



ROBERT RULES OF ORDER
ARTICLE 0: HOW BUSINESS IS CONDUCTED IN DELIBERATIVE
ASSEMBLIES
(ALL-IN-ONE)

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4TH Edition

ARTICLE 0
HOW BUSINESS IS CONDUCTED IN DELIBERATIVE ASSEMBLIES

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ROBERT RULES OF ORDER

PART: --

ARTICLE: --

TITLE: --

ITEMS: Order, Table, Preface, Introduction



-- | ORDER OF PRECEDENCE OF MOTIONS

The ordinary motions rank as follows, the lowest in rank being at the bottom and the highest at the top of the list. When any one of them is immediately pending the motions above it in the list are in order, and those below are out of order.

1	2	3	4	5	Motion
-	X	a	X	-	Fix the Time to which to Adjourn
-	X	b	-	-	Adjourn
-	X	c	X	-	Take a Recess
-	X	-	-	-	Raise a Question of Privilege
-	X	-	-	-	Call for the Orders of the Day
-	-	-	-	-	Lay on the Table
-	-	-	-	X	Previous Question
-	-	-	-	X	Limit or Extend Limits of Debate
X	-	-	X	-	Postpone to a Certain Time
X	-	-	X	-	Commit or Refer
X	-	-	X	-	Amend
X	-	-	-	-	Postpone Indefinitely
X	-	-	X	-	A Main Motion

Columns:

1 - Debatable

2 - Usually Privileged

3 - Not always privileged:

a - Privileged only when made while another question is pending, and in an assembly that has made no provision for another meeting on the same or the next day.

b - Loses its privileged character and is a main motion if in any way qualified, or if its effect, if adopted, is to dissolve the assembly without any provision for its meeting again.

c - Privileged only when made while other business is pending.

4 - Can be amended

5 - Require a 2/3 vote for their adoption; the others require only a majority.



-- | TABLE OF RULES RELATING TO MOTIONS

Explanation of the Table.

The rules at the head of the 8 columns apply to all original main motions, and to all other cases except where a star (*) or a figure indicates that the motion is an exception to these rules. The star shows that the exact opposite of the rule at the head of the column applies to the motion, and a figure refers to a note which explains the extent of the exception. For example, "Lay on the Table"; the Table shows that §28 of the Manual treats of this motion; that it is "undebatable" and "cannot be amended"; that "no subsidiary motion can be applied" to it; and that it "cannot be reconsidered"; -- the fact that the 4 other columns have no stars or figures shows that the rules at the head of these columns apply to this motion, to Lay on the Table, the same as to original main motions.

Columns:

- § - Section number
- 1 - Debatable
- 2 - Debate Confined to Pending Questions
- 3 - Can be Amended
- 4 - Subsidiary Motions can be Applied
- 5 - Can be Reconsidered
- 6 - Requires only a Majority Vote
- 7 - Must be Seconded
- 8 - Out of Order when Another has Floor
- N - Note below

§	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N	Motion
17	*	–	*	*	*	–	–	–	1	Adjourn (when privileged)
54	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	Adopt (Accept or Agree to) a Report
67	–	–	–	–	2	–	–	–	–	Adopt Constitutions, By-laws, Rules of Order
67	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	Adopt Standing Rules
33	4	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	Amend
33	4	–	*	–	–	–	–	–	–	Amend an Amendment
68	–	–	–	–	2	5	–	–	–	Amend Constitutions, By-laws, Rules of Order
67	–	–	–	–	–	6	–	–	–	Amend Standing Rules
21	*	–	*	–	–	–	–	*	7	Appeal, relating to Indecorum, etc.
21	–	–	*	–	–	–	–	*	–	Appeal, all other cases
33	–	–	*	–	–	–	*	–	–	Blanks, Filling
32	–	–	–	–	8	–	–	–	–	Commit or Refer, or Recommit
30	*	–	–	–	–	*	–	–	9	Debate, to Close, Limit, or Extend
25	*	–	*	*	*	–	*	*	–	Division of the Assembly
24	*	–	–	–	*	–	10	10	–	Division of the Question
16	11	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	Fix the Time to which to Adjourn
17	*	–	*	*	*	–	–	–	1	Adjourn (when privileged)
57	–	–	*	–	2	–	–	–	–	Informal Consideration of a Question
28	*	–	*	*	*	–	–	–	–	Lay on the Table
21	*	–	*	*	–	–	–	–	–	Leave to Continue Speaking after Indecorum
11	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	Main Motion or Question
26	–	–	*	–	*	–	*	–	–	Nominations, to Make
26	*	–	–	–	*	*	–	–	–	Nominations, to Close
26	*	–	–	–	2	–	–	–	–	Nominations, to Reopen
23	*	–	*	*	2	12	*	*	–	Objection to Consideration of a Question
21	*	–	*	*	*	–	*	*	–	Order, Questions of
20	–	–	–	–	–	*	–	–	–	Order, to Make a Special
20	*	–	*	*	*	–	*	*	–	Orders of the Day, to Call for
20	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	Order of the Day, when pending
27	*	–	*	*	*	–	*	*	–	Parliamentary Inquiry
31	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	Postpone Definitely, or to a Certain Time
34	–	*	*	–	13	–	–	–	–	Postpone Indefinitely



