

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE



“ This text is designed to provide information on the basics of parliamentary procedure. 95% of the skills and information an organizational member will need to function effectively in a meeting is covered in part one of this booklet.”

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Historical Sketch

Parliamentary procedure is a procedure whereby an organization may reach decisions in a systematic and democratic way in a fair and orderly fashion, based on the right of the deliberate majority to decide. It is a procedure with rules and with constraints put on all of the individuals involved. It is a procedure whereby the group decides what its policies will be, what actions it will take, how it will spend its resources, and how it will determine what its organizational leadership will be.

As Major Henry Robert explained, “where there is no law, but every man does what is right in his own eyes, there is the least of real liberty.”

The alternative to this democratic procedure is to reach decisions by force, by muscle, or with bullets. At times with these methods even the prevailing side comes out the loser as well.

Historically, parliamentary procedure is an organizational procedure that derives its name from the procedure used by the English Parliament, although its origins date back to ways of life with the Angles and Saxons, Germanic tribes in the 5th century A. D. Apparently even they recognized the need for some ground rules for governing their meetings.

As Vice President of the United States and as Presiding Officer of the new U.S. Senate, Thomas Jefferson was the individual who was primarily responsible for adapting the English procedure to that outlined in his *MANUAL* and for its adoption by the U.S. Congress in his time.

Probably because societies traditionally follow in part the custom of their legislative bodies, Luther Cushing, decades later, developed that procedure still further for use by common assemblies of many descriptions.

Still later, Major Henry Robert, of the U.S. Army, wrote up a procedure, patterned after the earlier works, to provide a more practical procedure for the many many organizations that were forming in our early democratic society. *Robert's Rules of Order* has become the most commonly accepted and the most frequently adopted standard for organizations in our society. It is a thorough and complete text that addresses virtually any situation that may develop in the course of an organizations work.

Since the time of Henry Robert not much has changed organizationally, except there are a great many more organizations today than there were then.

Increasingly our government has sought to involve the citizenry in the governmental decision making process by listening to representatives of various organized representative groups. This, in turn, has caused the development of more and more commonly called special interest groups.

To prepare for this adult participatory role, our young people have a multitude of organizations in which to participate: FFA, FHA-HERO, DECCA, KEY CLUB, STUDENT COUNCIL, 4-H, DCT, FBLA-CBE, HOSA, SAVOS, VICA, JUNIOR JAYCEES, INTERACT, JAYCEETTES, KIWANETTES, ALPHA GAMMA RHO, and many many others.

In order to participate effectively, it is desirable that young people learn the parliamentary procedural ropes at the earliest age possible.

This effort is to provide a handbook pared down to the basic principles of parliamentary procedure to learn the bare essentials and ground rules, and to enable the novice to function effectively with a minimum of time and effort spent on the learning process.

Because there is a limited amount of instructions in parliamentary procedure at any level in our society, those who are fortunate enough to be the recipients of it become the experts on the subject in organizational meetings even with their limited knowledge.

Major Robert's words of advice to the student who has become reasonably proficient in the basic principles of parliamentary procedure are appropriate. "While it is important to every person in a free country to know something of parliamentary law, this knowledge should be used only to help, not to hinder business. One who is constantly raising points of order and insisting upon a strict observance of every rule in a peaceable assembly in which most of the members are unfamiliar with these rules and customs makes himself a nuisance, hinders business, and prejudices people against parliamentary law. Such a person either does not understand its real purpose or else willfully misuses his knowledge."

This text is designed to provide information on the basics of parliamentary procedures. 95% of the skills and information that an organizational member will need to function effectively in a meeting is covered in part one of this booklet.

The text is arranged on a need to know basis so that the student may read the booklet in chronological order and my develop a working knowledge on that basis.

BASIC PRINCIPLES

To begin, items of business in an organizational meeting are introduced in a form called a motion. A motion cannot be debated on the floor in a meeting or voted upon until it has been introduced in the form of a motion.

For convenience, motions are classified into five types, which are in the order of highest precedence to the order of lowest precedence:

1. unclassified motion
2. privileged motion
3. incidental motion

4. subsidiary motion
5. main motion

A. MAIN OR PRINCIPAL MOTION is a motion made to bring before the meeting or assembly, for its consideration, any particular subject. Of the five types of motions it is of the lowest precedence because it cannot be introduced unless there are no other motions before the assembly, and it cannot be voted upon until all other types of motions have been voted upon or disposed of.

Main motions are debatable, amendable and can be reconsidered.

When a main motion is laid on the table it carries with it all pending subsidiary motions.

Main motions may be written and presented in the form of a resolution.

If a main motion is referred to a committee it carries with it only the pending amendments.

Two motions may not be presented at the same time.

B. SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS are such as are applied to other motions for the purpose of most appropriately disposing of them. By means of them the original motion may be modified, action may be postponed, or it may be referred to a committee to investigate and report, etc..

Subsidiary motions may be applied to any main motion, and when made they have precedence over the main motion and must be decided before the main motion can be acted upon.

In the following list the subsidiary motions are arranged in the order of their precedence, the first one having the highest precedence.

