

Elements of the Rules

(from: www.portlandonline.com/)

1. **Motion:** To take particular action on an issue, a motion must be made by a group member ("I move that..."). A motion must be supported by a second individual (called "a second") and is followed by a group discussion of the substantive issue. At the end of discussion the group will vote on the motion, which depending on the type of motion will require either a majority or three-fourths majority to pass.

2. **Postpone Indefinitely:** This motion is used to kill a motion. When passed, the motion cannot be reintroduced at the meeting in which the motion to postpone was made, but may be re-introduced at a later meeting. The motion is made by stating, "I move to postpone indefinitely...", and requires a second, followed by a majority vote to pass.

3. **Amend:** This motion is used to change the wording of a current motion under consideration. The motion is made by stating, "I move to amend the motion on the floor..." and requires a second. One vote is taken to accept the amendment to the original motion, and second vote is needed to then accept or reject the newly amended motion.

4. **Commit:** This motion refers an issue to a committee, requires a second, and a majority vote. At the next committee meeting, a report must be prepared on the motion committed. If an appropriate committee exists, the motion goes to that committee. If not, a new committee is established.

5. **Question:** To end a debate immediately a motion is made to "call the question". The motion needs a second, however, no discussion is necessary. A vote is held immediately and two-thirds vote is required for passage. If the motion passes, the main motion on the floor must be voted on immediately.

6. **Table:** To table a discussion means to suspend discussion on an issue to later in the meeting or to another meeting date. A second, as well as a majority vote is required.

7. **Adjourn:** This motion is to end a meeting. A second and a majority vote is required.

Resources

- <http://www.robertsrules.com/authority.html>
- <http://www.robertsrules.org/>
- <http://www.caves.org/nss-business/bog/app-r.html>
- <http://wordnet.princeton.edu/perl/webwn?s=robert's%20rules%20of%20order>
- <http://www.constitution.org/r/ror/ror--00.htm>
- <http://www.managementhelp.org/boards/roberts.htm>
- www.parlipro.org/
- <http://www.portlandonline.com/>
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert's_Rules_of_Order
- <http://www.co-intelligence.org/I-comparisonRR-CC-DF.html>

The following site is useful for basic questions about Robert's Rules of Order:

- <http://www.roberts-rules.com/>

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CITIZEN ADVOCACY CENTER presents

An Introduction to

Robert's Rules of Order

For Fair and Orderly
Meetings &
Conventions



Roberts Rules of Order

History

Robert's Rules of Order is a popularly employed manual of parliamentary rules created by Henry Martyn Robert, engineering officer in the regular Army during the 19th century. Robert was involved in various civil and church organizations in his time. While attending meetings, he came to realize the value of common parliamentary rules in achieving efficiency and effectiveness in meetings.

Since Robert felt that organizations fell prey to conflicting views as to proper parliamentary procedure, he researched parliamentary law and published a manual of procedural rules in February of 1876. The rules of the manual have since come to be known as Robert's Rules of Order. These rules are the most commonly adopted parliamentary authority among societies in the United States. The current edition of the series is *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, Tenth Edition (2000) (abbreviated RONR).



Henry Martyn Robert

Summary

According to the tenth edition of the manual,

The application of parliamentary law is the best method yet devised to enable assemblies of any size, with due regard for every member's opinion, to arrive at the general will on the maximum number of questions of varying complexity in a minimum amount of time and under all kinds of internal climate ranging from total harmony to hardened or impassioned division of opinion.

Robert's Rules of Order is a procedural option for assemblies to adopt for deliberation and debate, providing all assembly members with common procedural grounding and language. The rules are meant to facilitate constructive, democratic meetings. Most local public bodies follow RONR, as it is a time-tested parliamentary system conducive to effectively running meetings for any size or type of organization.

How to Adopt RONR

Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, 10th ed. can be adopted as an organization's parliamentary authority if the organization inserts the following into its bylaws at the appropriate place ([RONR](#), [10th ed.], p. 15, 1. 17-25; p. 561-62, 569):

Article #
Parliamentary Authority

"The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the Society may adopt."

The Basics

RONR lays out procedures for getting proposals raised, discussed, amended, and voted on in meetings directed by a chairperson. It is based on the belief that through rules for orderly deliberation, a majority can make decisions that will work for the group. The chair presides over the meeting, and if used properly, RONR allows for every group member's voice to be heard.

There are two main parts to RONR: the "Rules of Order" and "Organizations, Meetings, and Legal Rights of Assemblies". The Rules of Order contain sections that explain how to conduct business in a deliberative assembly, a general motions classification, privileged motions, incidental motions, subsidiary motions, some main and unclassified motions, the rules of debate and of voting, committees and boards, and the details of the officers and the minutes. The section under organizations, meetings, and assembly legal rights identifies procedural and substantive issues. Organizations that use parliamentary procedure usually follow a fixed order of business such as:

1. Call to order
2. Roll call of members present
3. Reading of minutes of last meeting
4. Officer reports
5. Committee reports
6. Special orders
7. Unfinished business
8. New business
9. Announcements
10. Adjournment

All motions must be seconded, debated, and adopted by a majority vote unless otherwise noted.