**Robert’s Rules of Order – Simplified**

**Guiding Principles:**

Everyone has the right to participate in discussion 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.

Only one thing (motion) can be discussed at a time.

**Meeting Structure:**

The following outlines the structure of a typical meeting using this method:

* Call to Order
* Roll Call of members present (voting delegate to respond)
* Reading of the minutes of the last meeting
  + Meeting leader will typically ask if there are any additions or changes to the minutes.
  + This typically will be followed by a vote to approve the minutes
* Officers’ Reports
  + These are simply updates and do not include votes
* Committee Reports
  + These are also updates and do not include votes
* Old Business
  + This is important business previously planned for discussion at the current meeting.
  + This can include items that were discussed at the last meeting, but more information was needed or they weren’t on the agenda for a vote.
  + Old business can include votes.
* New Business
  + Any new business or resolutions before the body that requires a vote.
  + This must also include a description on the agenda.
* Announcements
  + These are announcements from the body, but do not include votes.
* Adjournment
  + The meeting leader will move for adjournment, signifying the end of the meeting.

A **motion** is the topic under discussion (e.g. “I move that we add a coffee break to this meeting”). After being recognized by the president of the board, any member can introduce a motion when no other motion is on the table. A motion requires a second to be considered. Each motion must be disposed of (passed, defeated, tabled, referred to committee, or postponed indefinitely).

**How to do things**:

* **You want to bring up a new idea before the group.**

After recognition by the president of the board, present your motion. A second is required for the motion to go to the floor for discussion, or consideration.

* **You want to change some of the wording in a motion under discussion.**

After recognition by the president of the board, move to amend by

* + Adding words
  + Striking words or
  + Striking and inserting words
* **You like the idea of a motion being discussed, but you need to reword it beyond simple word changes.**

Move to substitute your motion for the original motion. If it is seconded, discussion will continue on both motions and eventually the body will vote on which motion they prefer.

* **You want more study and/or investigation given to the idea being discussed.**

Move to refer to committee. Try to be specific as to the charge to the committee.

* **You are tired of the current discussion.**

Move to limit debate to a set period of time or to set a number of speakers. Requires a 2/3 vote.

* **You have heard enough discussion.**

Move to close the debate. Requires a 2/3 vote. Or move to previous question. This cuts off discussion and brings the assembly to a vote on the pending question only. Requires a 2/3 vote.

* **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.

* **You believe the discussion has drifted away from the agenda and want to bring it back.**

Call for orders of the day.

* **You want to take a short break.**

Move to recess for a set period of time.

* **You want to end the meeting.**

Move to adjourn.

* **You are confused about a procedure being used and want clarification.**

Without being recognized, call for “Point of Information” or “Point of Parliamentary Inquiry.” The president of the board will ask you to state your question and will attempt to clarify the situation.

**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 privelege**
* If you see a breach of the rules – **point of order**
* If you disagree with the president of the board’s ruling - **appeal**

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| **Quick Reference Guide** | | | | | |
|  | **Must be Seconded** | **Open for Discussion** | **Can Be Amended** | **Vote Count Required to Pass** | **May Be Reconsidered or Rescinded** |
| Main Motion | 🗸 | 🗸 | 🗸 | Majority | 🗸 |
| Amend Motion | 🗸 | 🗸 |  | Majority | 🗸 |
| Kill a Motion | 🗸 |  |  | Majority | 🗸 |
| Limit Debate | 🗸 |  | 🗸 | 2/3 | 🗸 |
| Close Discussion | 🗸 |  |  | 2/3 | 🗸 |
| Recess | 🗸 |  | 🗸 | Majority |  |
| Adjourn | 🗸 |  |  | Majority |  |
| Refer to Committee | 🗸 | 🗸 | 🗸 | Majority | 🗸 |
| Postpone to a Later Time | 🗸 | 🗸 | 🗸 | Majority | 🗸 |
| Table | 🗸 |  |  | Majority |  |
| Postpone Indefinitely | 🗸 | 🗸 | 🗸 | Majority | 🗸 |