

Robert's Rules of Order

NCAA committees use "Robert's Rules of Order" when making decisions. Here's a cheat sheet if you're not already familiar with that format.

THERE ARE 5 GENERAL TYPES OF MOTIONS

1 MAIN MOTIONS

These introduce subjects for consideration. They cannot be made when another motion is before the assembly. They yield to privileged, subsidiary and incidental motions. For example: "I move that we purchase ..."

2 SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS

These change or affect how the main motion is handled. (They are voted on before the main motion.) For example: "I move to amend the motion by striking out ..."

3 PRIVILEGED MOTIONS

These concern special or important matters not related to pending business. In

general, they are considered before other types of motions. For example: "I move we adjourn."

4 INCIDENTAL MOTIONS

These are questions of procedure that arise out of other motions. They must be considered before the other motion. For example: "I move to suspend the rules for the purpose of ..."

5 MOTIONS THAT BRING A QUESTION AGAIN BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY

These enable certain items to be reconsidered. In general, they are brought up when no business is pending. For example: "I move to reconsider ..."

SOME QUESTIONS RELATING TO MOTIONS

Is it in order? Your motion must relate to the business at hand and be presented at the appropriate time. It must not be obstructive, frivolous or against the bylaws.

May I interrupt the speaker? Some motions are so important that the speaker may be interrupted to make them. The original speaker regains the floor after the interruption has been attended to.

Do I need a second? Usually, yes. A second indicates that another member would like to consider your motion. It prevents spending time on a question that interests only one person.

Is it debatable? Parliamentary procedure guards the right to free and full debate on most motions. However, some subsidiary, privileged and incidental motions are not debatable.

Can it be amended? Some motions can be changed by striking out or inserting wording, or both. Amendments must relate to the subject as presented in the main motion.

What vote is needed? Most require only a majority vote (more than half the members present and voting). But, motions concerning the rights of the assembly or its members need a two-thirds vote to be adopted.

Can it be reconsidered? Some motions can be debated again and revoted to give members a chance to change their minds. The motion to reconsider must come from the winning side.

HOW DO I PRESENT MY MOTION?

Here's what happens when you want a motion considered:

1 YOU OBTAIN THE FLOOR.

- Wait until the previous speaker is finished.
- Address the chair.
Say, "Mr. (or Madam) Chairperson" or "Mr. (or Madam) President."
- Give your name. The chair will recognize you by repeating it.

2 YOU MAKE YOUR MOTION.

- Speak clearly and concisely.
- State your motion affirmatively.
Say, "I move that we do ..." instead of "I move that we do not ..."
- Stay on the subject and avoid personal attacks.

3 YOU WAIT FOR A SECOND.

- Another member will say, "I second the motion."
- Or, the chair will call for a second.
- If there is no second, your motion will not be considered.

Motions made at the direction of a board or committee (of more than one person) do not require a second.

4 THE CHAIR STATES YOUR MOTION.

- The chair must say, "It is moved and seconded that we ..."
- After this happens, debate or voting can occur.
- Your motion is now "assembly property," and you can't change it without consent of the members.

5 YOU EXPAND ON YOUR MOTION.

- As the person who made the motion, you are allowed to speak first.
- Direct all comments to the chair.
- Keep to the time limit for speaking.
- You may speak again after all other speakers are finished.
- You may speak a third time by a motion to suspend the rules with a two-thirds vote.

6 THE CHAIR PUTS THE QUESTION.

- The chair asks, "Are you ready for the question?"
- If there is no more debate, or if a motion to stop debate is adopted, a vote is taken.
- The chair announces the results.