?
 - No.
 - Once a quorum at a meeting has been established, the continued presence of a quorum is presumed to exist only until the chair or any other member notices that a quorum is no longer present.
 - If the chair notices the absence of a quorum, he/she should declare this fact, at least before taking any vote or stating the question on any new motion.
 - Any member noticing the apparent absence of a quorum can and should make a Point of Order to that effect whenever another person is not speaking.
 - It is dangerous to allow the transaction of substantive business to continue in the absence of a quorum.
 - Although a Point of Order relating to the absence of a quorum is generally not permitted to affect prior action, if there is clear and convincing proof no quorum was present when business was transacted, the presiding officer can rule that business invalid.

- ◆ Should a member who has a conflict of interest with respect to a motion not vote on the motion?
 - If a member has a direct personal or pecuniary (monetary) interest in a motion under consideration not common to other members, the rule is that he should not vote on such a motion.
 - If the member is being considered with other members in a motion or is being elected to office, he/she is allowed to vote.
 - The general principle in parliamentary law is that when a member has a conflict of interest, he/she does not enter the discussion or vote on the matter. The other principle of parliamentary law is that if the member is not allowed to vote, he/she is not counted in the quorum.
 - **Be forewarned: If a member is not able to vote on an issue and his/her participation is needed for a quorum, members can't take a vote on the issue.**

- ◆ Does a member have to vote?
 - No. Choosing not to vote is abstaining. Even though having each member vote is in the best interest of the board/committee, no one can compel a member to vote.

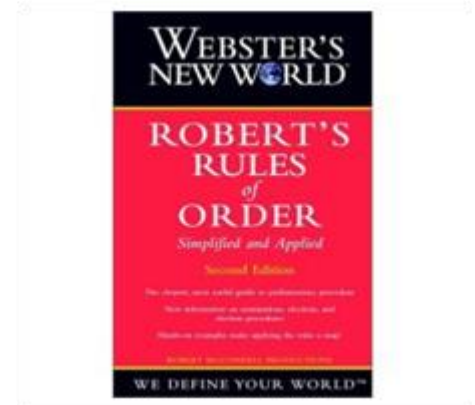
- ◆ Can members conduct business after a meeting is officially adjourned?
 - No. Doing this is unethical, undemocratic, and unkind. Any business transacted after the meeting adjourned is null and void. When a meeting adjourns, it is over.

- ◆ If a motion has been rejected, can members bring the same motion before the board/committee to vote on again?
 - A main motion that is defeated cannot be brought up again at the same meeting.

Terms

Adjourn

- A member can propose to close the meeting entirely by moving to adjourn.
- The motion to adjourn may not interrupt another speaker, must be seconded, is not debatable, is not amendable, and requires a majority vote.
- If the motion to adjourn has been made, but important matters remain for discussion, the chair may request that the motion to adjourn be withdrawn. It can be withdrawn only with consent of the meeting.
- It is important to note that a motion to adjourn terminates the meeting.



Amend

- A motion to change, to add words to, or to omit words from, an original motion.
- The change is usually to clarify or improve the wording of the original motion and must, of course, be related to the original motion.
- An amendment cannot interrupt another speaker, it must be seconded, and it is debatable.
- The chairperson should allow full discussion of the amendment, being careful to restrict debate to the amendment and not the original motion and should then have a vote taken on the amendment only, making sure the members know they are voting on the amendment, not the original motion.
- If the amendment carries, new discussion is created on the new motion.
- New amendments may be proposed if they do not alter or nullify the amendments already passed.
- Finally, the meeting will vote on the “motion amended” or if all amendments are defeated, on the original motion.

Appeal the Ruling of the Chair

- Appeal for the assembly to decide.
- Motion must be made before other business is resumed.
- NOT debatable if relates to decorum, violation of rules, or order of business.

Close Nominations

- A motion to close nominations is usually unnecessary because the nominations process simply continues until no one wishes to make further nominations. When the nominations stop, the chair just declares nominations closed after making sure that no more nominations are forthcoming. Customarily (although it's not required), the chair accomplishes this by calling three times for more nominations.

Consider by Paragraph

- Adoption of paper is held until all paragraphs are debated and amended and the entire paper is satisfactory.

- After all paragraphs are considered, the entire paper is then open to amendment, and paragraphs may be further amended.
- Any preamble cannot be considered until debate on the body of the paper has ceased.

Incidental Motions

- These motions are incidental to the motions or matters out of which they arise.
- Because they arise incidentally out of the immediate pending business, they must be decided immediately, before business can proceed.