29	*	-	*	*	15	*	-	-	14	Previous Question
19	*	-	*	*	*	-	*	*	-	Privilege, to Raise Questions of
19	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Privilege, Questions of, when pending
27	*	-	*	*	-	-	-	-	-	Reading Papers
18	11	-	-	-	*	-	-	-	1	Recess, to Take a (when privileged)
36	4	17	*	-	*	-	-	*	16	Reconsider
37	-	*	-	-	2	18	-	-	-	Rescind or Repeal
33	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Substitute (same as Amend)
22	*	-	*	*	*	*	-	-	-	Suspend the Rules
35	*	-	*	*	*	-	-	-	-	Take from the Table
22	*	-	*	*	*	*	-	-	-	Take up a Question out of its Proper Order
25	*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Voting, Motions relating to
27	*	-	*	*	2	-	*	-	-	Withdraw a Motion, Leave to



NOTES TO TABLE

1. To Fix the Time to which to Adjourn is privileged only when made while another question is pending, and in an assembly that has made no provision for another meeting on the same or the next day. To Adjourn loses its privileged character and is a main motion if in any way qualified, or if its effect, if adopted, is to dissolve the assembly without any provision for its meeting again. To Take a Recess is privileged only when made while other business is pending.
2. An affirmative vote on this motion cannot be reconsidered.
3. An Amendment may be made (a) by inserting (or adding) words or paragraphs; (b) by striking out words or paragraphs; (c) by striking out certain words and inserting others; or (d) by substituting one or more paragraphs for others, or an entire resolution for another, on the same subject.
4. Undebatable when the motion to be amended or reconsidered is undebatable.
5. Constitutions, By-Laws, and Rules of Order before adoption are in every respect main motions and may be amended by majority vote. After adoption they require previous notice and 2/3 vote for amendment.
6. Standing Rules may be amended at any time by a majority vote if previous notice has been given, or by a 2/3 vote without notice.
7. An Appeal is undebatable only when made while an undebatable question is pending, or when relating to indecorum, or to transgressions of the rules of speaking, or to the priority of business. When debatable, only one speech from each member is permitted. On a tie vote the decision of the chair is sustained.
8. Cannot be reconsidered after the committee has taken up the subject, but by 2/3 vote the committee at any time may be discharged from further consideration of the question.
9. These motions may be moved whenever the immediately pending question is debatable, and they apply only to it, unless otherwise specified.
10. If resolutions or propositions relate to different subjects which are independent of each other, they must be divided on the request of a single member, which can be made when another has the



floor. If they relate to the same subject and yet each part can stand alone, they may be divided only on a regular motion and vote.

11. Undebatable if made when another question is before the assembly.

12. The objection can be made only when the question is first introduced, before debate. A 2/3 vote must be opposed to the consideration in order to sustain the objection.

13. A negative vote on this motion cannot be reconsidered.

14. The Previous Question may be moved whenever the immediately pending question is debatable or amendable. The questions upon which it is moved should be specified; if not specified, it applies only to the immediately pending question. If adopted it cuts off debate and at once brings the assembly to a vote on the immediately pending question and such others as are specified in the motion.

