

# Simplified Roberts Rules of Order

## Main ideas:

- Everyone has the right to speak once if they wish, before anyone may speak a second time.
- Everyone has the right to know what is going on at all times.
- Only urgent matters may interrupt a speaker.
- The [members] discuss only one thing at a time.

## How to do things:

- 1. You want to bring up a new idea before the group.** After recognition by the [president], present your motion. A second is required for the motion to go to the floor for debate, or consideration.
- 2. You want a motion just introduced by another person to be killed.** Without recognition from the [president] simply state "I object to consideration." This must be done before any debate. This motion requires no second, is not debatable and requires a 2/3 vote.
- 3. You want to change some of the wording in a motion under debate.**  
After recognition by the [president], move to amend by
  - adding words,
  - striking words or
  - striking and inserting words.
- 4. You like the idea of a motion under debate, but you need to reword it beyond simple word changes.** Move to substitute your motion for the original motion. If it is seconded, debate will continue on both motions and eventually the body will vote on which motion they prefer.
- 5. You want more study and/or investigation given to the idea under debate.** Move to refer to a committee. Try to be specific as to the charge to the committee.
- 6. You want more time personally to study the proposal under debate.** Move to postpone to a definite time or date.
- 7. You are tired of the current debate.** Move to limit debate to a set period of time or to a set number of speakers. Requires a 2/3 vote.
- 8. You have heard enough debate.** Move to close the debate. Requires a 2/3 vote. Or move to previous question. This cuts off debate and brings the assembly to a vote on the pending question only. Requires a 2/3 vote.
- 9. You want to postpone a motion until some later time.** Move to table the motion. The motion may be taken from the table after 1 item of business has been conducted. If the motion is not taken from the table by the end of the next meeting, it is dead. To kill a motion at the time it is tabled requires a 2/3 vote. A majority is required to table a motion without killing it.
- 10. You want to take a short break.** Move to recess for a set period of time.
- 11. You want to end the meeting.** Move to adjourn.
- 12. You are unsure that the [president] has announced the results of a vote correctly.** Without being recognized, call for a "division of the house." At this point a standing vote will be taken.
- 13. You are confused about a procedure being used and want clarification.** Without recognition, call for "Point of Information" or "Point of Parliamentary Inquiry." The [president] will ask you to state your question and will attempt to clarify the situation.
- 14. You have changed your mind about something that was voted on earlier in the meeting for which you were on the winning side.** Move to reconsider. If the majority agrees, the motion comes back on the floor as though the vote had not occurred.
- 15. You want to change an action voted on at an earlier meeting.** Move to rescind. If previous written notice is given, a simple majority is required. If no notice is given, as 2/3 vote is required.

## You may INTERRUPT a speaker for these reasons only:

- to get information about business -point of information

to get information about rules -**parliamentary inquiry**  
 if you can't hear, safety reasons, comfort, etc. -**question of privilege**  
 if you see a breach of the rules -**point of order**  
 if you disagree with the [president]'s ruling -**appeal**

**You may influence WHAT the [members] discuss:**

if you would like to discuss something -**motion**  
 if you would like to change a motion under discussion -**amend**

**You may influence HOW and WHEN the [members] discuss a motion:**

if you want to limit debate on something -**limit debate**  
 if you want a committee to evaluate the topic and report back -**commit**  
 if you want to discuss the topic at another time -**postpone or lay it on the table**  
 if you think people are ready to vote -**previous question**

Parliamentary Procedure Motions Chart					
Adjourn	S			M	
Recess	S		A	M	
Table	S			M	
Close Debate	S			2/3	R
Limit Debate	S		A	2/3	R
Postpone to a later time	S	D	A	M	R
Refer to Committee	S	D	A	M	R
Amend Ammendment	S	D		M	R
Postpone Indefinitely	S	D	A	M	R
Main Motion	S	D	A	M	R

- S = Must Be Seconded D = Debatable A = Amendable M = Requires A Simple Majority Vote 2/3 = Requires A 2/3 Vote R = May Be Reconsidered Or Rescinded

Adapted from Case Western Reserve Graduate Student Senate; changes in [ ] <http://www.cwru.edu/orgs/gradsenate/rules/handbook.html>