Lay on the Table

- Sometimes the meeting wants to lay a main motion aside temporarily without setting time for resuming its consideration but with the provision that the motion can be taken up again whenever the majority so decides. This is accomplished by a motion to table or to lay on the table.
- The effect of the motion to table is to prevent action from being taken on the main motion.
- A motion to table may not interrupt another speaker, must be seconded, and is not debatable.
- Motion is not amendable and requires majority vote.

Limit or Extend Limits of Debate

- A motion to limit debate changes the normal rules of debate.
- It could, for example, limit the time of the whole debate, such as “I move that the debate on this motion be limited to 15 minutes,” or it might limit the time taken by each speaker.
- A motion to limit or extend the time of debate may not interrupt the speaker, must be seconded, is not debatable and can be amended.
- Requires two-thirds majority vote.

Main Motion

- Main motions are the basis of all parliamentary procedure and provide a method of bringing business before the assembly for consideration and action.
- A main motion ranks lowest in the order of precedence.
- When the main motion has been stated by one member, seconded by another member, and repeated for the meeting by the chair, the meeting cannot consider any other business until the motion has been disposed of, or until some other motion of higher precedence has been proposed, seconded, and accepted by the chair.
- Once the motion has been seconded, it becomes property of the meeting; the mover and the seconder cannot withdraw the motion unless the meeting agrees. The chair can ask if the meeting objects to the motion being withdrawn. If no one objects the chair will announce: “the motion is withdrawn.”

Majority Vote

- Simply means that more than half of those voting approve a motion.
- More specifically, it means that more than half of the votes cast by persons legally entitled to vote at a properly called meeting with a quorum present approves a motion.
- Those voting, not necessarily those present, determine the majority.
Example: If 20 people are present at the meeting and 15 members vote, the majority is 8, because the majority is determined by the number voting, not by the number present.

Object To Consideration of a Question

- To prevent the main motion from being considered (may be embarrassing)
- Objection must be stated before discussion or another motion is stated.
Example: “Mr. /Madam President, I object to the consideration of the question.” (Immediate vote taken)

Orders of the Day

- Means the agenda or the order of the business.
- If the order of the business is not being followed, or if consideration of a question has been set for the present time and is therefore now in order, but the matter is not being taken up, a member may call for the orders of the day, and can thereby require the order of business be followed, unless the meeting decides by a two-thirds vote to set the orders of the day aside.
- Such a motion can interrupt another speaker.
- Does not require a second, is not debatable, is not amendable.
- If the chair admits that the agenda has been violated and returns to the correct order no vote is required

Parliamentary Inquiry

- Inquire as to correct motion to accomplish a desired result or raise a point of order.

Point of Information

- A question about the facts affecting the business at hand is directed to the chair or through the chair to another member.
- Generally, applies to information desired from the speaker: “I should like to ask the (speaker) a question.”

Point of Order

- This motion permits a member to draw the chair’s attention to what he/she believes to be an error in procedure or lack of decorum in debate.
- The member may say: “point of order” and the chair should recognize the member who will then state the point of order.
- The effect is to require the chair to make an immediate ruling on the question involved.
- The point of order can interrupt another speaker, does not require a seconder, is not debatable and is not amendable.
- The chair can rule against a point of order.
Example: “I rise to a point of order.” After being acknowledged by the Chair, “There is no longer a quorum present, and any business will be null and void.”

Point of Privilege

- Pertains to noise, personal comfort, etc.
- May interrupt only if necessary.

Postpone Definitely

- If a meeting prefers to consider a main motion in the same meeting or at a subsequent one, it can move to postpone a motion to a certain time, which is specified in the motion to postpone.
- Such a motion can be moved regardless of how much debate there has been on the motion it proposes to postpone.

- A motion may be postponed definitely to a specific time or until after some other items of business have been dealt with.
- If another item of business is being discussed at that time, the chairperson should present the postponed motion immediately after the other business has been concluded.
- A motion to postpone to a definite time may not interrupt another speaker, must be seconded and is debatable.
- If the postponement is to a later time in the same meeting, the effect is to amend the agenda of that meeting and the motion therefore requires a two-thirds majority vote.

Postpone Indefinitely

- This motion is not to postpone, but to suppress or kill a pending main motion.
- Motion can be made at any time except when a speaker has the floor.
- If passed, the motion kills the matter under consideration.
- It requires a seconder, and it may be debated.