When one of the subsidiary motions is the immediately pending question, every motion above it is in order and every one below it is out of order. They are as follows:

1. lay on the table
2. the previous question (vote immediately)
3. postpone definitely
4. commit or refer to committee
5. amend
6. postpone indefinitely

C. INCIDENTAL MOTIONS ARE ACTIONS that arise from another question, which is pending, and, therefore, take precedent. It must be decided before the question or motion out of which they arise; or they are incidental to a question that has just been pending and should be decided upon before any other business is originated. An incidental motion is in order only when it is legitimately

incidental to business at hand. It then takes precedence over any other motions pending.

These motions and actions, which have no established order of precedence, are:

1. point of order
2. appeal
3. suspend the rules
4. object to the consideration of a question
5. division
6. leave to withdraw a motion
7. leave the chairman's station
- 8.

D. PRIVILEGED MOTIONS OR ACTIONS while not relating to the pending question, are of so great importance as to require them to take precedence over all other questions, and due to this high privilege they are not debatable. They cannot change any subsidiary motions applied to them except to amend the motions to adjourn. Some examples, in order of precedence, are:

1. adjourn
2. recess
3. question of privilege
4. orders of the day
- 5.

E. UNCLASSIFIED MOTIONS are motions, which cannot conveniently be classified. They're in order of precedence.

1. take from the table
2. reconsider
3. rescind
- 4.

In reviewing any of the many versions of Roberts Rules of Order, the student will find that there are a great many more kinds of each of these motions.

This review of the five types of motions has been reduced to the bare essentials to enable you to not be confused or overwhelmed by the more sophisticated procedures or motions that may be used. For references, the very serious student may wish to use on of the following:

1. Robert's Rules of Order Revised, 1915 copyright, Morrow paperback edition.
2. Robert's Rules of Order Revised, 1981 revision, Scotts Foresman and Co.
3. Robert's Rules of Order Revised, 75th anniversary edition, Scott's Foresman and Co.
4. Robert's Rules of Order Revised, newly revised 1970 edition, Scotts Foresman and Co.
5. Robert's Rules of Order Revised, paperback, 1893 edition, Jove Publications Inc.

One characteristic of the various editions of the Robert's Rules of Order is they vary on some points and they are not identical in their presentation of procedure. The differences, however, are not substantial. To enable the knowledgeable group to function in those situations not covered by this text it is necessary that the group have one or several copies of Robert's Rules on hand, preferably the same edition.

ABILITY I – DEMONSTRATION OF THE MAIN MOTION

Initially, the new language of parliamentary procedure must be quite a challenge to the student. To help you understand how the procedure operates, let us go through the definitions and the procedure in the order in which you will be concerned with them.

In order to operate in a meeting one individual must accept the role of the chair. Practically speaking, this is done by someone volunteering or by someone being drafted by fellow members. The individual who volunteers or who is elected to serve on a temporary basis is called a chairman. In your organization the individual who is elected by the group is called the president. When the presiding officer is a male he is referred to as Mr. Chairman or Mr. President. When the presiding officer is a female, she is referred to as Madam Chairman or Madam President. A degree of formality is appropriate.

SELECTION OF A PRESIDING OFFICER

In determining the individual you would prefer to have lead your organization, it is important for every member to know that the presiding officer should be chosen only on his ability to preside. Most organizations utilize a nominating committee to expedite the selection process.

Some of the characteristics that contribute to making the desirable presiding officer and characteristics you should seek to develop in yourself include:

- a. He is a LEADER. He has a positive attitude, and he is willing to accept the responsibility and assume the initiative.
- b. He is FAIR. Difficult decisions in recognition, appointing committees, etc., demand that the chair be fair to retain their position.
- c. He exhibits GOOD JUDGEMENT. Planning, organization, and management are his trademark.
- d. He is TACTFUL. Courteous treatment of all members is always a desirable trait.

- e. He MANIFESTS POISE. He is alert, erect in posture, calm, and reassuring.
- f. He has a STRONG CLEAR VOICE. A strong clear voice evokes the image of a forceful presence.
- g. He is REASONABLY DELIBERATE. His methodical, direct, and concise means of going through the procedure exude dependability.
- h. He demonstrates MASTERY OF THE RULES of parliamentary procedure. Certainly it is much much easier to be fair and to exhibit good judgement
- i. and to have the confidence that contributes to your poise, if you have a ready working knowledge of the procedure you will administer.

DEMONSTRATIONS

For demonstration purposes it is desirable that every class member take their turn in acting as the presiding officer going through the order of business for a main motion.

Because the format for entertaining a main motion is basic to most other motions, it is essential that every student make a concerted, diligent effort to commit key phrases, in the order of business, to memory.

Initially, to encourage participation, it is easier to entertain motions of a humorous nature, Centering motions around subject matter familiar to your group, such as your organization's program of activities of their organization and may acquaint the leaders of your organization with their member's interests and desire while learning the procedure. Remember, however, the goal is to learn the procedure.

Because the main motion is basic to other abilities, our study of ability one is more intensive. There is no object in going on to the study of other abilities until every member is proficient with the main motion.

This main motion is of the lowest order of precedence; it is the motion introduced first, but if other motions arise, it is the last motion to be voted upon.

