

## Parliamentary Procedures – “How to Make a Motion”

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This article is not a complete set of rules, it is only meant to be used as a guide to cover the points most often encountered by our chapters. For a complete set of rules, you may refer to Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised.

### HOW TO MAKE A MOTION

Obtain the floor: Address and be recognized by the presiding officer before presenting a motion.

State the motion: This is usually done by saying, “I move that...”

The motion must be seconded: A motion cannot be discussed unless it is seconded. Also, unless it receives a second, it is lost. Any eligible voter other than the one making the motion may second it. Simply say “second.”

The presiding officer must repeat the motion in full and call for any discussion.

The motion is then open for discussion. This is done by members who obtain the floor by addressing and being recognized by the presiding officer. The person who made the motion is usually given the opportunity to open and close the discussion.

Call for the previous question. In order to close discussion, a member must call for the previous question. This is done by being recognized by the presiding officer and saying “Call for the previous question,” or “Move to close debate.” If there is a second, the members will vote to close discussion. If it passes, discussion is closed and a vote will be taken on the motion on the floor. If then it fails, discussion remains open.

Voting: A vote is taken by one of the following ways: raising hand, roll call, ballot. In larger groups, a vote may be taken by saying “aye” / “no” and the presiding officer determines if which way a majority voted. If it sounds close, a member has the right to call for a division. This is done by simply saying “Division” and does not need the recognition of the presiding officer. If a division is called, the vote will then be taken by raising hands and counting.

Note: secret ballot votes are required for selecting pledges. Ballots may also be used for other confidential matters such as individual trials and can be very helpful for the minutes, since members have appeal rights in trials. Officer elections are another example when ballots may be most effective and avoid any personal offenses that could be interpreted if voting was verbal or visible.