

Parliamentary Procedure in a Nutshell

Here are some motions you might make, how to make them, and what to expect of the rules.

TO DO THIS:	YOU SAY THIS:	May you interrupt the speaker?	Do you need a second?	Is it debatable?	Can it be amended?	What vote is needed?	Can it be reconsidered ?
ADJOURN MEETING	"I move that we adjourn."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
CALL AN INTERMISSION	"I move that we recess for ..."	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No
COMPLAIN ABOUT HEAT, NOISE, ETC.	"I rise to a question of privilege."	Yes	No	No	No	No vote	No (not usually)
SUSPEND FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF AN ISSUE	"I move to table the motion."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
END DEBATE AND AMENDMENTS	"I move the previous question."	No	Yes	No	No	2/3	No ¹
POSTPONE DISCUSSION FOR A CERTAIN TIME	"I move to postpone the discussion until ..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
GIVE CLOSER STUDY OF SOMETHING	"I move to refer the matter to committee."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes ²
AMEND A MOTION	"I move to amend the motion by .."	No	Yes	Yes ³	Yes	Majority	Yes
INTRODUCE BUSINESS	"I move that ..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
The motions listed above are in order of preference. For motions below, there is no order.							
PROTEST BREACH OF RULES OF CONDUCT	"I rise to a point of order."	Yes	No	No	No	No vote ⁴	No
VOTE ON A RULING OF THE CHAIR	"I appeal the chair's decision."	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Majority ⁵	Yes
SUSPEND RULES TEMPORARILY	"I move to suspend the rules so that ..."	No	Yes	No	No	2/3	No
AVOID CONSIDERING AN IMPROPER MATTER	"I object to consideration of this motion."	Yes	No	No	No	2/3 ⁶	-- ⁷
VERIFY A VOICE VOTE BY HAVING MEMBERS STAND	"I call for a division." Or "Division."	Yes	No	No	No	No vote	No
REQUEST INFORMATION	"Point of information."	Yes	No	No	No	No vote	No
TAKE UP A MATTER PREVIOUSLY TABLED	"I move to take from the table ..."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
RECONSIDER A HASTY ACTION	"I move to reconsider the vote on ..."	Yes	Yes	-- ⁸	No	Majority	No

Normally one may not speak unless recognized by the chair. Exceptions are shown in column 3. Voice vote is sufficient by "aye" or "no" unless a "call for division" is subsequently made (i.e., a count of the votes by raised hand is demanded).

¹ Unless vote on question is not taken ² Unless committee has already taken up the subject ³ Only if the motion to be amended is debatable. ⁴ Except in doubtful cases. ⁵ A majority vote in negative needed to reverse ruling of the chair. ⁶ A 2/3 vote in negative needed to prevent consideration of main motion.

⁷ Only if the main question or motion was not, in fact, considered. ⁸ Only if motion to be reconsidered is debatable.