

ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER OVERVIEW

The World Service Manual contains a brief summary of parliamentary procedure drawn largely from Robert's Rules of Order (see Appendix H). Below is a brief overview of Robert's Rules and typical Area business meeting practices.

1. How do we keep the business meeting orderly?
 - a. Raise your hand to be recognized.
 - b. Chair keeps a list; once acknowledged by Chair, lower your hand.
 - c. Respect others by listening with an open mind and not talking over each other.
 - d. Understand that some people need more discussion/information than others.
 - e. You never know who might say something that makes all the difference.
2. What happens when a motion is made?
 - a. Maker must be recognized to speak by Chair.
 - b. Motion must be seconded; if not, there is no motion.
 - c. Once motion is seconded, Chair restates it ("A motion has been made and seconded that...").
 - d. Once motion has been made and seconded, it belongs to the body of the business meeting and may not be amended or withdrawn without approval of the body—nor may the Chair close debate at will.
 - e. Once motion is seconded, if it is debatable (see Table of Motions, Appendix G), Chair gives maker first option to speak in favor, then asks if there is any further discussion.
 - f. Begin your debate by saying whether you're in favor or opposed ("I'm in favor of/opposed to this motion because").
 - g. Each person wishing to speak should have the opportunity to do so before anyone speaks twice (which is why Chair should keep a list).
3. Friendly amendments:
 - a. Offered instead of debate.
 - b. If maker of motion accepts, Chair asks if there is any objection from the floor.
 - c. If there is no objection, motion is amended.
 - d. If there is an objection, motion stands as originally made.
 - e. If person offering friendly amendment feels strongly enough, they may make a motion to amend.
4. What about calling for the vote?
 - a. This is a motion to close debate (essentially, a vote on whether to vote).
 - b. Requires a second, is not debatable, and requires 2/3 majority to pass.
 - c. Chair should rule out of order if no one else on list to debate (to save time).
 - d. First vote on motion to close debate; if it passes, then vote on main motion.
5. The voting process:
 - a. Motion should be restated by Chair (or Secretary, at Chair's request) immediately prior to vote.

- b. Chair asks for those in favor to raise their hands, then those opposed.
- c. Threshold for approval (whether 2/3 or majority) is based on votes cast, not votes in the room.
- d. Standard procedure does not require asking for abstentions.

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- 6. What about the minority opinion (5th Concept)?
 - a. If someone who did not vote w/the prevailing side feels strongly about the motion, they may ask to state a minority opinion (or 5th Concept statement).
 - b. Chair does not need to stop and ask for minority opinions every time, but needs to respect a member’s desire to make one.
 - c. Should not be abused.
- 7. Types of motions (see Table of Motions, Appendix G):
 - a. To suspend the rules (such as to entertain a motion to extend the time)—not debatable; if seconded, vote immediately; if it passes, then main motion is made.
 - b. To reconsider—must be made and seconded by members voting with prevailing side; debate is limited to why motion should be reconsidered, not the underlying motion itself; simple majority to pass.
 - c. To rescind—must be used if motion passed during a previous day or if maker did not vote with prevailing side; debate can go into merits of underlying motion; requires 2/3 majority (if at least 1 day’s notice is given, simple majority).
 - d. To table—not debatable; simple majority to pass.
- 8. When may I speak without being recognized by the Chair? (see Table of Motions, Appendix G)
 - a. Point of order.
 - b. Parliamentary inquiry.
 - c. Objection to consideration.
 - d. Challenge the Chair.
 - e. Motion to reconsider.

TABLE OF MOTIONS

Motions (In Order by Precedence)	Require s a Second?	Does Mover Need to be Recognized?	Is Motion Debatable?	Voting % Requir ed to Pass	NOTES/applies to motions:
To Adjourn (Close Meeting) or Recess	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	None

Point of Order or Parliamentary Inquiry	No	No	No	—	Any motion, act, or decision
To Appeal from a Decision (Challenge the Chair)	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	Any decision by Chair (or Parliamentarian)
To Suspend the Rules	Yes	Yes	No	2/3	Must qualify by stating why rules should be suspended; simple suspension (to consider a motion out of its order on the agenda) requires majority only
To Withdraw a Motion	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	Any motion
To Object to Consideration (RARE)	No	No	No	2/3	Main motion
To Table	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	Main motion, appeals, reconsideration
To Close Debate (Call for the Vote) or Limit Debate	Yes	Yes	No	2/3	Any debatable Motion
To Refer to Committee	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Main motion
To Amend (generally offer friendly amendment 1st; move to amend if rejection/objection)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Main motion, limit debate, refer
MAIN MOTION	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	No other motions
To Reconsider (previous vote or motion – including motions which failed)	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	Any except adjourn, table, suspend rules. Must be made and seconded same day by members who voted with prevailing side. Debate limited to why motion should be reconsidered, not underlying motion itself.
To Rescind (previously passed motions)	Yes	Yes	Yes	2/3**	Must be used if motion passed during a previous day or if maker did not vote w/prevailing side. **If at least 1 day's notice is given, only a simple majority is required.