

## ROBERTS RULES CHEAT SHEET

| To:  | You say:                                   | Interrupt Speaker | Second Needed | Debatable | Amendable | Vote Needed   |
|--|--|-------------------|---------------|-----------|-----------|---------------|
| Adjourn                                    | "I move that we adjourn"                   | No                | Yes           | No        | No        | Majority      |
| Recess                                     | "I move that we recess until..."           | No                | Yes           | No        | Yes       | Majority      |
| Complain about noise, room temp., etc.     | "Point of privilege"                       | Yes               | No            | No        | No        | Chair Decides |
| Suspend further consideration of something | "I move that we table it"                  | No                | Yes           | No        | No        | Majority      |
| End debate                                 | "I move the previous question"             | No                | Yes           | No        | No        | 2/3           |
| Postpone consideration of something        | "I move we postpone this matter until..."  | No                | Yes           | Yes       | Yes       | Majority      |
| Amend a motion                             | "I move that this motion be amended by..." | No                | Yes           | Yes       | Yes       | Majority      |
| Introduce business (a primary motion)      | "I move that..."                           | No                | Yes           | Yes       | Yes       | Majority      |

The above listed motions and points are listed in established order of precedence. When any one of them is pending, you may not introduce another that is listed below, but you may introduce another that is listed above it.

| To:  | You say:  | Interrupt Speaker              | Second Needed | Debatable                             | Amendable | Vote Needed                 |
|--|---|--------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------|
| Object to procedure or personal affront                    | "Point of order"  | Yes                            | No            | No                                    | No        | Chair decides               |
| Request information  | "Point of information"  | Yes                            | No            | No                                    | No        | None                        |
| Ask for vote by actual count to verify voice vote          | "I call for a division of the house"                            | Must be done before new motion | No            | No                                    | No        | None unless someone objects |
| Object to considering some undiplomatic or improper matter | "I object to consideration of this question"                    | Yes                            | No            | No                                    | No        | 2/3                         |
| Take up matter previously tabled                           | "I move we take from the table..."                              | Yes                            | Yes           | No                                    | No        | Majority                    |
| Reconsider something already disposed of                   | "I move we now (or later) reconsider our action relative to..." | Yes                            | Yes           | Only if original motion was debatable | No        | Majority                    |
| Consider something out of its scheduled order              | "I move we suspend the rules and consider..."                   | No                             | Yes           | No                                    | No        | 2/3                         |
| Vote on a ruling by the Chair                              | "I appeal the Chair's decision"                                 | Yes                            | Yes           | Yes                                   | No        | Majority                    |

The motions, points and proposals listed above have no established order of preference; any of them may be introduced at any time except when meeting is considering one of the top three matters listed from the first chart (Motion to Adjourn, Recess or Point of Privilege).

## PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING A MAIN MOTION

**NOTE:** Nothing goes to discussion without a motion being on the floor.

### Obtaining and assigning the floor

A member raises hand when no one else has the floor

- The chair recognizes the member by name

### How the Motion is Brought Before the Assembly

- The member makes the motion: *I move that (or "to") ...* and resumes his seat.
- Another member seconds the motion: *I second the motion* or *I second it* or *second*.
- The chair states the motion: *It is moved and seconded that ... Are you ready for the question?*

### Consideration of the Motion

1. Members can debate the motion.
2. Before speaking in debate, members obtain the floor.
3. The maker of the motion has first right to the floor if he claims it properly
4. Debate must be confined to the merits of the motion.
5. Debate can be closed only by order of the assembly (2/3 vote) or by the chair if no one seeks the floor for further debate.

### The chair puts the motion to a vote

1. The chair asks: *Are you ready for the question?* If no one rises to claim the floor, the chair proceeds to take the vote.
2. The chair says: *The question is on the adoption of the motion that ... As many as are in favor, say 'Aye'. (Pause for response.) Those opposed, say 'Nay'. (Pause for response.) Those abstained please say 'Aye'.*

### The chair announces the result of the vote.

1. *The ayes have it, the motion carries, and ...* (indicating the effect of the vote) or
2. *The nays have it and the motion fails*

### WHEN DEBATING YOUR MOTIONS

1. Listen to the other side
2. Focus on issues, not personalities
3. Avoid questioning motives
4. Be polite

# HOW TO ACCOMPLISH WHAT YOU WANT TO DO IN MEETINGS

## MAIN MOTION

You want to propose a new idea or action for the group.