PROCEDURE

CALLING THE MEETING TO ORDER – Normally, simply waiting or signaling for quiet and calling for the meeting to come to order is all that is necessary to call the meeting to order. It is appropriate for the chair to be standing.

USE OF THE GAVEL – Use of the gavel with discretion may be appropriate to gain attention. Authoritative parliamentary procedure references have little to say about use of the gavel.

THE AGENDA – The call to order is followed by the items identified on the agenda before the disposition of old business and new business:

- opening ceremony
- minutes of previous meeting
- officer reports
- report of Program of Activities
- special features
- old or unfinished business
- committee reports
- new business
- degree and installation ceremonies

CALLING FOR BUSINESS – For our practice sessions we can assume we have progressed through the agenda to the old business stage. Your presiding officer is now at that point in the business where he can say, “What business is to be considered at this time? Is there any old business to come before the assembly?”

WHAT TO CALL THE GROUP – Your organization may be called the club, chapter, assembly, society, house, etc., but whatever the group normally prefers to call itself, the chair is normally in possession of the “floor” of the “assembly” until he recognizes a member which entitles the member to speak until seated.

GAINING RECOGNITION – To gain recognition to speak, a member should rise and call “Mr. Chairman”, and remain standing until the chair calls on him. The chair will then say, “Yes, George,” or “The chair recognizes Joe,” or identify in some way the individual to whom he is yielding the floor. That individual may then speak until seated. there are several motions that may interrupt a speaker at which point he shall be seated; however, it is common courtesy to allow the speaker to complete his comments rather than to interrupt him.

When there is a choice of whom to recognize, the chair recognizes the individual who has participated the least up to that point, and then to recognize the individual closest to the chair. When the speaker takes his seat, possession of the floor reverts to the chair.

PURPOSE OF A MAIN MOTION – The purpose of a main motion is to present the opinion of, or action proposed by, on member for the consideration of the entire organization and ultimately for their vote.

PHRASING THE MOTION – The motion is made by saying, “ I move we enter the parliamentary procedure contest, “ or “ I move our chapter select a chapter sweetheart.”

For practice purposes every individual in the class or group should write a motion they would like to see introduced at a meeting and should then recite their motion for the group by standing and reading or stating it aloud as they would in a regular meeting.

If a member states the motion improperly, or, for that matter, engages in other improper procedures through ignorance, it is the chair's duty to assist the member by suggesting proper wording or procedure.

PURPOSE OF A SECOND – The purpose of a second is to make certain the motion has the support of at least two members.

To save the assembly's time, it is not in order to consider the motion unless there is more than one person who will support it. If there is no second, it is desirable for the chair to ask for a second. If there is no second, you may announce the motion has support, it is not mandatory you wait for a second to proceed.

STATING THE MOTION – To avoid any possibility of misunderstanding or confusion, the chair should then state the motion, such as, "The motion before the chapter is we enter a parliamentary procedure contest," or "The motion has been made and properly seconded we select a chapter sweetheart."

PURPOSE OF DISCUSSION – The purpose of discussion is to offer members the opportunity to express their opinion either in support of or in opposition to the motion.

POINTS TO REMEMBER – It is not appropriate for a member to speak without first risen, addresses the chair, and obtained the floor.

The maker of the motion has the opportunity to speak first if he wishes.

The individual recognized to speak addresses the chair, not the assembly.

It is an accepted rule the presiding officer not participate in the discussion or, as Thomas Jefferson put it, "The presiding officer or chairman be forced to become an arbitrator to the advantage of one side or the other, thereby exerting an undue influence on the outcome." The chair's obligation is to speak on matters of order and with the assembly's deference may state matters of fact but participation in discussion from the chair is an absolute no no.

The chair may then state, " Are there any remarks to the motion," or, " The question is open for discussion," or, " The motion is open for debate."

MAINTAINING ORDER – Occasionally a member will intentionally or unintentionally violate accepted rules, such as gaining recognition before speaking. The desirable course for the chair to take is to call the member to order by:

1. identifying the individual
2. identifying the problem
3. stating what the proper procedure is

For example, when the member rises and begins speaking without recognition, the chair should then say, “ George, you are out of order. You failed to get recognition before participating in the debate.”

Again, it is always best to handle matters in a courteous and orderly manner.

When a member notes a violation of the rules that is unnoticed by the chair, he may rise to a point of order as is covered in a later ability.

CALLING FOR THE QUESTION – When it appears no one else desires to speak the chair may ask, “ Are you ready for the question?” If no one rises to claim the floor, he may put the question to vote.

When a member wished to proceed to the vote, he can simply say, “Question!” to indicate his readiness to vote. This does not obligate the chair to vote but when debate has been extensive, it is helpful to the chair and to the members to know when other members have heard sufficient debate. He may then say, “ The question has been called for. If there is no further discussion, we will vote.”

If other members still wish to debate, even rising while the chair is attempting to put the vote, they must be heard, even to the point of nullifying the vote to hear the debate. All sides have the right to be heard!!

To shut off debate, a member may move to close debate. A 2/3 vote will close the debate and allow the chair to put the vote.

RESTATING THE MOTION – With or without intervening debate or whether or not there have been other types of motions introduced, it is desirable to restate the motion before voting. Action that contributes to the orderliness of the procedure and avoids confusion will enhance the democratic process.

