

# RULES OF ORDER AT A GLANCE

To do this:	You say this:	May you interrupt the speaker?	Must you be seconded?	Is the motion debatable?	Is the motion amendable?	What majority is required?
Object to incorrect procedure being used	Point of order.	YES	NO	NO	NO	No vote taken, chair rules
Seek clarification from the previous speaker	Point of information.	YES	NO	NO	NO	No vote taken, chair rules
Object to something which prevents your continued participation (eg. excessive noise)	Point of personal privilege.	YES	NO	NO	NO	No vote taken, chair rules
Object to a motion being considered	I object to consideration of this motion.	YES	NO	NO	NO	2/3 majority
Consider something out of its scheduled order	I move that the agenda be amended in order to deal with the following item . . .	NO	YES	NO	NO	2/3 majority
Overturn the ruling of the chair	I challenge the chair on . . .	YES	YES	YES	NO	Majority
Change a motion	I move that the motion be amended to read . . .	NO	YES	YES	YES	Majority
Have a motion studied more before voting on it	I move that the motion be referred to . . .	NO	YES	YES	YES	Majority
Postpone further discussion on a motion until later in the meeting	I move that the motion be tabled until . . .	NO	YES	Only to time	YES	Majority
Postpone consideration of a motion until a future meeting	I move that the motion be postponed until . . .	NO	YES	Only to time	YES	Majority
Differ consideration of a motion temporarily	I move that motion . . . be laid on the table	NO	YES	NO	NO	Majority
Raise a matter previously tabled	I move that motion . . . be lifted from the table.	NO	YES	NO	NO	Majority
Reconsider a motion already voted on earlier in the meeting.	I move that motion . . . be reconsidered.	YES	YES	YES (if original motion was)	NO	Majority
End debate on a motion	I call the question	NO	YES	NO	NO	2/3 majority
Ask that everyone's vote on a particular motion be recorded in the minutes	I call for a roll call vote.	NO	NO	NO	NO	No vote required, chair rules
Recess the meeting.	I move that the meeting recess until . . .	NO	YES	Only to time	YES	Majority
End the meeting	I move that the meeting adjourn.	NO	YES	NO	NO	Majority

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The following is an abbreviation of Robert's Rules of Order.

All Federation meetings are run by Robert's Rules of Order. These rules of order are intended to facilitate the smooth and efficient conduct of meeting business and to ensure that all decisions are made in a fair and democratic manner. In addition, rules of order are meant to ensure that, in matters of debate, all voices are heard, not merely the loudest ones.

This process works best when it is supported by a system of self-regulation and it is therefore most effective when delegates ensure that they are at all times respectful towards the meeting chairperson and the other meeting participants.

## 2 CALL TO ORDER

This occurs at the time set for the start of the meeting. Once meeting quorum is established (the minimum number of voting members present), the chair will call the meeting to order. If quorum cannot be met, a new time and place for the meeting may be set. Members present may also choose to discuss matters of interest, but any decisions made in the absence of quorum will not be binding.

## 3 SPEAKER'S LIST

The Chair will maintain a list of those wishing to speak to the matter being considered. Only those **recognised** by the Chair will have the right to speak. If a new motion is made, a new Speaker's List begins. The Chair has the discretion to allow those who have not spoken to an issue to speak before others. The Chair may also choose to limit the number of speakers "for" and "against" a motion.

For the purposes of clarity and expediency, speakers are encouraged to put new ideas in the form of a motion that may then be debated and to start their interventions with an indication of whether they are speaking **for** (in favour) or **against** (opposed) the motion on the table.

## 4 SUBSTANTIVE MOTIONS

In order to give a sense of direction to the efforts of the meeting participants, the Chair must ensure that there is always a motion **on the floor** and that members know what they are debating. Except in rare cases, such as a request for a roll call vote, a motion must be moved by one member and be seconded by another. This means that at least two voters agree they want to consider the matter at hand. If the motion is debatable, the mover and seconder may speak to the motion first.

Main motions are normally submitted ahead of time, by the specified deadline, so that they may be reviewed ahead of time. In order to make a motion, individuals must await their turn on the Speaker's List and, once recognised by the Chair, rise and say: "I would like to make a motion." The structure of the motion is usually formal, stating reasons for the motion in the whereas clause(s), and the actual resolution should follow the words "be it resolved that". Motions must be phrased so as to take a positive action, as you cannot vote not to take an action.

## 5 AMENDMENTS

A motion may be amended by moving to make a specific change to the motion. In order for debate to occur on an amendment, it must first be seconded. Amendments are offered in the same way as motions, and are introduced to assist in changing, modifying, or completing a motion to make it more acceptable to the assembly.