- After recognition, make a main motion.
- Member: "Madame Chairman, I move that \_\_\_\_\_."

## AMENDING A MOTION

You want to change some of the wording that is being discussed.

- After recognition, "Madame Chairman, I move that the motion be amended by adding the following words \_\_\_\_\_."
- After recognition, "Madame Chairman, I move that the motion be amended by striking out the following words \_\_\_\_\_."
- After recognition, "Madame Chairman, I move that the motion be amended by striking out the following words, \_\_\_\_\_, and adding in their place the following words \_\_\_\_\_."

## REFER TO A COMMITTEE

You feel that an idea or proposal being discussed needs more study and investigation.

- After recognition, "Madame Chairman, I move that the question be referred to a committee made up of members Smith, Jones and Brown."

## POSTPONE DEFINITELY

You want the membership to have more time to consider the question under discussion and you want to postpone it to a definite time or day, and have it come up for further consideration.

- After recognition, "Madame Chairman, I move to postpone the question until \_\_\_\_\_."

## PREVIOUS QUESTION

You think discussion has gone on for too long and you want to stop discussion and vote.

- After recognition, "Madam President, I move the previous question."

## LIMIT DEBATE

You think discussion is getting long, but you want to give a reasonable length of time for consideration of the question.

- After recognition, "Madam President, I move to limit discussion to two minutes per speaker."

## **POSTPONE INDEFINITELY**

You want to kill a motion that is being discussed.

- After recognition, "Madam Moderator, I move to postpone the question indefinitely."

## **POSTPONE INDEFINITELY**

You are against a motion just proposed and want to learn who is for and who is against the motion.

- After recognition, "Madame President, I move to postpone the motion indefinitely."

## **RECESS**

You want to take a break for a while.

- After recognition, "Madame Moderator, I move to recess for ten minutes."

## **ADJOURNMENT**

You want the meeting to end.

- After recognition, "Madame Chairman, I move to adjourn."

## **PERMISSION TO WITHDRAW A MOTION**

You have made a motion and after discussion, are sorry you made it.

- After recognition, "Madam President, I ask permission to withdraw my motion."

## **CALL FOR ORDERS OF THE DAY**

At the beginning of the meeting, the agenda was adopted. The chairman is not following the order of the approved agenda.

- Without recognition, "Call for orders of the day."

## **SUSPENDING THE RULES**

The agenda has been approved and as the meeting progressed, it became obvious that an item you are interested in will not come up before adjournment.

- After recognition, "Madam Chairman, I move to suspend the rules and move item 5 to position 2."

## **POINT OF PERSONAL PRIVILEGE**

The noise outside the meeting has become so great that you are having trouble hearing.

- Without recognition, "Point of personal privilege."
- Chairman: "State your point."
- Member: "There is too much noise, I can't hear."

## COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

You are going to propose a question that is likely to be controversial and you feel that some of the members will try to kill it by various maneuvers. Also you want to keep out visitors and the press.

- After recognition, "Madame Chairman, I move that we go into a committee of the whole."

## POINT OF ORDER

It is obvious that the meeting is not following proper rules.

- Without recognition, "I rise to a point of order," or "Point of order."

## POINT OF INFORMATION

You are wondering about some of the facts under discussion, such as the balance in the treasury when expenditures are being discussed.

- Without recognition, "Point of information."

## POINT OF PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

You are confused about some of the parliamentary rules.

- Without recognition, "Point of parliamentary inquiry."

## APPEAL FROM THE DECISION OF THE CHAIR

Without recognition, "I appeal from the decision of the chair."

### Rule Classification and Requirements

| Class of Rule                   | Requirements to Adopt   | Requirements to Suspend  |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| Charter                         | Adopted by majority vote or as proved by law or governing authority | Cannot be suspended  |
| Bylaws                          | Adopted by membership   | Cannot be suspended  |
| Special Rules of Order          | Previous notice & 2/3 vote, or a majority of entire membership      | 2/3 Vote   |
| Standing Rules                  | Majority vote   | Can be suspended for session by majority vote during a meeting |
| Modified Roberts Rules of Order | Adopted in bylaws   | 2/3 vote   |