

A Quick Guide to Motions

Based on Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised 10th Edition

Steps to Handle a Motion

1. A member makes a motion
2. Another member seconds the motion
3. The Chair states the motion, passing ownership of the motion to the assembly
4. The members debate the motion
5. The Chair puts the question (motion) to a vote
6. The Chair announces the result and effect of the vote

Making a Motion

The member must get recognition by the Chair and “move” that the organization take action or a stand.

Example: “I move that we hold a bake sale every Monday at lunch.”

What is a “Second”?

A member who seconds a motion, only agrees to the consideration of the motion by the assembly, and may not in fact agree with the motion and may wish to speak against the motion in debate.

Example: “I second that motion.”

Rules of Debate

Every member has the right to speak to every debatable motion before it is finally acted upon. In debate, members should observe the following:

- Clearly present information
- Correctly present any facts
- Completely answer any questions
- Concisely present information
- Courteously behave during the discussion
- Consider what you want to say before you say it
- Clean up your language to avoid any barriers

Amending a Motion

To amend a main motion, the proposer may move to insert words, add words, strike out words, or substitute text as portions or in its entirety. The process for amending a motion (main or subsidiary) is:

Example: “I move that we change the day of the week from Monday to Friday.”

A second is required, and then the Chair will ask for discussion, after reading the motion to amend.

Example: “An amendment has been moved and seconded that the day of the week change from Monday to Friday. Is there any discussion?”

After the discussion of the amendment is considered, a simple majority is needed to decide whether the amendment is to be adopted.

If it is adopted, the amended main motion is then open for discussion once again.

Example: “The motion being discussed is to hold a bake sale every Friday at lunch. Is there any further discussion?”

Once discussion is over, the motion may be voted on.