The chair may say, “ The motion before the chapter is “or, “ It has been moved and seconded to

PURPOSE OF THE VOTE – The purpose of a vote is to secure the opinion of the majority with reference to the motion.

The decision as to what action the group will take is made on the basis of a majority vote is one more than half of the votes cast. In a tie vote the chair votes to break the tie.

There are several methods of voting:

- a) An oral vote is a vote by ayes and noes as in, “ All in favor of the motion say aye; all who object to the motion say no.” The chair makes his ruling based on which side sounds like they had the most votes. The vote is always taken by voice first unless it requires a 2/3 vote.

- b) A standing or show of hands vote is done when it is desirable to know the specific number for or against a proposal. This is the method used when a member calls for a division of the house.
- c) A vote by ballot provides the individual with a secret vote. Voting is done by marking a piece of paper or responding electronically when the vote is called.
- d) General Consent is a method commonly used in smaller groups. To speed up the voting process the chair may say, “ If there are no objections to the motion, we will accept the proposal by General Consent.” If there are no objections the motion is passed unanimously. If there is any objection, the chair must put the vote by some other method.
- e) Roll Call vote involves recording the individual’s vote by ayes and noes when the roll call is taken. Vote by ballot or roll call is not done unless required by the rules. When putting the vote the chair is obligated to call for the negative vote as well as for the positive vote.

ANNOUNCING THE RESULT OF THE VOTE – In announcing the vote the chair may simply say, “ The motion is carried,” or, “The motion is lost.” In a voice vote he may say, “ The ayes have it; the resolution is adopted.”

In announcing the vote by a procedure so votes can be counted, the chair would announce, “8 votes for, 3 votes against, the motion is carried.”

RULES FOR THE MAIN MOTION – The main motion requires a second. It is debatable, amendable, requires a majority vote and can be reconsidered.

As each ability is presented and studied, every student should make a sincere effort to commit the rules to memory.

Now that we have a description in detail of what the participants’ actions are, it is appropriate to see the procedure in an outlined form.

This is one version. For your own demonstration, originality in wording is appropriate. Use of synonyms in your demonstration of the phrases used in this outline is in order, but use the prescribed order of business.

Sufficient space has been left between steps so that you may write in wording that you prefer.

Remember, a degree of formality is appropriate in your demonstration.

ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR A MAIN MOTION – DEMONSTRATION

1. Ask for further business

Chairman says, “What business is to considered at this time?”

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 2. Receive a motion | Member stands and after getting recognition says, "Mr. Chairman, I move that we buy a tractor." |
| 3. Receive a second | Member remains seated, raises his hand and says, "I second the motion." |
| 4. State the motion | The chairman says, "The motion before the chapter is that we buy a tractor." |
| 5. Call for Discussion | Chair says, "Are there any remarks to the motion?" The member stands, gains recognition and speaks for or against. |
| 6. Call for the vote | Chair says, "Are you ready for the question? If there are no further remarks we will vote." |
| 7. Restate the motion | Chair says, "The motion before the chapter is that we buy a tractor." |
| 8. Take a vote on the motion | Chair says, "As many as favor the motion, say aye; all who object to the motion, say no." |
| 9. Announce the result of the vote | "The Motion is carried," or "the motion is lost." |

ABILITY II – THE AMENDMENT

An amendment is a widely used subsidiary motion whose purpose is to change the intent of the original motion.

The motion requires a second, is debatable, is amendable, can be reconsidered, and requires a simple majority vote for passage.

There are four ways of amending motion. They are:

1. to add words
2. to strike out words
3. to strike out and then add words
4. to substitute a new motion on the same subject

SOME POINTS TO REMEMBER

- The amendment is usually proposed during the discussion period on a motion.
- A maximum of two amendments may be on the floor at one time (an amendment and an amendment to the amendment) although the motion may be amended as many times as you wish.
- All amendments must be on the same subject as the original motion.
- An amendment cannot change a motion from negative to positive.
- The voting procedure is as follows: 1st, vote on the amendment; 2nd, vote on the motion as amended or on the original motion if the amendment fails.
- Many times as discussion proceeds on a motion, some individual's opinions are strong as to what items the original motion should include. With the amendment process, additions or deletions may be made without defeating the original motion and beginning again.

AMENDMENT

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1. receive a motion | "Mr. Chairman, I move that we see a film." |
| 2. Receive a second | "Second!" |
| 3. State the motion | "The motion before the chapter is that we see a film." |
| 4. Call for discussion | "Are there any remarks to the motion?" |
| 5. Receive a motion to amend | "Mr. Chairman, I move that an amendment to the motion by <u>adding the words</u> on Friday." |
| 6. Receive a second | "I second the motion." |
| 7. State the motion | "The motion before the chapter is that we amend the motion by adding the words on Friday." |
| 8. Call for discussion | "Are there any remarks to the motion?" |
| 9. Restate the motion | "The motion before the chapter is that we amend the motion by adding the words on Friday." |

- | | | |
|-----|---|---|
| 10 | Vote on the amendment | “We will vote. All in favor of the motion, say aye. All who object say no.” |
| 11. | Announce the result of the vote | “The motion is carried.” |
| 12. | State the motion as amended
that we see a film on Friday.” | “The motion before the chapter is |
| 13. | Call for discussion | “Are there any remarks to the motion?” |
| 14. | Restate the motion
see a film on Friday.” | “The motion before the chapter is that we |
| 15. | Call for the vote
object to the motion say no.” | “All in favor of the motion say aye; all who |
| 16. | Announce the result | “The motion is carried.” |

MOTION TO COMMIT OR REFER TO COMMITTEE

The PURPOSE of this motion is to make it possible to secure more detailed information as a basis for action and to put the question into better shape for the assembly to consider.