15. Cannot be reconsidered after a vote has been taken under it.

16. The motion to reconsider can be made while any other question is before the assembly, and even while another has the floor, or after it has been voted to adjourn, provided the assembly has not been declared adjourned. It can be moved only on the day, or the day after, the vote which it is proposed to reconsider was taken, and by one who voted with the prevailing side. Its consideration cannot interrupt business unless the motion to be reconsidered takes precedence of the immediately pending question. Its rank is the same as that of the motion to be reconsidered, except that it takes precedence of a general order, or of a motion of equal rank with the motion to be reconsidered, provided their consideration has not actually begun.

17. Opens to debate main question when latter is debatable.

18. Rescind is under the same rules as to amend something already adopted. See notes 2, 5, and 6, above.

ADDITIONAL RULES

Incidental Motions. Motions that are incidental to pending motions take precedence of them and must be acted upon first. [See 13 for list of these motions.]

No privileged or subsidiary motion can be laid on the table, postponed definitely or indefinitely, or committed. When the main question is laid on the table, etc., all adhering subsidiaries go with it.



EXPLANATION OF THE TABLE OF RULES RELATING TO MOTIONS

Every one expecting to take an active part in meetings of a deliberative assembly should become sufficiently familiar with the Order of Precedence of Motions and the Table of Rules, to be able to refer to them quickly. This familiarity can only be acquired by actual practice in referring to these tables and finding the rulings on the various points covered by them in regard to various motions. These six pages contain an epitome of parliamentary law. The Order of Precedence of motions should be committed to memory, as it contains all of the privileged and subsidiary motions, 12 in number, arranged in their order of rank, and shows in regard to each motion whether it can be debated or amended, and what vote it requires, and under what circumstances it can be made.

In the Table of Rules the headings to the 8 columns are rules or principles which are applicable to all original main motions, and should be memorized. They are as follows: (1) Original Main Motions are debatable; (2) debate must be confined to the immediately pending question; (3) they can be amended; (4) all subsidiary motions can be applied to them; (5) they can be reconsidered; (6) they require only a majority vote for their adoption; (7) they must be seconded; and (8) they are not in order when another has the floor. Whenever any of the 44 motions in the Table differs from a main motion in regard to any of these rules, the exception is indicated by a star (*) or a figure in the proper column opposite that motion. A star shows that the exact opposite of the rule at the head of the column applies to the motion. A figure refers to a note which explains the extent of the exception. A blank shows that the rule at the head of the column applies, and therefore that the motion is in this respect exactly like a main motion. Some of the motions are followed by figures not in the columns: these figures refer to notes giving useful information in regard to these motions.

The Table of Rules is constructed upon the theory that it is best to learn the general principles of parliamentary law as applied to original main motions, and then to note in what respects each other motion is an exception to these general rules. Thus, the motion to postpone definitely, or to a certain time, has no stars or figures opposite it, and therefore it is subject to all of the above 8 rules the same as any main motion: to postpone indefinitely has two stars and the number 13 opposite to it, showing that the rules at the head of these three columns do not apply to this motion. The first star shows that debate is not confined to the motion to



postpone indefinitely, but that the main motion is also open to debate; the second star shows that the motion to postpone indefinitely cannot be amended; and the number 13 refers to a note which shows that a negative vote on this motion cannot be reconsidered.

As has previously been stated, a star shows that the motion, instead of being subject to the rule at the head of the column, is subject to a rule exactly the reverse. Stars in the various columns, therefore, mean that the motions are subject to the following rules:

- (1) undebatable;
- (2) opens main question to debate;
- (3) cannot be amended;
- (4) no subsidiary motion can be applied;
- (5) cannot be reconsidered;
- (6) requires a two-thirds vote;
- (7) does not require to be seconded; and
- (8) in order when another has the floor.



