



## Parliamentary Procedure Overview

**Parliamentary Procedure** is a set of rules for conduct at meetings that allows everyone to be heard and to make decisions without confusion.

### Why is Parliamentary Procedure Important?

Because it's a time-tested method of conducting business at meetings and public gatherings. It can be adapted to fit the needs of any organization. Today, "Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised" is the basic handbook of operation for most clubs, organizations, and other groups. It is important that everyone know these basic rules.

Organizations using parliamentary procedure usually follow a fixed order of business.

### Below is a typical example:

1. Call to Order
2. Adoption of Agenda
3. Public Comment
4. Consent Agenda
5. Informational Items (reports)
6. Action Items
7. Board Member Reports
8. Adjourn

The method used by members to express themselves is in the form of making motions. A motion is a proposal that the board take action or a stand on an issue. Each individual member can:

- Make motions
- Second motions
- Debate motions
- Vote on motions

### There are Four Basic Types of Motions:

- **Main Motions:** The purpose of a main motion is to introduce items to the membership for their consideration. They cannot be made when any other motion is on the floor, and yield to privileged, subsidiary, and incidental motions.
- **Subsidiary Motions:** Their purpose is to change or affect how a main motion is handled and is voted on before a main motion.
- **Privileged Motions:** Their purpose is to bring up items that are urgent about special or important matters unrelated to pending business.
- **Incidental Motions:** Their purpose is to provide a means of questioning procedure concerning other motions and must be considered before the other motion.

**There are Three Other Motions that are Commonly Used that Relate to Voting:**

1. Motion to Table - This motion is often used in the attempt to "kill" a motion; however, this is inappropriate. This motion is to set aside a motion temporarily at the same meeting. Once the motion is tabled, the option is always present, however, to "take from the table," for reconsideration by the membership at the same meeting
2. Motion to Postpone Indefinitely - This motion is used to kill a motion by postponing it to an indefinite time.
3. Postpone Definitely - This motion is used to put off making a decision until a definite time in the future.

Parliamentary Procedure is the best way to get things done at your meetings. But, it will only work if you use it properly.

- Allow motions that are in order.
- Have members obtain the floor properly.
- Speak clearly and concisely.
- Obey the rules of debate.
- Most importantly, BE COURTEOUS.

