

Robert's Rules of Order

Those who are most successful in
an organization
(political / legislative / etc.)
are those who know how to use
the rules in their favor.

Deliberative Assembly

- An organization that uses parliamentary procedure to make decisions
 - Mass Meetings
 - Convention of Delegates
 - Legislative Bodies

Robert's Rules of Order

- Origin of Parliamentary Procedure:
 - English Parliament
- Came to America with the first European settlers
- Henry Martyn Robert:
 - 1863 –reluctantly agreed to preside over a meeting.
 - He left determined to learn all he could about parliamentary procedure before he attended another meeting.
 - No uniformity, wide disagreement, local customs
 - 1876 – Pocket Manual of Rules of Order for Deliberative Assemblies.
 - 2011 – Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (RONR) – 11th Edition

Definitions

- Meeting – a convening of members for official business with breaks of no more than a few minutes.
- Session – a meeting or series of meetings working through an entire agenda
- Recess – a short break in a meeting
- Adjournment – ends a meeting, but not necessarily a session
 - The 2nd and subsequent meetings of a session are “adjourned meetings.”

Purpose

- Provides for order in a meeting
- Majority rules
- Minority has the right to be heard
- Chair keeps order
- Deliberative Assembly holds the power

Agenda

- Call to Order
- Minutes
- Officers' Reports
- Committee Reports
- Special Orders
- Unfinished Business
- New Business
- Announcements
- Adjournment

Participating

- Chairman:
 - Refers to himself in the 3rd person: “The chair recognizes...”
 - Should avoid using names except when assigning the floor: “Will the member please be seated.” “The chair recognizes Mr. Smith.”
- Members:
 - Should always address the chair: “Mr. / Madam Chairman, I move that...”
 - Should speak through the chair: “Mr. Chairman, does the member who just spoke know the cost of ...”

Main Motions

- Obtain the floor
- Present Motion
- Wait for Second
- Chair repeats the Motion
- Debate
 - Person making motion speaks first and last
 - Debate should alternate between “for” and “against”
 - Time limits apply
 - Each person speaks only once until everyone is heard
- Question called
- Vote
- Chair announces results

Types of Motions

- Main Motions
 - Subsidiary Motions – process main motion
 - Privileged Motions – personal issues
 - Incidental Motions – procedural questions
- Motions to Reconsider a previous question

Subsidiary Motions

- I move:
 - to lay the motion on the table
 - the previous question (2/3)
 - to postpone the discussion until
 - to refer the matter to a committee
 - to amend the motion
- * listed in order of precedence

Privileged Motions

- I move to fix the time to adjourn
 - I move to adjourn
 - I move for recess
 - I rise for a question of privilege
 - I call for orders of the day
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- * listed in order of precedence
 - * takes priority over subsidiary motions

Motion (order of precedence)	Type	Interrupt?	Second?	Debatable?	Amend?	Vote	Reconsider?
Fix the Time of Adjournment	Privileged	-	Yes	-	Yes	Majority	Yes
Adjourn	Privileged	-	Yes	-	-	Majority	-
Recess	Privileged	-	Yes	-	Yes	Majority	-
Question of Privilege	Privileged	Yes	-	-	-	Chair	-
Orders of the Day	Privileged	Yes	-	-	-	Chair	-
Table a Motion	Subsidiary	-	Yes	-	-	Majority	-
Move the Question	Subsidiary	-	Yes	-	-	2/3	Yes
Limit Debate	Subsidiary	-	Yes	-	Yes	2/3	Yes
Postpone until...	Subsidiary	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
Refer to Committee	Subsidiary	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
I move to amend...	Subsidiary	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
Postpone indefinitely	Subsidiary	-	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	Yes
I move...	Main	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes

Incidental Motions

- I rise to a point of order
- I appeal from the ruling of the chair
- I move to suspend the rules
- I object to the consideration of the question
- I move to divide the question
- I move to divide the assembly (“Division!”)
- Parliamentary inquiry, please
- I rise to a point of information
- I request permission to withdraw the motion

Reconsider

- I move to reconsider
- I move to rescind something previously adopted
- I move to amend something previously adopted
- I move to discharge a committee
- I move to take from the table

Motion (no precedence)	Type	Interrupt?	Second?	Debatable?	Amend?	Vote	Reconsider?
Point of Order	Incidental	Yes	-	-	-	Chair	-
Appeal from the Chair's Decision	Incidental	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	Majority	Yes
Suspend Rules	Incidental	-	Yes	-	-	2/3	-
Object to Consideration	Incidental	Yes	-	-	-	2/3	Yes
Divide the Question	Incidental	-	Yes	-	Yes	Majority	-
Divide the Assembly	Incidental	Yes	-	-	-	-	-
Parliamentary Inquiry	Incidental	Yes	-	-	-	-	-
Point of Information	Incidental	Yes	-	-	-	-	-
Withdraw the Motion	Incidental	Yes	Yes	-	-	Majority	Yes
Reconsider	Reconsider	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	Majority	-
Rescind Previous Adoption	Reconsider	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	2/3	Yes
Amend Previous Adoption	Reconsider	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	2/3	Yes
Discharge a Committee	Reconsider	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	2/3	Yes
Take from the Table	Reconsider	-	Yes	-	-	Majority	-

Voting

- Unanimous / General Consent
 - Someone must object or the motion is accepted
- Voice
- Show of Hands
- Roll Call
- Ballot

Elections

- Decisions are made by majority vote, including elections
- Multiple rounds of voting occur until a majority is reached.
- It is always improper to drop candidates from the ballot
- Incomplete Election – the winner declines to take office

Resources

- Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised 11th Edition
- Robert's Rules for Dummies
- RobertsRulesMadeSimple.com – Susan Leahy
- YouTube: RobertsRulesOfOrder – Susan Leahy