A committee is a body of one or more persons appointed or elected by an assembly to consider, to investigate, or to take action in regard to certain matters or subjects, or to do all of these thing.

The typical procedure involves receiving a main motion. With or without discussion, some individual will recognize that:

- a) further information is necessary
- b) a large group will find it awkward to study the question and reach a decision
- c) carrying out the group’s desires will require only a few members
- d) fixing the responsibility is necessary
- e) time will be saved utilizing the committee

At this point in the procedure a member may move to refer this motion to a committee.

Depending on what the needs are to carry out the assembly’s desires the motion may be worded in several way.

In some organizations the chair appoints all committees and so the member may say, “Mr. Chairman, I move that we refer this motion to a committee, “and the chair will appoint the committee.

In other organizations there are standing committees appointed annually. The member may simply say, "Mr. Chairman, I move that we refer this motion to our recreation committee."

In many organizations it will be more appropriate to specify exactly who will function on the committee and what they will be expected to do such as, "Madam Chairman, I move that we refer this motion to a committee of three to be appointed by the chair, with the authority to act and to report back to the chapter at our next regularly scheduled meeting."

SOME POINTS TO REMEMBER

- The phrasing of the motion will be tailored to the needs of your organization.
- Many times an organization will pass a number of resolutions and at succeeding meetings members will inquire as to the disposition of their motions. Unless the chair is an especially diligent individual without much else to occupy his time, nothing will happen. It is an accepted premise that everybody's business becomes nobody's business, and so it is with your motion. If you wish for something to happen, specify what you want to occur, who it is that is to carry it out and how and when they are to report. This fixing of responsibility is also called accountability. With accountability your organization will accomplish a great deal more.
- This is a subsidiary motion. It is debatable, is amendable, requires a second, and requires a majority vote for passage.
- The motion cannot be reconsidered after the committee has taken up the subject, but by a two-thirds vote the committee may be discharged.
- If the motion to refer fails, the assembly goes right back to discussion of the main motion.
- Whoever has the authority to appoint the committee also has the authority to appoint the chairman.
- When the committee completes its task, it ceases to exist unless it is a standing committee.
- It is the duty of the chairman to call meetings of the committee. If he is unable or declines to do so, it is the duty of the committee to meet on the call of any two members.
- The committee constitutes a miniature of the assembly. the same general rules apply although with considerably less formality.
- Committee reports, when made, should also be filed with the secretary.

The ability to refer a motion to a committee is very important in the smooth functioning of an organization. Use of the ability is limited only by the member's imagination to utilize it.

Working on the following demonstration should be modified to conform to the particular needs of your group.

REFER TO COMMITTEE – DEMONSTRATION

1. Chair calls for further business “What business is to be presented at this time?”
2. Member presents a motion “Madam Chairman, I move that we go on a field trip.”
3. Member seconds the motion “I second the motion.”
4. Chair states the motion “The motion before the chapter is that we go on a field trip.”
5. Chair calls for discussion “Are there any remarks to the motion?”
6. Member presents a motion to refer “Madam Chairman, I move that we refer this motion to a committee of three to be appointed by the chair with the authority to act and report back to our next meeting.”
7. Member seconds the motion “I second the motion.”
8. Chair states the motion “The motion before the chapter is that we refer this motion to a committee of three to be appointed by the chair with the authority to act and report back to our next meeting.”
9. Chair calls for discussion “Are there any remarks to the motion?”
10. Chair calls for the vote “Are you ready for the vote?”
11. Chair restates the motion “The motion before the chapter is we refer this motion to a committee of three to be appointed by the chair with the authority to act and report back to our next meeting.”
12. Chair takes the vote “As many as favor the motion say aye. All who object to the motion say no.”
13. Announce the result of the vote “The motion is carried.”
14. Chair give direction to the committee after appointing the committee “The committee will be Joe, Susan, and Greg. Joe, will you act as chairman?”

You have the authority to act on the motion. Also, will you report on your actions at the next meeting?"

15. Chair calls for further business "Is there any further business to be considered at this time?"

MOTION TO LAY ON THE TABLE

The purpose or object of this motion is to enable the assembly to lay a motion on the table to :

1. attend to more urgent business
2. to lay aside the pending question in a way its consideration may be resumed at the will of the assembly as easily as if it were a new question
3. consider items of business in preference to it that are competing with it for consideration
4. allow time to think or consider the motion before voting

SOME POINTS TO REMEMBER

- The use of this ability to suppress consideration of a question is improper as there are other abilities that may be used for this purpose that require a 2/3 vote for passage.
- The motion is a subsidiary motion that is not debatable, not amendable and cannot be reconsidered. Proper procedure includes announcing these negative rules on this motion.
- This subsidiary motion also takes precedence over all other subsidiary motions and over all incidental motions pending at the time.
- The motion lays on the table the main motion and all other motions pertaining to it.
- The proper form of the motion is any of the following or, of course, words that are synonymous with these. Use your ingenuity.
 - I move to lay the question on the table.
 - I move the question be laid on the table.
 - I move the question lay on the table.
- Significantly, the question cannot be qualified in any way, such as adding the words, "and its amendments, " as this is automatic.

