

## Rubrics for the Handling of Motions

The following is a set of rubrics for the necessary steps to follow to properly execute a motion. The format of this document includes the name of the motion, the classification of the motion, the purpose of the motion, the steps that should be followed to properly handle the motion and examples where necessary. Examples given, however, are merely examples and are not the exclusive ways that must be used.

**There are general practices that should be followed when introducing business or conducting motions. This is a general outline of those rules. Not all motions require debate, are amendable, etceteras and so this is not absolute. Refer to the rubrics of the specific motions for clarifications.**

Steps to be followed:

1. No other motion may be pending to introduce a main motion.
2. Member is recognized by the Chair.
3. Member states motion, starting with “I move...”, “I rise....”, or “I call ...”  
Motion should be succinct, and not negative in nature
4. Another member seconds the motion when required, recognition is not necessary
5. After the motion has been properly stated and seconded (if required), the chair states the motion to the assembly
6. The motion is now considered “pending” and the chair will ask for debate (if allowed).
7. Providing the motion is debatable, the maker of the motion is entitled to debate first. Each member may debate the particular motion only twice, for ten minutes.
8. Members must be recognized to be entitled to debate (they must obtain the floor)
9. The chair will ask for any further debate, if none will proceed to a voice vote if allowed (only majority votes not requiring an accurate count are subject to voice vote). The chair will first ask for the affirmative vote, then the negative vote.
10. The chair announces the outcome of the vote, if the motion is adopted or lost, the effect of the vote and the next action of the assembly.  
If the main motion receives a tie vote, it is lost.  
If a rising, counted vote is taken, the chair must state the count before announcing the prevailing side, and the count should be entered in the minutes.

The official text and final authority for this contest will be the latest edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised* (as of July 2001, the 10<sup>th</sup> Edition).

<p><b>Main Motion</b>  Classification: Main  Rank : 1, lowest in precedence  Purpose: To bring business before the assembly.  Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Floor must be open, no other pending items.</li> <li>2. Member obtains the floor.</li> <li>3. Member states motion, starting with "I move.."</li> <li>4. Second required by any other member</li> <li>5. Chair states the question</li> <li>6. The motion is now considered "Pending" and is now formally open for consideration.</li> <li>7. Motion on floor for consideration.</li> <li>8. Requires a simple majority vote.</li> </ol> <p>8. A main motion may be reconsidered</p>	<p><b>Postpone Indefinitely</b>  Classification: Subsidiary  Rank: 2, lowest ranking subsidiary motion.  Purpose: To drop a main motion without a direct vote on it. To kill a motion.  Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Main motion only must be pending</li> <li>2. Member obtains the floor.</li> <li>3. Member states motion to Postpone indefinitely.  Example; " I move to postpone this motion indefinitely."</li> <li>4. Motion must be seconded by any other member.</li> <li>5. Chair states the question. Example, "It has been moved and seconded that the motion to _____ be postponed indefinitely."</li> <li>6. Motion on the floor for consideration.</li> <li>7. Requires a simple majority vote.</li> <li>8. After an affirmative vote, the floor is open to any new business.</li> <li>9. In the case of a negative vote, the floor is again open to debate of the original main motion.