

A Shortcut to Robert's Rules of Order

BEGINNING THE MEETING:

The Chairs call the meeting to order. Recognition to speak, make motions, or act is at their discretion. The Chairs set the agenda, manage the agenda and may, at their discretion, change the order or items and decide what is and is not legitimate new business. The Chairs have full discretion to decide what is and what is not pertinent to any item on the agenda.

MOTIONS:

To make a motion, a member of the group must be recognized to speak by the Chairs. The format of a motion is "Mr. or Ms. Chair, I move that...". The Chairs may not make motions.

SECONDING A MOTION:

To move forward, a motion has to be seconded by a member of the group (not staff). The Chairs may not second a motion. If there is no second, the motion dies at that time.

DISCUSSION:

After a motion has been made, it is "on the floor". It may be discussed by anyone who is recognized to speak by the Chairs.

CALLING THE QUESTION: Any member of the group (Not Chairs) may "call the question". This effectively ends all discussion of the original motion. A motion to call the question may be made at any time as long as there is a motion on the table. There is no discussion of a "call the question". It must be seconded and, if seconded, is immediately voted on. If it passes, the Chairs proceed directly to a vote on the original motion. If the "call the question" fails, then discussion of the motion proceeds.

A POINT OF ORDER: A point of order is an attempt to be recognized by the Chairs in order to make a statement or ask a question. It overrides all other business. Having been recognized to speak on a point of order, the speaker must not address the motion on the floor, but only the process or procedures being used to handle that motion. For example, pointing out that a motion violates the By-Laws for the group, is illegal or that a motion is not being processed correctly. Once resolved, the group returns to the original discussion.

AMENDING A MOTION: Any speaker may move to amend the motion on the table. If the person making the original motion accepts the amendment as a friendly amendment, the motion is carried. If the person rejects the amendment, it must be voted on. A motion to amend must be resolved before the original motion can be called and passed or rejected.

ADJOURNING:

In some very formal groups, there is a motion to adjourn, which is then voted on. In other groups, the Chairs have full discretion to adjourn the meeting as they see fit.