-- | PREFACE

A work on parliamentary law is needed, based, in its general principles, upon the rules and practice of Congress, but adapted, in its details, to the use of ordinary societies. Such a work should give not only the methods of organizing and conducting meetings, the duties of officers, and names of ordinary motions, but also a systematic statement in reference to each motion, as to its object and effect; whether it can be amended or debated; if debatable, the extent to which it opens the main question to debate; the circumstances under which it can be made, and what other motions can be made while it is pending. Robert's Rules of Order (published in 1876, slight additions being made in 1893) was prepared with a hope of supplying the above information in a condensed and systematic form, each rule being complete in itself, or giving references to every section that in any way qualifies it, so that a stranger to the work can refer to any special subject with safety.

The fact that during these thirty-nine years a half million copies of these Rules have been published would indicate that there is a demand for a work of this kind. But the constant inquiries from all sections of the country for information concerning proceedings in deliberative assemblies that is not contained in Rules of Order, seems to demand a revision and enlargement of the manual. To meet this want, the work has been thoroughly revised and enlarged, and, to avoid confusion with the old rules, is published under the title of "Robert's Rules of Order Revised."

The object of Rules of Order is to assist an assembly to accomplish in the best possible manner the work for which it was designed. To do this it is necessary to restrain the individual somewhat, as the right of an individual, in any community, to do what he pleases, is incompatible with the interests of the whole. Where there is no law, but every man does what is right in his own eyes, there is the least of real liberty. Experience has shown the importance of definiteness in the law; and in this country, where customs are so slightly established and the published manuals of parliamentary practice so conflicting, no society should attempt to conduct business without having adopted some work upon the subject as the authority in all cases not covered by its own special rules.

While it is important that an assembly has good rules, it is more important that it be not without some rules to govern its proceedings. It is much more important, for instance, that an



assembly has a rule determining the rank of the motion to postpone indefinitely, than that it gives this motion the highest rank of all subsidiary motions except to lay on the table, as in the U.S. Senate; or gives it the lowest rank, as in the U.S. House of Representatives; or gives it equal rank with the previous question, to postpone definitely, and to commit, so that if one is pending none of the others may be moved, as under the old parliamentary law. This has been well expressed by one of the greatest of English writers on parliamentary law: "Whether these forms be in all cases the most rational or not is really not of so great importance. It is much more material that there should be a rule to go by than what that rule is; that there may be a uniformity of proceeding in business, not subject to the caprice of the chairman or captiousness of the members. It is very material that order, decency, and regularity be preserved in a dignified public body."

H.M.R.

February, 1915.



-- | INTRODUCTION

Parliamentary Law refers originally to the customs and rules for conducting business in the English Parliament; and thence to the usages of deliberative assemblies in general. In England these usages of Parliament form a part of the unwritten law of the land, and in our own legislative bodies they are of authority in all cases where they do not conflict with existing rules or precedents.

But as a people we have not the respect which the English have for customs and precedents, and are always ready for such innovations as we think are improvements; hence changes have been and are constantly being made in the written rules which our legislative bodies have found best to adopt. As each house adopts its own rules, the result is that the two houses of the same legislature do not always agree in their practice; even in Congress the order of precedence of motions is not the same in both houses, and the previous question is admitted in the House of Representatives but not in the Senate. As a consequence of this, the exact method of conducting business in any particular legislative body is to be obtained only from the Legislative Manual of that body.

The vast number of societies -- political, literary, scientific, benevolent, and religious -- formed all over the land, though not legislative, are deliberative in character, and must have some system of conducting business and some rules to govern their proceedings, and are necessarily subject to the common parliamentary law where it does not conflict with their own special rules. But as their knowledge of parliamentary law has been obtained from the usages in this country, rather than from the customs of Parliament, it has resulted that these societies have followed in part the customs of our own legislative bodies, and our people have thus been educated under a system of parliamentary law which is peculiar to this country, and yet so well established as to supersede the English parliamentary law as the common law of ordinary deliberative assemblies.

The practice of the National House of Representatives should have the same force in this country as the usages of the House of Commons have in England, in determining the general principles of the common parliamentary law of the land, were it not for the fact that while the English Parliament has continued to be a strictly deliberative assembly, the business of our House of Representatives has grown so enormously that it has been obliged to make such changes in its rules and practice as will allow the majority to suppress the debate, if there has been previous debate,



and if there has been none, to limit the debate to forty minutes; and also to suppress a question for the session even without any debate. These deviations from the old parliamentary law, while necessary in the House of Representatives, are in violation of the fundamental right of a deliberative assembly to have questions thoroughly discussed before it is called upon to take action upon them, unless a large majority, at least two-thirds, is prepared to act at once. In ordinary deliberative assemblies the right to debate questions before taking final action upon them should never be suppressed by less than a two-thirds vote, and the motion to lay on the table should be used only for its legitimate parliamentary purpose of laying aside a question temporarily.