Now let us go on to the demonstration.

LAY ON THE TABLE – DEMONSTRATION

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Receive a motion | “Madam Chairman, I move our chapter has an anti-litter sign contest.” |
| 2. Receive a second | “I second the motion.” |
| 3. State the motion | “The motion before the chapter is our chapter has an anti-litter sign contest.” |
| 4. Call for debate | “The motion is now open for discussion.” |
| 5. Receive a motion to lay on the table | “Madam Chairman, I move this motion be laid on the table.” |
| 6. Receive a second | “I second the motion.” |
| 7. State the motion | “The motion before the chapter is we lay the motion on the table. This motion is not amendable and cannot be reconsidered.” |
| 8. Call for the vote | “We will vote. As many favors the motion say aye; all who object to the motion say no.” |
| 9. Announce the result of the vote | “The motion is carried.” |

POINT OF ORDER OR QUESTION OF ORDER

The purpose of the motion “rise to a point of order” is to avoid breaking any parliamentary rules and to insist upon the enforcement of all rules.

When a member feels an error in procedure or a violation of the rules has been made, he can rise to a point of order.

The question of order or point of order is an incidental motion that takes precedence over the question out of which it arises.

It is in order even if another member has the floor and is speaking.

This motion does not require a second, it is not amendable, and it cannot have subsidiary motions applied to it.

The chair may request a knowledgeable person give him advice on how to rule.

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| 12. Call for the vote | Chair say, "Are you ready for the question?" |
| 13. Restate the motion | "The motion before the chapter is that we have a party." |
| 14. Take a vote | "All in favor of the motion say aye.
All who object to the motion say no." |
| 15. Announce the result | "The motion is lost." |

DIVISION

After a vote by a show of hands, or after an oral vote, any member may say;

"I call for a division of the house."
or
"I doubt the vote."
or simply;
"Division."

After this call by a member the chair states:

"A division of the house is called for. As many as favor the motion please rise."
(Announce the number for.)

"All who object to the motion please rise." Announce the number against.

Announce, "The motion is carried." or, "The motion is lost."

SOME POINTS TO REMEMBER

- The member's call for "Division" does not requires a second and may interrupt a speaker after the vote.
- The chair is not required to divide the house but may be requires by a majority vote.
- If the vote was close, it would be the courteous thing for the chair to do without being forced by a motion.
- This action is incidental to the question under consideration and while referred to as motion does not require a second and cannot have a subsidiary motion applied to it.

APPEAL FROM A DECISION OF THE CHAIR

At times in organizational work, there are individuals elected to preside who fail to meet all of the characteristics of the ideal presiding officer, who occasionally may attempt to force their will upon the group by rulings that support their wishes.

The purpose of the appeal is to safeguard majority rule and to prevent the chair from controlling the action of the body.

This is done by the procedure that puts the chair's questionable decision to a vote of the organization's members. The member in appealing a decision simply rises and says, "Mr. Chairman, I appeal from the decision of the chair."

For a single error in procedure or in a ruling, it is much easier and more appropriate to give the presiding officer the benefit of the doubt and to rise to a point of order.

In the event your point is not sustained, you may then appeal.

SOME POINTS TO REMEMBER

- The appeal may be made from any decision of the chair except another appeal.
- It can only be done at the time the ruling is made,
- It is in order when another member has the floor.
- It is an incidental motion. It requires a second and is normally debatable, can be reconsidered, but cannot be amended.
- On this issue the chair may vote. If it is a tie vote his decision is sustained.

PROCEDURE – APPEAL FROM THE DECISION OF THE CHAIR- DEMONSTRATION

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| 1. Main motion | "Mr. Chairman, I move we have a party." |
| 2. The chair makes an error in a ruling such as: | "This motion is not debatable." |
| 3. A member rises to a point of order | "Mr. Chairman, I rise to a point of order." |
| 4. Chair asks for the point of order | "State your point." |
| 5. Member specifies the problem | "Mr. Chairman, this main motion is debatable." |
| 6. The chair (for practice purposes) rules against the member | "Your point is not sustained!" |
| 7. The member appeals from the decision that he feels is in error | "Mr. Chairman, I appeal from the decision of the chair." |
| 8. It <u>must</u> have a second | "Mr. Chairman, I second the motion." |
| 9. The chair states the motion for the group | "The decision of the chair has been appealed. State the decision which you are appealing." |
| 10. At this point the chair may also give the reason for his ruling after stating why the appeal has been made. | |

11. The chair calls for the discussion “Are there any remarks to the motion?”
12. The chair calls for the vote “Shall the decision of the chair stand as the judgement of the chapter? All who support the chair will rise. (# for.) All who do not support the chair will rise. (# against.)
13. Announce the result of the vote “The chair is not sustained.”
14. Correct the original error and “The chair was in error.”
15. Restate the motion with the correction “The motion before the chapter is we have a party. The motion is debatable.”
16. Continue the demonstration.