</li> <li>10. Only the affirmative vote may be reconsidered</li> </ol>	<p><b>Amend</b>  Classification: Subsidiary  Rank: 3  Purpose: To modify the wording of a pending main motion before the pending motion itself is acted upon.  Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Motion to be amended must be pending.</li> <li>2. Member obtains the floor.</li> <li>3. Member states the motion to amend.  Motions may be amended in the following ways: Adding, striking out and inserting (substituting), striking out, or inserting and must be germane.</li> <li>4. Motion must be seconded by any other member.</li> <li>5. Chair states the pending question.</li> <li>6. Motion to amend on the floor for consideration.</li> <li>7. Amendment of the first order may be amended further to the second order, but no further.</li> <li>8. Affirmative vote(s) on the amendments proceed to further consideration on the original main motion, as amended.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Refer to a Committee, or Commit</b>  Classification: Subsidiary  Rank: 4  Purpose: To send a pending motion to a committee so that it may be investigated and put in better condition for the assembly to consider at a later time.  Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Motion to be committed must be pending.</li> <li>2. Member obtains the floor.</li> <li>3. Members states Motion to commit. Motion should include type of committee (standing or special), number in the committee (odd number preferred), and powers given (full power to act, or to merely report).</li> <li>4. Chair states motion to commit as introduced.</li> <li>5. Assembly considers motion.</li> <li>6. Requires a simple majority vote.</li> <li>7. Affirmative vote requires chair carry out any requirements of the motion, such as naming the committee members, their chair, and powers.</li> <li>8. In the case of a negative vote, the original motion is again open for consideration.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Postpone Definitely</b>  Classification: Subsidiary  Rank: 5  Purpose: To put off action on a pending motion to definite time or after a specific event.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Motion to be postponed definitely must be pending.</li> <li>2. Member obtains the floor.</li> <li>3. Member states motion. Example: "I move that the motion be postponed to the next meeting."  Motion may not be postponed beyond the next regular meeting.</li> <li>4. Any member may second the motion.</li> <li>5. The chair states the question.</li> <li>6. Motion is open for debate, debate <u>may not</u> pertain to the original main motion.</li> <li>7. A majority vote is required for adoption.</li> <li>8. In the case of the affirmative vote the chair announces to what time the question is postponed and then opens the floor to new business.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Limit or Extend Debate</b>  Classification: Subsidiary  Rank: 6  Purpose: To lengthen or shorten the time to debate or change the number of debates normally allowed.  Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A debatable motion must be pending.</li> <li>2. Member obtains the floor.</li> <li>3. Member states the motion to limit or extend debate. The motion may (a) limit the number or length of debates, or (b) require at a certain time, or after a specific amount of time, debate will be closed.</li> <li>4. Any member may second the motion.</li> <li>5. The chair states the motion.</li> <li>6. The assembly may not debate the motion.</li> <li>7. The chair must take a 2/3 rising vote since this infringes on the rights of speaking.</li> <li>8. If the vote is counted, the chair must state the count before announcing the prevailing side.</li> <li>9. This motion may not be used to immediately stop debate.</li> </ol>