Where the practice of Congress differs from that of Parliament, the common law of this country usually follows the practice of Congress. Thus, in every American deliberative assembly having no rules for conducting business, the motion to adjourn, when it does not dissolve the assembly, would be decided to be undebatable, as in Congress, the English parliamentary law to the contrary notwithstanding; so if the previous question were negatived, the debate upon the subject would continue, as in Congress, whereas in Parliament the subject would be immediately dismissed; so, too, the previous question could be moved when there was before the assembly a motion either to commit, or to postpone definitely or indefinitely, just as in Congress, notwithstanding that, according to English parliamentary law, the previous question could not be moved under such circumstances.

The old common parliamentary law gives the same rank to the motions for the previous question, to postpone definitely, to commit, and to postpone indefinitely, so that no one of them can be moved while another one of them is pending; the House makes them rank in the order just named; while the Senate does not admit the motion for the previous question, and makes to postpone indefinitely outrank all the others. The practice of the House in this matter establishes the parliamentary law of this country, as it does in all cases where its practice is not due to the great quantity of its business or the necessities of party government. This may be illustrated by the motions to lay on the table and the previous question. The House of Representatives has completely changed the use of the motion to lay on the table from that of merely laying aside a question until the assembly chooses to resume its consideration [see foot note, 28], to a motion to kill the pending proposition. To make it more effective for this purpose, they have allowed it to be made before the member reporting a bill from the



committee is allowed to speak, and when a question is laid upon the table it cannot be taken up except by suspending the rules, which requires a two-thirds vote. For reasons previously given, such rules are necessary in Congress, but in ordinary assemblies they would do more harm than good. The same vote should be required (two-thirds vote) to stop debate and bring the assembly to a vote on the final disposition of the question, whether the intention is to adopt or to reject the proposition. The previous question and the motion to lay on the table require the same vote in Congress, and should in all assemblies where to lay on the table is used for killing propositions.

The modifications made by the House in regard to the previous question have made that motion extremely simple and useful, and its practice establishes the parliamentary law of the country as to the previous question, except in respect to its being ordered by majority vote and forty minutes' debate being allowed after it has been ordered, if the proposition has not been previously debated. It is necessary in Congress for the majority to have the power to close debate, but, such a power being in conflict with the fundamental rights of a deliberative assembly, Congress has modified it so as not to cut off debate entirely. In an ordinary assembly, with sessions not exceeding two or three hours, it should, and it does, have the power by a two-thirds vote to close debate instantly, just as by the same vote it may suspend the rules.

In matters of detail, the rules of the House of Representatives are adapted to the peculiar wants of that body, and are of no authority in any other assembly. No one, for instance, would accept the following House of Representatives rules as common parliamentary law in this country: That the chairman, in case of disorderly conduct, would have the power to order the galleries to be cleared; that any fifteen members would be authorized to compel the attendance of absent members; that each member would be limited in debate upon any question to one hour; and that the motion to suspend the rules can only be entertained on the first and third Mondays of each month. These examples are sufficient to show the absurdity of the Idea that the rules of Congress in all things determine the common parliamentary law.

While some of the rules of Congress are adapted only to legislative assemblies, and others only to the House that adopts them, yet its rules and practice, except where manifestly unsuited to ordinary deliberative assemblies, should, and do determine the



parliamentary law of the country. The people of the United States will never accept the rules and practice of the legislature, or of deliberative assemblies, of any state, or even of any section of the country, as of equal authority with the practice of the National Congress in determining the parliamentary law for the whole country.