MOTION TO SUSPEND THE RULES

The purpose of the motion to suspend the rules is to enable the assembly to do something it wishes to do that it cannot do without suspending the rules.

This motion is not debatable, is not amendable and cannot be reconsidered. The motion requires a 2/3 vote for passage. The 2/3 vote must be taken in a manner that includes counting the number for and against the motion.

SOME POINTS TO REMEMBER

- This motion is in order when no question is pending or while a question is pending if it is for a purpose connected with that motion.
- The rules states in the constitution of an organization and its by-lays may not be suspended because they require prior notice to all members. Suspending these rules without notice to all members (including those not present) would deprive the absent members of their right to participate in this particular decision.
- Rules that may be suspended include Rules of Order and Standing Rules.

MOTION TO SUSPEND THE RULES – DEMONSTRATION

1. Chair receives a motion “Mr. Chairman, I move that we begin our next regular meeting at 8:00.”
2. Member seconds the motion “Second.”
3. Chair states the motion “The motion before the chapter is we begin our next regular meeting at 8:00.”

4. Chair states the rule of the organization "May I remind you there is a standing rule of this organization that sets our meeting time at 7:00."
5. Chair receives a motion to suspend "Mr. Chairman, I move we suspend the rules the rule of this organization that says that we meet at 7:00 for this one meeting."
6. Member seconds the motion "Second."
7. Chair states the motion "The motion before the chapter is that we suspend the rule of this organization that says we must meet at 7:00. This motion is not debatable, is not amendable and cannot be reconsidered and requires a 2/3 vote for passage."
8. Chair calls for the vote "We will vote."
9. Chair takes vote on the motion "All who support the motion please rise. Ten for. All who object to the motion please rise. Three against."
10. Chair announces the result of the motion "The motion is carried. The rule is suspended."
11. Chair restates the motion "The motion to begin our next regular meeting at 8:00 is now in order."
12. Chair calls for discussion "Are there any remarks to the motion?"
13. Chair calls for the vote "If there is not further discussion we will vote."
14. Chair restates the motion "The motion before the chapter is we begin our next regular meeting at 8:00."
15. Chair put the vote "All in favor of the motion say aye. All who object to the motion say no."
16. Chair announces the result of the vote "The motion is carried. Our next regular meeting will be held at 8:00."

MOTION TO LEAVE THE CHAIRMAN'S STATION

One of the most flagrant violations of the rules of parliamentary procedure is for the chair to speak to a question. An individual who intends to actively participate in discussion on the floor should not accept the position as presiding officer since the reason for his having been chosen is his ability to preside.

On the occasion when the chair feels obligated to participate in the discussion, he should leave the chair and request the Vice President to chair the meeting. The chair should not return to his station until the question he has spoken to has been disposed of. If he leaves his station for the balance of the meeting, he automatically resumes his office when that meeting is adjourned.

If there is no Vice President present, the chair's obligation is to appoint a Chairman pro tem.

In a session where feelings are strong on either side of a question and the only potential replacements for the chair might have difficulty in preserving proper order, the chair's obligation is to maintain his position and forgo speaking to the question.

ABILITY TO LEAVE THE CHAIRMAN'S STATION – DEMONSTRATION

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|---|--|
| 1. Chair asks for further business | “What business is to be considered at this time?” |
| 2. Member phrases a motion | Member, after recognition states, “Mr. Chairman, I move we have a pizza party.” |
| 3. Member seconds the motion | “Mr. Chairman, I second the motion.” |
| 4. Chair states the motion | “The motion before the assembly is we have a pizza party.” |
| 5. Chair calls for the debate | “Are there any remarks to the motion?” |
| 6. Chair leaves his station | “Because I have a personal interest in this question, I would like to participate in the discussion. I am asking (Specify the member) to act as Chairman pro tem so that I may participate in the discussion.” |
| 7. Chair pro tem presides
(Calls for further debate) | “Thank you, Mr. Chairman, are there any further remarks to the motion?”
(at this point the chair may get recognition and speak to the question if he wishes) |

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|---|--|
| 8. Chair pro tem calls for the vote | “Are you ready for the question?
If there is no further
discussion, we will vote.” |
| 9. Chair pro tem restates the motion | “The motion before the assembly
is we have a pizza party.” |
| 10. Chair pro tem puts the vote | “All who support the motion say
aye; all who object to the
motion say no.” |
| 11. Chair pro tem announces the result
of the vote | “The motion is lost.” |
| 12. Chair pro tem invites the chairman
to resume his station | “Mr. Chairman, will you please
resume your office.” |

MOTION TO TAKE FROM THE TABLE

The purpose or objective of the motion to take from the table is to provide renewed consideration of a motion that was laid on the table when the reasons for having laid it on the table are disposed of.

The motion is an unclassified motion that takes precedence of no pending question but has precedence over main motions. It is not debatable, it is not amendable, it cannot be reconsidered and no subsidiary motion can be applied to it.

