

Some Common Parliamentary Procedures

Notes: The motions to Adjourn, Recess, Raise Questions of Privilege, and Call for the Orders of the Day are “privileged” motions under “Robert’s” and must be disposed of before any of the lower-ranked (“subsidiary”) motions may be made.

If unsure about how to deal with a particular matter, aid may be requested from the chair by saying, “Parliamentary Inquiry” or “I have a question”; this should be done from a floor microphone if available.

This chart is a reference summary of common parliamentary procedures, based largely on the 2000 edition of “Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised,” in addition to other compilations, and is not a substitute for any constitution, bylaws, special procedural rules or precedents, outside governing documents, or the parliamentary authority a group has adopted (such as “Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised, Tenth Edition,” 2000).

Purpose	Sample Wording	Interrupt Speaker?	Seconded??	Debatable?	Amendable?	Vote Needed?	Comments
Adjourn meeting	"I move that we adjourn"	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	
Recess meeting	"I move that we recess until . . ."	No	Yes	Not if question pending	Yes	Majority	
Complain (noise, room temperature, personal affront, etc.)	"Point of Privilege"	Yes	No	No	No	No vote; chair decides	
Object to deviation from adopted order of business or to a specific issue	"Point of Order"; "I call for the Orders of the Day"; "I object to consideration of the question"	Yes	No	No	No	Two-thirds vote needed to overrule objection	Demand of one member for Orders of Day requires attention to deviation
Adopt Order of Business	"I move that we adopt the agenda as proposed"	Not applicable	Yes	Yes	Yes (during initial adoption, unless bylaws limit this)	Majority	Second not necessary if recommended by a board
Amend Order of Business during meeting or session	"I move that we amend the agenda to . . ." or "I move for a special order"	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Two-thirds	Debate should be limited to wisdom of changing the agenda
Obtain Information	"Parliamentary inquiry" or "I have a question" or "Point of Order."	Yes	No	No	No	No vote; chair	Better not to use "Point of Order" (see "Object . . ." above)

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on appropriate motion, parliamentary situation, effect of motion, etc.						states opinion	
Debate	[Varies; speaker may specify "for" or "against" or chair may characterize to keep balance in debate-speaker may not speak against own motion]	No	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Debate only on issue under discussion; speak once only but second time if all others have spoken; not used to respond to others
Introduce business item (main or primary motion)	"I move that . . ."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	
Amend a motion	"I move to amend by . . ."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Proposal must be germane; may reverse the intent except for bylaw amendments.
Amend proposed amendment to motion	"I move to amend by . . ." or "I move to modify the amendment by . . ."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	As 'Amend,' above; no further amendments until this one is disposed of
Postpone consideration to a definite time	"I move to postpone consideration until . . ."	No	Yes	Only the "wisdom" is debatable	Yes	Majority	
Have something studied further	"I move that we refer this matter to . . ." a committee, board, officers, other; "Commit" or "recommit" may be used	No	Yes	Only the "wisdom" is debatable	Yes	Majority	Amendment may change referee or may add instructions
Suspend consideration (temporarily)	"I move that we table this motion"	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	Not to be used to defeat

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Take up tabled matter	"I move that we take from the table the motion to . . ."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	Only on same day or next day; otherwise falls to the floor
"Friendly Amendment"	"I would like to propose a friendly amendment"	No	See comment	See comment	See comment	See Comment	New in Robert's 10th. Original maker has say only before debate has begun; after, group must agree or otherwise is treated as ordinary amendment
Withdraw a motion	"I would like to withdraw the motion"	No	See comment	See comment	See Comment	See comment	Original maker has say only before chair states motion; unanimous consent or majority vote required after motion is on floor
Dispose of a matter without taking a position ("kill diplomatically")	"I move that we postpone consideration of this question indefinitely"	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	Debate can include discussion of substance of original motion
Vote on ruling of chair	"I appeal the ruling of the chair" (must be done before next item of Business is taken up)	Yes; see comment	Yes	See comment	No	Majority in negative to overrule chair's ruling	Debatable except for speech rules, order of business, or if pending motion is not debatable. Motion always stated in positive, "to sustain the ruling of the chair"
End debate	"I move that we close debate" or "I move the previous question"	No	Yes	No	No	Two-thirds	
Modify previous action Or bring issue up again (at same meeting or on next day of business Session)	"I move that we reconsider the Motion that..."	Only before speaker begins to speak	Yes	Both "wisdom" and substance debatable; best limited to "wisdom" of reconsidering	No	Majority	Motion can only be made by someone on prevailing Side of original vote

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Modify previous action or bring issue up again (at any time but usually at later time)	“I move that we rescind...” or “I move that we amend something previously adopted, the motion that...”	No	Yes	Both “wisdom” and substance are debatable	Yes	Majority with prior notice; two-thirds without notice; but two-thirds if scope of prior notice expanded	