Since, however, the sessions of Congress last from three to six months, and at times to nearly a year, whereas the great majority of ordinary deliberative assemblies have sessions lasting not more than two or three hours; and since the quorum in Congress is a majority of the members, while in most societies it is less than one-fifth, and often less than one-tenth, of the members; and since the members of Congress are paid to devote all their time during a session to the business of Congress, and can be compelled to attend, whereas in ordinary assemblies the members have other duties and their attendance is simply voluntary; and as the work of Congress is enormous and is mostly done by standing committees, of which there are fifty-six, or in committee of the whole, while in ordinary assemblies the assembly itself attends to most of its business, the rest is done usually by special committees rather than by standing committees or in committee of the whole -- as these differences exist, it is evident that the rules and practice of Congress require to be modified in some respects to adapt them to ordinary deliberative assemblies. Sometimes the old common parliamentary law is better adapted to ordinary societies, as with the motion to lay on the table. Where the two houses differ, sometimes the Senate practice is better adapted to ordinary assemblies, as in allowing each member to speak twice to the same question each day; while in allowing the previous question and in making the motion to postpone indefinitely the lowest of subsidiary motions, the practice of the House seems better adapted to ordinary assemblies. The House allows a majority to order the previous question, but if there has been no debate on the question, forty minutes' debate is permitted after the previous question has been ordered. This rule is not adapted to assemblies whose entire session may not last two hours. They should have power to close debate instantly by a two-thirds vote. This is in accordance with the general principle that the assembly by a two-thirds vote may suspend the rules, even the rule permitting debate.

As there would naturally be differences of opinion as to the application of the above principles, and it is important that the law should be definite, every deliberative assembly should imitate



our legislative bodies and adopt some Rules of Order for the conduct of its business.¹

PLAN OF THE WORK.

These Rules are prepared to meet partially this want in deliberative assemblies that are not legislative in their character. They have been made sufficiently complete to answer for the rules of an assembly until it sees fit to adopt special rules conflicting with and superseding any of the rules of detail, such as the Order of Business, etc. They are based upon the rules and practice of Congress so far as these are adapted to ordinary deliberative assemblies with short sessions and comparatively small quorums, as has just been explained. In cases where these Rules differ from the practice of Congress, usually the congressional rule will be found in a foot note. The foot notes need not be referred to for any other purpose than to ascertain the practice of Congress.

This Manual contains a Table of Contents, Table of Rules, Part I, Part II, Lesson Outlines, and the Index.

Table of Contents.

This gives a clear, systematic idea of the arrangement of subjects treated in the Manual.

Order of Precedence of Motions and Table of Rules.

A careful study of these tables so as to be able to use them quickly will enable any one in an emergency to ascertain whether a motion is in order, and whether it may be debated, or amended, or reconsidered, or requires a second, or a two-thirds vote, or is in order when another member has the floor.

Part I, comprising the main part of the Manual, contains a set of Rules of Order systematically arranged, as shown in the Table of Contents. It begins with showing how business is introduced in a deliberative assembly, and then follows it step by step until the vote is taken and announced. The next section, 10, shows what is the proper motion to use to accomplish certain objects, referring at the same time to the section where the motion will be found fully treated. Next, the motions are classified as usual into Privileged, Incidental, Subsidiary, and Main, and the general characteristics of each class given.

Then each class is taken up in order, beginning with the highest privileged motion, and a section is devoted to each motion,



including some motions that are not classified. Each of these twenty-six sections is complete in itself, so that one unfamiliar with the work need not be misled in examining any particular subject. Cross-references, in heavy-face type, are used wherever it was thought they would be helpful, the references being to sections, the number of the section being placed at the top of each page. The following is stated in reference to each motion, except some of the incidental ones, the first six points being mentioned at the beginning of each section:

- (1) Of what motions it takes precedence (that is, what motions may be pending and yet it be in order to make and consider this motion).
- (2) To what motions it yields (that is, what motions may be made and considered while this motion is pending).
- (3) Whether it is debatable or not (all motions being debatable unless the contrary is stated).
- (4) Whether it can be amended or not.
- (5) In case the motion can have no subsidiary motion applied to it, the fact is stated [see Adjourn, 17, for an example: the meaning is, that the particular motion, to adjourn, cannot be laid on the table, postponed, committed, or amended, &c.].
- (6) The vote required for its adoption, when it is not a majority.
- (7) The form of making the motion when peculiar.
- (8) The form of stating and putting the question when peculiar.
- (9) The object of the motion when not apparent.
- (10) The effect of the motion if adopted, whenever it could possibly be misunderstood.