SOME POINT TO REMEMBER

- It is not in order unless some business has been transacted since the question was laid on the table. When the intervening business has been disposed of, the individual wishing to phrase a motion to take from the table has first claim to the floor. If someone else gets recognition from the chair first, he is entitled to inform the chair that he wishes to move to take a question from the table to get the recognition he is entitled to.
- If the motion to take from the table passes the motion that was tabled and any resolutions applied to it is immediately on the floor for consideration in the same order as they were prior to their being laid on the table.
- The motion to take from the table is in order during the meeting in which the resolution was laid on the table and in the succeeding session but no later.
- The wording on the motion is as follows: i.e. “Mr. Chairman, I move the motion that we buy a new Ford tractor be taken from the table.”
- Before beginning class demonstrations, it is excellent practice to ask every individual in the class to rise and phrase a motion to take a previous motion taken from the table. This practice enables everyone to become familiar with the wording and to develop confidence in using the ability.

The following demonstration may clarify how to perform this ability.

TAKE FROM THE TABLE – DEMONSTRATION

1. Receive a motion
The member says, “Mr. President, I move we take from the table the motion that our chapter have an anti-litter sign contest.”
2. Receive a second
Second member says, “Mr. President, I second the motion.”
3. Chair states the motion
“The motion before the chapter is we take from the table the motion that our chapter have an anti-litter sign contest. This motion is not debatable, is not amendable and cannot be reconsidered.”
4. Chair calls for the vote
“We will vote. All in favor of the motion say aye. All who object to the motion say no.”
5. Chair announces the result of the vote
“The motion is carried.”
6. The chair states the motion
“The motion before the chapter is our chapter have an anti- litter sign contest. This motion is not debatable is not amendable and cannot be reconsidered.”
7. The chair calls for discussion
“The motion is open for debate.”
8. After discussion the chair calls for
“Are you ready for the question? If the vote there is no further discussion we will vote.”
9. Chair restates the motion
“The motion before the chapter is that our chapter have an anti-litter sign contest.”
10. Chair puts the vote
“All who favor that motion say aye. All who object to the motion say no.”
11. The chair announces the result
“The motion is carried.”
of the vote

MOTION TO ADJOURN

The purpose of the motion to adjourn is to terminate the meeting.

This is a privileged motion that is first in the order of precedence except for the motion to fix a time to adjourn.

It is not debatable, it is not amendable and it cannot be reconsidered. The member, in order to phrase the motion, must first get recognition from the chair.

Even when the motion to adjourn is carried, the chair should check to see that no important matters have been overlooked before announcing it. The member may withdraw his motion to adjourn so the chair may finish the agenda.

The adjournment typically puts to an end all pending business.

MOTION TO ADJOURN - DEMONSTRATION

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|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Call for further business | Chair says, "What business is to be considered at this time?" |
| 2. Receive a motion | Member stands, gains recognition and says, "Mr. Chairman, I move begin planning our annual banquet." |
| 3. Receive a second | Member remains seated and says, "Second." |
| 4. State the motion | The chairman says, "The motion before the chapter is that we begin planning our annual banquet." |
| 5. Call for discussion | The chair says, "It is now open for debate." |
| 6. Receive a motion to adjourn | Member stands, gets recognition and says, "Mr. Chairman, I move that we adjourn." |
| 7. Receive a second | Member remains seated, raises his hand and says, "Second." |
| 8. State the motion | The chair says, "The motion before the chapter is we adjourn. This is a privileged motion. This motion is not debatable, it is not amendable and it cannot be reconsidered. We will |
| 9. Put the vote on the motion | "All who support the motion say aye. All who object to the motion say no." |
| 10. Announce the result of the vote | The chair says, "The ayes have it. This meeting is adjourned." |

QUICKIE RULES CHART

MOTION	TYPE OF MOTION	REQUIRED SECOND	DEBATABLE	AMENDABLE	REQUIRES MAJORITY VOTE	BE RECONSIDERED	
Main	Main	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Amend	Subsidiary	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not debatable when the motion it amends is not debatable.
Refer or Commit	Subsidiary	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	*	Cannot be reconsidered after the committee has taken up its work. Vote majority may discharge the committee at any time.
Lay on table	Subsidiary	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	
Point of order	Incidental	No	No	No	No	No	
Division	Incidental	No	No	No	No	No	
Appeal	Incidental	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	
Suspend the rules	Incidental	Yes	No	No	*	No	Requires 2/3 vote.
Leave the Chairman's station	No	No	No	No	No	No	
Take from the table	Incidental	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	
Adjourn	Privileged	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	
Postpone definitely	Subsidiary	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Move the previous question	Subsidiary	Yes	No	No	*	Yes	Requires 2/3 vote.
Postpone indefinitely	Subsidiary	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	*	Affirmative vote can be reconsidered.
Object to the consideration of a question	Incidental	No	No	No	Yes	*	Negative vote only.
Withdrawal of a motion	Incidental	No	No	No	Yes	*	Negative vote only.
Rescind	Unclassified	Yes	Yes	Yes	*1	*2	1 Requires 2/3 vote. 2 Negative vote only.
Reconsider	Unclassified	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	If motion to reconsider is debatable or amendable.
Recess	Privileged	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	
Question of privilege	Privileged	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Orders of the day	Privileged	No	No	No	Yes	No	

