

The Eight Steps of a Main Motion

Based on Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised (11th Edition)

1. Member obtains the floor

Member rises (or raises hand, if small group) and waits to speak until recognized by the Chair (by voice, or by nod)

Note: It is improper to rise (or raise hand) while another is speaking. If motion rule allows interruption, do so without recognition from the Chair.

2. Member makes a motion

"I move that (to) ..." Member does not speak to the motion until after the Chair states the motion and the member obtains the floor.

3. Another member seconds the motion

"Second" (Indicates at least two members wish to discuss.)

If the motion does not receive a second, the motion fails, although the motion can be renewed at the same meeting or a subsequent meeting. (In small groups, if discussion precedes a motion, a second is no longer necessary.)

4. The Chair states the motion

"It has been moved and seconded that (to) ... Are you ready for the question?"

5. Members debate the motion

Before speaking, members must obtain the floor. The maker has the first right to the floor. Debate must be confined to the merits of the pending motion. Members may speak twice for ten minutes, unless members vote to limit or extend debate accordingly. The Chair may alternate between proponents and opponents of the motion.

6. The Chair restates the motion

The Chair asks, "Are you ready for the question?" If there are no further requests to obtain the floor, the Chair proceeds to restate the question. "The question is on the adoption of the motion that [states motion]. Restating the motion ensures clarity on the final and exact motion to be voted upon.

7. The Chair puts the question (motion) to a vote

The Chair asks, "All those in favour, say 'aye' (or raise hand). [pause] All those opposed, say 'no' (or raise hand)."

For routine or uncontentious matters, unanimous consent may be used.

8. The Chair announces result of the vote

The Chair states, "The ayes have it, the motion carries, and [states the effect of the vote]." or "The noes have it, the motion fails."

