

Parliamentary Procedures: "Cheat Sheet"

Main Motion:

1. A member must be recognized by the Chair in order to make a motion.
2. Requires a second.
3. Once seconded, the motion is "on the floor" for discussion. The Chair restates the motion prior to allowing discussion to ensue.
4. Requires simple majority for approval.

Debate/Discussion:

1. Once a motion is on the floor, if no one offers to discuss then the Chair immediately proceeds to a vote.
2. The person who moved the motion has the right to speak first after the Chair's call for discussion. The Chair must recognize that person first.
3. A member may only speak twice to a motion. The second chance to speak to a motion can occur after everyone speaks for the first time.

Closing Debate/Discussion:

1. A common mistake Chairs make is to close discussion.
2. The Chair does not have authority to close discussion on a motion.
3. Discussion is closed either through a lack of further member comments, or a successful calling of the question.
4. When a debate appears to the chair to be finished, he/she should inquire, "Are you ready for the question?"

Limiting Time of Debate/Discussion:

1. Requires a second.
2. Acted upon immediately and is not debatable.
3. Can not apply to anything but the motion before the Board at that time.
4. It is amendable.
5. Requires a 2/3 majority for approval.
6. If successful, the effect is to limit discussion to a certain time period (e.g., 30 minutes) including the main motion & amendments.

Amendment of a Main Motion:

1. Requires a second.
2. It is amendable (but the amendment of an amendment is not amendable; see Amendment of an Amendment below).
3. Can (1) add words, (2) strike words, and/or (3) substitute new language to the main motion.
4. Requires simple majority for approval.

Amendment of an Amendment:

1. Requires a second.
2. It is not amendable; that is, a first motion to amend is amendable, but an amendment to an amendment (amendment of the second degree) is not amendable.
3. Can (1) add words, (2) strike words, and/or (3) substitute new language to the first amendment motion.
4. Requires simple majority for approval.

Reconsidering an Approved Motion:

1. Requires a second.
2. If seconded, it must be acted upon immediately.
3. It is not amendable, cannot be tabled indefinitely, and it cannot be referred to a committee.
4. May only be made during the same meeting at which the previous motion was approved.
5. This motion may be made while any other question is pending, even if it means interrupting a member who has the floor.
6. The motion to reconsider is debatable so long as the action being reconsidered was debatable. If the action being reconsidered was not debatable, then the motion to reconsider is likewise not debatable.
7. Only requires a simple majority to pass, regardless of the vote necessary to adopt the action being reconsidered.
8. If the motion to reconsider is lost it cannot be repeated.
9. If successful, the effect is to place before the Board the original question in the exact position it occupied before it was voted upon (including any amendments it had).
10. A motion to reconsider provides a means of correcting (at least on the day on which it occurred) Board errors due to hasty action.

Rescinding an Approved Motion:

1. Requires a second.
2. Requires a 2/3 majority to pass.
3. Must be noticed at the previous meeting, or called for as part of the agenda for the current meeting, that a motion for rescission of an approved action will be considered by the Board.
4. Cannot be made during the same meeting at which the original motion was approved (a motion to reconsider is used in that case).
5. It is debatable.
6. It is amendable.

Tabling a Motion:

1. Requires a second.
2. Acted upon immediately and is not debatable.
3. Can not apply to anything but the motion before the Board at that time.
4. Is not amendable.
5. Requires a simple majority for approval.
6. If successful, the effect is to table a motion until the next regular meeting of the Board.

Taking a Motion from the Table:

1. Requires a second.
2. Acted upon immediately and is not debatable.
3. It is not amendable.
4. Can not apply to anything but the previously tabled motion.
5. Requires a simple majority for approval.

Tabling a Motion Indefinitely:

1. Requires a second.
2. Acted upon immediately and is not debatable.
3. Can not apply to anything but the motion before the Board at that time.
4. It is not amendable.
5. Requires a simple majority for approval.
6. If successful, the effect is to table a motion until such time, subsequent to the current meeting, that a member of the Board moves, has seconded, and has approved (simple majority) a motion to retrieve the item from the table.
7. The object of this motion is not to postpone, but to reject the main motion without incurring the risk of a direct vote on it.

Referring a Motion to a Committee:

1. Requires a second.
2. It is debatable (not the main motion, only the motion to refer to a committee).
3. It is amendable.
4. Requires a simple majority for approval.
5. Takes precedence over motions to amend and to table.

Withdrawing a Motion:

1. May be made at any time before a vote on the motion has occurred.
2. Requires a second.
3. It is not debatable.
4. It is not amendable.
5. Requires a simple majority for approval.

Calling the Question:

1. Requires a second.
2. Acted upon immediately and is not debatable.
3. Is not amendable.
4. Requires a 2/3 majority for approval.
5. If successful, the effect is to end all debate on the motion before the Board and force a roll call vote.

Voting:

1. The Chair restates the question immediately prior to the vote.
2. The Chair calls for the yes votes and counts.
3. The Chair calls for the no votes and counts.
4. A roll call vote (otherwise known as a "rising vote") is required for any motion which requires a 2/3 majority to pass, or when a voice or show of hands vote produced an inconclusive result.
5. A motion fails on a tie vote.
6. Abstentions are treated as a non-vote (that is, as if a member were absent).
7. The Chair may vote (as well as make motions and speak on behalf of one side or the other).

Point of Order:

1. Does not require a second.
2. Can be made even when it interrupts the speech of another member.
3. Cannot be debated or amended.
4. Must be decided by the Chair without debate.
5. Upon announcing his/her decision, the Chair should explain the reasons for the decision.
6. The decision by the Chair may be appealed by two members, one appealing and the other seconding the appeal, and then entering debate and voting as a Board on the decision (simple majority for approval).
7. If the Chair is in doubt and chooses to submit the question to a vote of the Board, then it does become a debatable issue (simple majority for approval).

Adjournment:

1. Requires a second.
2. Acted upon immediately and is not debatable.
3. Is not amendable.
4. If the meeting is, in effect, the last regular meeting of the Board, then the motion to adjourn should be treated as any other main motion and debate, amendments, etc. allowed.
5. The motion to adjourn may not be made when another motion is already on the floor.
6. Even though the motion to adjourn is not debatable (except as noted in item 4 above) the chair has the right to inform the Board about any business requiring attention before adjournment. If the chair feels an item must be attended to before the Board adjourns, he/she can request that the mover withdraw the motion to adjourn.
7. A motion to adjourn requires a simple majority vote for approval.

Nomination Procedure:

1. Chair opens nominations.
2. No second needed to nominate someone.
2. Motion/second needed to close, and a 2/3 vote.
4. Open discussion upon closure of nominations.
5. Vote; nominee with most votes is appointed.