

HOW TO USE MOTIONS

Parliamentary motions have become accepted and are used because they meet a need. They help members of groups to transact business cooperatively in meetings.

COMMON PROCEDURE

Usually an item of new business is presented for action in a meeting with a main motion as follows:

1. Member addresses the chair (when no one else has the floor) saying, “Mr./Madam Chairperson.”
2. Chairperson recognizes the speaker.
3. Speaker then presents his/her motion stating, “I move that_____.”
4. Motion is seconded by another member (until it receives a second it is not open for discussion.)
5. Motion may be discussed and amended.
6. Motion is passed or defeated by a majority of vote.

OTHER MOTIONS

Often a special kind of motion is needed for a particular purpose. Accepted references such as Robert’s Rules of Order classify these and state certain distinctive characteristics of each. These make it easier for complicated business to be conducted efficiently. They are classified below.

Users of this guide are urged to do three things:

1. Note the following letters designating “characteristics”.

A.	May not be amended	S.	Does not require a second
C.	Permitted by unanimous consent (<i>w/o vote</i>)	T.	Requires a two-thirds vote
I.	May interrupt speaker	U.	Is undebatable (<i>must be voted on immediately</i>)
P.	Is ruled upon by presiding officer without vote	V.	Vote taken if chair desires it
R.	Cannot be reconsidered	(?)	Privileges vary with the situation

2. Choose from the thirty-one kinds of motions listed below the one best suited to their purpose.
3. Observe the “characteristics” and the “rank” of the motion used. (A motion having a higher number is out of order when one of a lower number is pending. X indicates that it is in order at any time if situation demands it.)

MOTIONS FOR DIFFERENT NEEDS

Rank Characteristics

To Introduce New Business, Use:

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| 1. A main motion (when no motion is pending) | 14 | See "Common Procedure" |
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To Modify the Motion, Move:

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|---|----|---------------------|
| 2. To amend (striking out, adding or substituting) | 12 | Same as main motion |
| 3. To substitute a motion (of same general meaning) | 12 | |
| 4. To consider seriatim (step by step) | 11 | A-U |
| 5. To divide the question (making two or more) | 11 | A-R-U |
| 6. To modify the motion (by member making motion) | 12 | A-C-S-U |
| 7. To withdraw the motion (by member making motion) | 12 | A-C-S-U |

To Suppress the Motion, Move:

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| 8. To object to consideration (when discussion undesirable) | X | A-I-S-T-U |
| 9. To postpone indefinitely (killing the motion) | 13 | A |

To Postpone Action, Move:

- | | | |
|---|----|-------|
| 10. To postpone to stated time (then considered as unfinished business) | 9 | |
| 11. To lay on the table (until called up by vote) | 6 | A-R-U |
| 12. To refer to a committee (considered when committee reports) | 10 | |
| 13. To make a special order (stating definite postponed time) | 9 | T-U |

To Limit Debate, Move:

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|---|---|-------|
| 14. The previous question (forces vote on pending motion) | 7 | A-T-U |
| 15. To limit debate (specifying time) | 8 | T-U |

To Bring Up a Postponed Motion, Move:

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|--|----|-------------|
| 16. To call for orders of day (considering planned agenda) | 5 | A-I-P-R-S-U |
| 17. To take from the table (renews tabled motion) | 14 | A-R-U |

To Consider a Question a Second Time, Move:

- | | | |
|---|---|-------------|
| 18. To reconsider (by one who voted with prevailing side) | X | A-I-R-U-(?) |
| 19. To rescind (cannot undo partially executed contracts) | X | T-(?) |

To Make a Request During Debate, Rise to:

- | | | |
|---|---|-------------|
| 20. A point of privilege (to secure convenience, etc.) | 4 | A-C-I-R-S-U |
| 21. A parliamentary inquiry (to determine status) | X | A-I-P-R-S-U |
| 22. A point of information (to ask chairperson for information) | X | A-I-P-S-U |
| 23. Ask the speaker a question (to clarify facts) | X | A-I-P-S-U |

	<i>Rank</i>	<i>Characteristics</i>
To Correct a Parliamentary Error, Rise to:		
24. A point of order (to insist on adherence to rules, etc.)	X	A-R-S-U-V
To Correct or Reverse Chairperson:		
25. Call for a division of house (to check vote)	X	A-I-R-S-U-V
26. Appeal from decision of chair (to approve or disapprove ruling)	X	A-I-S-U
To Take Action Violating Standing Rules, Move:		
27. To suspend the rules (constitution excepted)		A-R-T-U
28. To take up question out of proper order		A-R-T-U
To Arrange for Next Meeting, Move:		
29. To fix the time at which to adjourn	1	U
To Dismiss the Meeting, Move:		
30. To adjourn (loses privilege if follow-up lacking)	2	A-R-U
31. To take a recess (for specified length of time)	3	R-U