There may be an amendment made to the first amendment, but no further orders of amendment. Voters may move an amendment which changes the intention of the motion. The Chair may suggest that this be dealt with as a motion of substitution. This has the same end effect.

## **6 ORDER OF PRECEDENCE FOR MOTIONS**

While a motion is on the floor, certain other motions may be made. To make a motion, one is required to await one's turn on the Speaker's List.

Members of the meeting must state their motion prior to entering into debate on the issue. It is preferable to write out the motion and present a written copy to the meeting secretary.

The following is a partial list of these motions:

**a. Amendment**

Explained above.

**b. To Divide**

This is a variant of a motion to amend, and is subject to the same rules. When a question is divided, each separate item must be presented as an individual question to be decided upon by a vote.

**c. To Table**

This motion must be moved and seconded and is debatable only as to the length of time of tabling. Normally a motion is tabled if more information is required or if another decision must be made before the decision that is on the floor can be made.

**d. To Refer**

This motion is made when it would be more appropriate for another body to deal with the motion before it is dealt with by the committee at hand. It requires a mover and a seconder, and passes with a simple majority.

**e. To Call the Question**

This motion is made when an individual feels that enough debate has occurred on a motion and that the committee in question should move to a vote. Individuals should refrain from Calling the Question in order to stifle arguments with which they disagree; generally such a motion should be used only when the individual feels that all sides of the debate have been clearly stated, or when it appears that there is a consensus in the room.

If there is no opposition to moving to the vote (calling the question), a vote on the motion on the floor is then taken. If there is opposition, the motion to call the question requires a mover and a seconder. A motion to call the question is non-debatable and must pass by a two-thirds (2/3) majority. If passed, a vote is taken on the original motion on the floor; if not passed, debate on the motion continues. One may not speak to a motion on the floor and then end one's remarks by calling the question.

**f. To Reconsider**

This motion is made when an individual wishes to have another vote on a motion that has already been voted upon. Generally, motions to reconsider are presented when new information on a motion previously decided has emerged. The mover of the reconsideration must have voted on the prevailing side of the original motion. Motions may only be reconsidered during the same meeting at which they were first considered. Any one item may only be reconsidered twice. Motions to reconsider require a two-thirds (2/3) majority.

**g. To Recess**

This motion may be made to give the meeting participants a break during the course of the meeting (for example, a recess from 12:00 to 1:30 for lunch). Quorum must be attained after each recess before the meeting may continue.

**h. To Adjourn**

This motion ends the meeting. Usually a motion to adjourn occurs only at the end of the agenda. It is made when there is no further business to be dealt with.

## 7 POINTS

Points take precedence over whatever is on the floor, which means that a delegate may be interrupted in order to have the point raised.

Proper procedure is for the individual to raise her hand and call their particular point (eg. "Point of Order") and then wait to be recognised by the chair. Once recognition is given (eg. the Chair says, "State your point"), the delegate may elaborate their particular point.

The following is a list of the most common points:

**a. Point of Order**

An individual may rise on a Point of Order if she feels that business is proceeding incorrectly. The Chair must either agree or disagree with the Point raised. An individual may also rise on a Point of Order if she does not understand the proceedings and/or wishes to have clarification on a specific ruling.

**b. Point of Information**

An individual may rise on a Point of Information to ask a question of clarification of the comments of another speaker. Such a point should be used by an individual to gather information necessary for making an informed decision (eg. to have an acronym spelled out or the nature of an organisation explained).

The member may decide not to answer the question by refusing to yield the floor. It is not in order to rise on a Point of Information to provide information during debate.

**c. Point of Privilege**

An individual may rise on a Point of Privilege if she is unable to hear a speaker, if the room is uncomfortable (too hot, too cold, the fan is too loud), or if there is any other problem during the meeting that does not relate to the debate, but which impedes the individual's ability to participate in the meeting.

An individual may also rise on a Point of Order if she feels that her rights as a member of the assembly have been violated (Robert's Rules is very clear on appropriate decorum in a meeting).

**d. Challenges to the Chair**

An individual may rise to Challenge the Chair if she disagrees with a ruling made by the Chair. In this case, the individual must give the reasons why she wishes to have the ruling overturned.

The Chair then has the right to give the reasons for the ruling. A vote is then taken, with those individuals supporting the original ruling voting "in favour" and those against the ruling voting "against." A simple majority is required to overrule the Chair.

There are extraordinary cases when the Chair has the right to refuse to entertain a challenge, i.e: when the Chair makes a ruling in accordance with the bylaws, her ruling cannot be challenged as the bylaws of the Federation are not open to this type of challenge.