Previous Question

- This tactic is used to close debate on a question.
- It is usually made at a time when the debate has been long and repetitious.
- A member rises (or raises their hand) and says: “I move the previous question.” Or A motion to put the previous question (that is, to vote immediately on the motion being debated).
- Cannot interrupt another speaker, must be seconded, is not debatable, and is not amendable.
- It requires a two-thirds majority vote.
- This requirement is important in protecting the democratic process. Without it, a momentary majority of only one vote could deny to the other members all opportunity to discuss any measure the “majority” wanted to adopt or to defeat.
- If the motion to put the question passes, the chair immediately proceeds to call a vote on the question that was being debated.
- If the motion is defeated, debate on the motion before the meeting continues as if there had been no interruption.
- The motion to put the previous question is the only proper method of securing an immediate vote.
- Members who call, “Question!” in an attempt to get the chairperson to call the question immediately should be ruled out of order.

Privileged Motions

- Do not relate to the pending business but have to do with special matters of immediate and overriding importance that, without debate, should be allowed to interrupt the consideration of anything else.
- Privileged motions are such that, while having no relation to the pending question, are of such urgency, or importance that they are entitled to immediate consideration; relate to members, and to the organization, rather than to items of business.
- They take precedent over any Main Motion.

Question or Point of Privilege

- If a situation is affecting the comfort, convenience, integrity, rights, or privileges of a meeting or of an individual member (for example: noise, inadequate ventilation, introduction or a confidential subject in the presence of guests, etc.), a member can

raise a point of privilege, which permits him/her to interrupt pending business to make an urgent statement, request or motion.

- If a motion is made, it must be seconded.
- A Point of Privilege may also be used to seek permission for the meeting to present a motion of an urgent nature.

Example: “I rise to the question of privilege – ‘It is too hot in here; I can’t hear the speaker; I move we go into executive session to discuss the issue.’”

Quorum

- A minimum number of members who must be present at a meeting to legally conduct business, usually specified by the bylaws. If not specified in the bylaws, then a quorum is a majority of the entire membership.

Recess

- A member can propose a short intermission in a meeting, even while business is pending, by moving to recess for a specified length of time.
- A motion to recess may not interrupt another speaker, must be seconded, is not debatable and can be amended (for example, to change the length of the recess), and requires a majority vote.

Refer to Committee

- When it is obvious that a meeting does not have enough information to make a wise decision, or when it seems advisable to have a small group work out the details, a member may move: “That the question be referred to the _____ Committee.”
- A motion to refer cannot interrupt another speaker; it must be seconded and is debatable.
- The motion to refer can also be amended and requires a majority vote.
- If a motion to refer is passed, the committee to which the matter is referred should report on the question at a subsequent meeting.
- The motion may carry a timeline on reporting.

Roll Call Vote

- Any member may request a roll call vote to ensure that her/his position on the question will be duly noted in the minutes as part of the vote results. Roll call conducted, individual voice votes.

Subsidiary Motions

- Subsidiary motions are those that may be applied to another motion for the purpose of modifying it, delaying action on it, or disposing of it.

Suspension of the Rules

- To set aside a rule of the board/committee (except bylaws)
- The motion to suspend the rules may be made at any time when no question is pending; or while a question is pending, provided it is for a purpose connected with that question.
- It yields to all privileged motions (except a call for the orders of the day), to the motion to lay on the table, and to incidental motions arising out of itself.
- It is undebatable and cannot be amended or have any other subsidiary motion applied to it.
- The vote on it cannot be reconsidered.
- A motion to suspend the rules for the same purpose cannot be renewed at the same meeting except by unanimous consent.

- Used primarily to take up a particular item of business out of regular agenda order (to take up a “new business” item before taking up unfinished business or vote immediately)
Example: “I move to suspend the rules and take up the topic “to repair the gymnasium.” or “I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution.”

To Take from the Table

- This motion takes precedence of no pending questions, but has the right of way in preference to main motions if made during the session in which it was laid on the table while no question is actually pending, and at a time when business of this class, or unfinished business, or new business, is in order; and also during the next session in organizations having regular business meetings.
- It yields to privileged and incidental motions, but not to subsidiary motions.
- It is undebatable, and no subsidiary motion can be applied to it.
- It is not in order unless some business has been transacted since the question was laid on the table, nor can it be renewed until some business has been transacted since it was lost.
- The motion to take from the table cannot be reconsidered, as it can be renewed repeatedly if lost, and, if carried, the question can be laid again on the table after progress in debate or business.

Withdraw/Modify Motion

- Applies only after question is stated.
- The mover can accept an amendment without obtaining the floor.