<p><b>Previous Question</b>  Classification: Subsidiary  Rank: 7  Purpose: To immediately close debate and the making of subsidiary motions except the motion to Lay on the Table.  Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The pending question(s) on which debate is to be closed is on the floor.</li> <li>2. Member obtains the floor. Recognition is required.</li> <li>3. Member states the motion. They must state on which pending question(s) they are ordering the Question.</li> <li>4. Seconded by any member.</li> <li>5. Chair states the question.</li> <li>6. There is no debate by the assembly.</li> <li>7. The motion may not be amended.</li> <li>8. Requires a 2/3 rising vote since it infringes on the rights of speaking.</li> <li>9. An affirmative 2/3 rising vote orders the immediate vote of the pending question or questions.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Lay on the Table</b>  Classification: Subsidiary  Rank: 8, the highest subsidiary motion.  Purpose: To interrupt the pending business so as to permit doing something else immediately, or, to lay the pending question aside temporarily when something else of immediate urgency has arisen.  Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Motion to be tabled must be on the floor.</li> <li>2. Member obtains the floor.</li> <li>3. Member states the motion to lay on the table. The reason for laying on the table may be stated in the motion but is not required.</li> <li>4. Any other member may second the motion</li> <li>5. The Chair states the question.</li> <li>6. The assembly may not debate the motion.</li> <li>7. Requires a simple majority vote.</li> <li>8. The chair states the outcome of the vote. An affirmative vote tables the motion and opens the floor to new business of an urgent nature.</li> <li>9. A negative vote returns the assembly to consideration of the original motion.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Adjourn</b>  Classification: Privileged  Rank: 9, the highest ranked motion in this contest.  Purpose: To end, or close, the meeting.  Steps:</p> <p>If a main motion is pending and/or a member wishes to close the meeting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Any motion may be on the floor.</li> <li>2. Member obtains the floor.</li> <li>3. Members moves to adjourn the meeting.</li> <li>4. Any member may second the motion</li> <li>5. Chair states the question.</li> <li>6. The assembly may not debate the motion.</li> <li>7. Requires a simple majority vote.</li> <li>8. The Chair states the outcome of the vote. An affirmative vote closes the meeting.</li> </ol> <p>If the order of business is completed and the Chair wants to adjourn the meeting.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Chair states: “ Is there any further business?” (pause for response) “Since there is no further business, the meeting is adjourned.”</li> </ol> <p>(These steps refer to the unqualified motion to adjourn, which is privileged. The Qualified motion to adjourn is merely a main motion, ranking lowest in precedence.)</p>
<p><b>Suspend the Rules</b>  Classification: Incidental  Rank: none  Purpose: To suspend one or more rules contained in the parliamentary authority, the special rules of order, or the standing rules of the assembly.  Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Can be done when the floor is open without pending business, or during business that it pertains to.</li> <li>2. Member obtains the floor</li> <li>3. Members states the motion to suspend including the items to be suspended.</li> <li>4. Any member may second the motion to suspend.</li> <li>5. The Chair states the motion</li> <li>6. The assembly may not debate the motion.</li> <li>7. A 2/3 vote is required. A majority vote may be used to suspend an ordinary standing rule provided it is not in the by-laws, constitution, or fundamental principal of parliamentary procedure.</li> <li>8. An affirmative vote suspends the rule for that specific meeting.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Withdraw a Motion</b>  Classification: Incidental  Rank: none  Purpose: To withdraw a motion before it is voted on.  Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A motion is pending</li> <li>2. The maker of the motion may interrupt the others to move to withdraw their motion.</li> <li>3. If the withdraw happens before debate, the maker states “Mr./Madam Chairman, I withdraw my motion.”  The chair responds, “The motion has been withdrawn.” And the floor is again open for new business.</li> <li>4. If the withdraw happens after debate has begun, the maker of the motion states “Mr./Madam Chairman, I ask permission to withdraw my motion.”</li> <li>5. The Chair asks for any objections to the withdraw, if there are none the motion is withdrawn.</li> <li>6. If there is objection to the withdraw, the chair asks for a vote. “All those in favor of withdrawing the motion to _____, say ‘Aye’”.</li> <li>7. The votes either sustain or defeat the withdraw.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Object to the Consideration of a Question.</b>  Classification: Incidental  Rank: none  Purpose: To allow the assembly to altogether avoid the consideration of an original main motion.  Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. An original main motion must be pending.</li> <li>2. No debate or subsidiary motion may have occurred.</li> <li>3. A member may be interrupted provided they have not yet started to debate.</li> <li>4. The objecting member states to the chair that they object to the consideration of the motion.</li> <li>5. No second is required.</li> <li>6. No debate is allowed</li> <li>7. The Chair asks the assembly to vote on considering the question by a 2/3 vote.</li> <li>8. If the result is affirmative, the question <u>will</u> be considered.</li> <li>9. If the result is negative, the question <u>will not</u> be considered and the floor will be opened to a new item.</li> </ol>