Part II contains an explanation of the methods of organizing and conducting different kinds of meetings, giving the words used by the chairman and speakers in making and putting various motions; and also a few pages devoted to the legal rights of deliberative assemblies and ecclesiastical tribunals, and to the trial of members of such societies. The beginner especially, will find it useful to read sections 69-71 in connection with sections 1-10, thus obtaining correct ideas as to the methods of conducting business in deliberative assemblies.



The Plan for the Study of Parliamentary Law gives some helpful suggestions to clubs and individuals wishing to study parliamentary law together with a series of eighteen Lesson Outlines.

The Index refers to pages, not sections, and at the beginning are given some suggestions as to the best method of finding anything in these Rules.

DEFINITIONS.

In addition to the terms defined above (taking precedence of, yielding to, and applying to [see above]), there are other terms that are liable to be misunderstood, to which attention is called.

Accepting a report is the same as adopting it, and must be decided before the pending question, should not be confused with receiving a report, which is allowing it to be presented to the assembly.

Assembly. This term is used for the deliberative assembly, and should be replaced in motions, etc., by the proper name of the body, as society, club, church, board, convention, etc.

The Chair means the presiding officer, whether temporary or permanent.

The terms Congress and H.R., when used in this Manual, refer to the U.S. House of Representatives.

Meeting and Session. Meeting is used in this Manual for an assembling of the members of a deliberative body for any length of time during which they do not separate for longer than a few minutes, as the morning meeting, or the evening meeting, of a convention. In a society with rules providing for regular meetings every week, or month, etc., each of these regular meetings is a separate session. A called or special meeting is a distinct session. Should a regular or special meeting adjourn to meet at another time, the adjourned meeting is a continuation of the session, not a separate one; the two meetings constitute one session. In the case of a convention holding a meeting every year or two, or rather a series of meetings lasting several days, the entire series of meetings constitute one session. [See 63.]

Pending and Immediately Pending. A question is said to be pending when it has been stated by the chair and has not yet disposed of either permanently or temporarily. When several questions are pending, the one last stated by the chair, and therefore the one



to be first disposed of, is said to be the immediately pending question.

A Main motion is one that is made to bring before the assembly any particular subject. No main motion can be made when another motion is pending.

A Subsidiary motion is one that may be applied to a main motion, and to certain other motions, for the purpose of modifying them, delaying action upon them or otherwise disposing of them.

Privileged motions are such that, while having no relation to the pending question, are of such urgency or importance as to require them to take precedence of all other motions.

An Incidental motion is one that arises out of another question which is pending or has just been pending, and must be decided before the pending question, or before other business is taken up. Incidental motions have no fixed rank but take precedence of the questions out of which they arise, whether those questions are main or subsidiary or privileged.

The Previous Question does not refer, as its name would imply, to the previous question, but is the name given to the motion to close debate and at once to take the vote on the immediately pending question and such other questions as are specified in the motion.

A Substitute is an amendment where an entire resolution, or section, or one or more paragraphs, is struck out and another resolution, or section, or one or more paragraphs, is inserted in its place.

Plurality, Majority, and Two-thirds Vote. In an election a candidate has a plurality when he has a larger vote than any other candidate; he has a majority when he has more than half the votes cast, ignoring blanks. In an assembly a plurality never elects except by virtue of a rule to that effect. A majority vote when used in these rules means a majority of the votes cast, ignoring blanks, at a legal meeting, a quorum being present. A two-thirds vote is two-thirds of the votes just described. For an illustration of the difference between a two-thirds vote, a vote of two-thirds of the members present, and a vote of two-thirds of the members, see 48:4.



Footnotes

¹ Any society adopting these Rules of Order should be governed by them in all cases to which they are applicable, and in which they are not inconsistent with the by-laws and rules of order of that society. [See 67:7 for the form of a rule covering this case.] Its own rules should include all of the cases where it is desirable to vary from the rules in the Manual, and especially should provide for a Quorum [64] and an Order of Business [65], as suggested in this Manual.



APPENDIX



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