

ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

BASIC MOTIONS / MEETING ETIQUETTE

Basic Meeting Etiquette:

- Obtain the floor (the right to speak) by being the first to raise your hand when the person speaking has finished. Must be recognized by the chair before speaking.
- Debate cannot begin until the Chair has stated the motion or resolution. If there is no debate, then the Chair calls the question. (Asking for a vote)
- Before the motion is stated by the Chair (the question) members may suggest modification of the motion; the mover can modify as he pleases, or even withdraw the motion without consent of the seconder; if mover modifies, the seconder can withdraw the second.
- The “immediately pending question” is the last question stated by the Chair – Motion/Resolution – Amendment – Motion to Postpone
- The member moving the “immediately pending question” is entitled to preference to the floor.
- No member can speak twice to the same issue until everyone else wishing to speak has spoken to it once.
- All remarks must be directed to the Chair. Remarks must be courteous in language and deportment – avoid all personalities, never allude to others by name or to motives.
- The agenda and all committee reports are merely recommendations. When presented to the assembly and the question is stated, debate begins and changes occur.
- Please keep in mind we are all guided by the Traditions and the Concepts.

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Basic Motions:

- 1. Point of Privilege:** Pertains to noise, personal comfort, etc. – may interrupt only if necessary.
- 2. Parliamentary Inquiry:** Inquires as to the correct motion – to accomplish a desired result, or raise a point of order.
- 3. Point of Information:** Generally applies to a question to the contents of the motion, not a statement or rhetorical statement about the motion.
- 4. Orders of the Day (Agenda):** A call to adhere to the agenda (a deviation from the agenda requires Suspending the Rules).
- 5. Point of Order:** Infraction of the rules, or improper decorum in speaking. Must be raised immediately after the error is made.
- 6. Main Motion:** Brings new business (the next item on the agenda) before the assembly.
- 7. Divide the Question:** Divides a motion into two or more separate motions (must be able to stand on their own).
- 8. Consider by Paragraph:** Adoption of paper is held until all paragraphs/parts are debated and amended and entire paper is satisfactory; after all paragraphs/parts are considered, the entire paper is then open to amendment, and paragraphs/parts may be further amended.
- 9. Amend:** Inserting or striking out words or paragraphs, or substituting whole paragraphs or resolutions.
- 10. Withdraw/Modify Motion:** Applies only after question is stated; mover can accept an amendment without obtaining the floor.
- 11. Commit/Refer/Recommit to Committee:** State the committee to receive the question or resolution; if no committee exists include size of committee desired and method of selecting the members (election or appointment).
- 12. Extend Debate:** Applies only to the immediately pending question; extends until a certain time or for a certain period of time.

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Basic Motions Continued:

- 13. Limit Debate:** Closing debate at a certain time, or limiting to a certain period of time.
- 14. Postpone to a Certain Time:** State the time the motion or agenda item will be resumed.
- 15. Object to Consideration:** Objection must be stated before discussion or another motion is stated.
- 16. Lay on the Table:** Temporarily suspends further consideration/action on pending question; may be made after motion to close debate has carried or is pending.
- 17. Take from the Table:** Resumes consideration of item previously "laid on the table" – state the motion to take from the table.
- 18. Reconsider:** Can be made only by one on the prevailing side who has changed position or view.
- 19. Previous Question:** Closes debate if successful – may be moved to "Close Debate" if preferred.
- 20. Appeal Decision of the Chair:** Appeal for the assembly to decide – must be made before other business is resumed; NOT debatable if relates to decorum, violation of rules or order of business.
- 21. Suspend the Rules:** Allows a violation of the assembly's own rules (except Constitution); the object of the suspension must be specified.