<p><b>Point of Order</b>  Classification: Incidental  Rank: none  Purpose: To enforce the rules by calling upon the chair for a ruling and enforcement of the regular rules.  Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A motion is pending.</li> <li>2. A violation of the rules occurs.</li> <li>3. A member rises, without recognition and calls for a point of order, "I rise to a point of order."</li> <li>4. The chair responds, "State your point of order."</li> <li>5. The member makes a statement indicating the rule that was violated. The statement should be limited to the statement of the rule or mistake in procedure without referring to an individual or suggesting the solution.</li> <li>6. The Chair responds either favorably, "Your point is well taken", and corrects the problem, or,</li> <li>7. The Chair responds unfavorably, "Your point is not well taken", and justifies the action.</li> <li>8. If the member disagrees with the Chair's decision, they may call for an Appeal.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Parliamentary Inquiry</b>  Classification: Incidental  Rank: none  Purpose: To obtain information about parliamentary law or the rules of the organization bearing on the question at hand.  Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A motion of business is usually pending but not necessary.</li> <li>2. A member rises without recognition.</li> <li>3. A member may interrupt the speaker.</li> <li>4. The member states their inquiry to the Chair. The inquiry must be related to parliamentary law on the pending business or the rules of the chapter.</li> <li>5. Requires no vote by the assembly.</li> <li>6. The Chair answers the inquiry.</li> <li>7. Business resumes from the point of interruption by the inquiry.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Appeal from the Decision of the Chair</b>  Classification: Incidental  Rank: none  Purpose: To ask the assembly to decide on a ruling by the chairman.  Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A ruling has been made by the chair and a member questions the results.</li> <li>2. The questioning member, without recognition, rises and appeals the decision. "I appeal the decision from the chair."</li> <li>3. Any other member may second the motion</li> <li>4. The chair states the issue, explains the decision if necessary, and states the question on the appeal. "Shall the decision of the chair be sustained?" or "Shall the decision of the chair stand as the judgment of the assembly?"</li> <li>5. The affirmative vote is in favor of the chair's decision. A majority/tie vote sustains the chair's decision, <u>not</u> the appeal.</li> <li>6. No votes reverse the chairs decision and action is then taken accordingly.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Division of the Assembly</b>  Classification: Incidental  Rank: None  Purpose: To take a standing vote either because the result appears close or because a member doubted that a representative number of the members present have voted.  Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A vote by voice or show of hands has been taken.</li> <li>2. A member questioning the vote may call division any time from the negative vote up until the chair states the question or another motion.</li> <li>3. The member rises without recognition, even if another member is speaking and calls for a division of the assembly. "I call for division." Or "Division".</li> <li>4. No vote is required, it is not debatable.</li> <li>5. The chair restates the question and calls for a rising or counted vote.</li> <li>6. Members should be asked to stand, not raise hands, or any other definitely countable type of vote.</li> <li>7. The chair will count the affirmative and negative votes is a rising, counted vote was called for and will announce the results and then the prevailing side.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Reconsider</b>  Classification: Unclassified, or Motions that again bring a question before the assembly.  Rank: None.  Purpose: To bring back a motion that has been voted on in order to permit the correction of hasty, ill-advised or erroneous action. Also to take into account added information or a changed situation since taking the vote.  Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Any member on the prevailing side of the motion to be reconsidered rises, without interrupting a speaker, to move to reconsider. "I move to reconsider the motion..."</li> <li>2. May only reconsider motions from current session.</li> <li>3. The motion must be seconded by any member.</li> <li>4. The chair states the motion.</li> <li>5. Debatable only when the motion to be reconsidered was debatable.</li> <li>6. The chair puts the question.</li> <li>7. An affirmative decision places the reconsidered motion on the floor for consideration and action.</li> <li>8. A negative decision does not allow consideration of the reconsidered motion and the floor is again opened for further business.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Rescind</b>  Classification: Unclassified, or Motions that again bring a question before the assembly.  Rank: None, however no other business may be pending.  Purpose: To change an action previously taken or ordered.  Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Any member that wishes to rescind a previous action obtains the floor when no other motion is pending.</li> <li>2. The member moves to rescind the previous action. "I move to rescind the motion..."</li> <li>3. The motion must be seconded by any other member.</li> <li>4. The chair states the motion to rescind.</li> <li>5. Members may debate the motion to rescind as well as the motion proposed to be rescinded.</li> <li>6. If previous notice was given at the previous meeting, mail, or in the call (notice) of the meeting a simple majority vote may be used.</li> <li>7. If no previous notice was given, a 2/3 vote is required.</li> <li>8. Rescind and Expunge from the minutes may only be done by a majority of the entire membership of the organization, not merely by the majority of the quorum present.</li> </ol>

### **Take from the Table**

Classification: Unclassified, or Motions that Again bring a Question before the Assembly.

Rank: None, however, no other business may be pending.

Purpose: To make pending again a motion or series of adhering motions that had previously been laid on the table.

Steps:

1. Floor must be open, no other pending items.
2. Member obtains the floor and moves to take from the table. "I move to take from the table the motion..."
3. Motion must be seconded by any other member.
4. No debate is allowed on the motion.
5. The chair states the motion.
6. A simple majority vote may be taken.
7. The affirmative vote brings the motion back onto the floor for further consideration and action.

A question that has been laid on the table remains there and can be taken from the table during the same session, or, if the next regular business meeting will be held before a quarterly interval has elapsed, also at the next session after it was tabled. If not taken from the table within these limits, the question dies, although it may be reintroduced later as new business.