Simplified Parliamentary Procedure

I. USUAL ORDER OF BUSINESS

A. Call to order

B. Roll call

C. Minutes, read and approved or corrected

D. Report of committees

1. Standing committees
2. Special committees

E. Unfinished or old business

F. New business

G. Announcements

H. Adjournment

II. PROPER PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING A MOTION

A. Member rises or signifies they would like to speak and addresses chairperson

B. Chairperson recognizes member by saying name or nodding

C. Member states motion

D. Chairperson asks for a second if one is not offered voluntarily

E. Chairperson states the motion.

F. Chairperson asks for discussion if it a debatable motion.

G. When discussion ceases, chairperson restates motion and asks for a vote.

H. Chairperson gives results of vote and declares the motion passed or failed.

(Some motions do not require all 8 steps see section III for variations.)

III. MOTIONS MOST OFTEN USED DURING A MEETING Motions have rank or precedence, those of lower rank yield to those of higher rank, resulting in more than one motion of the floor at one time. A higher ranking motion can be moved during the discussion period of the motion before the assembly. The following motions are listed according to their rank, starting with the lowest.

A. The main motion (a proposal of an activity for an organization)

1. Phraseology example: *"I move that we have a party.")*

2. Rules for procedure:

a. Requires the 8 steps as described in proper procedure, section II.

b. Majority vote

B. Amendment (a change in a motion by adding, subtracting or substituting words)

1. Phraseology example: *"I move we amend the motion by adding the word "Christmas" before the word "party"."*

2. Rules for the procedure:

a. Requires 8 steps in as described in proper procedure

b. Majority vote

3. An amendment to an amendment changes or modifies the original amendment. Say, *"I move we amend the amendment by..."*. Use same rules for procedure as above for the original amendment.

C. Refer to committee (having a special group investigate or arrange necessary details to carry out the motion)

1. Phraseology example: *"I move we refer this matter of a Christmas party to the program committee.."*

2. Rules for procedure:

a. Requires the 8 steps in proper procedure

b. Majority vote

D. Postpone to a certain day (a motion which allows the motion to be postponed until a later meeting)

1. Phraseology example: *"I move we postpone consideration of this motion until the next meeting."*

2. Rules for procedure:

a. Requires 8 steps in proper procedure

b. Majority vote

E. Close debate (to stop discussion upon the motion)

1. Phraseology example: *"I move we close debate and vote immediately on the pending question."*

2. Rules for procedure:

a. Requires 7 steps of the proper procedure - omit discussion (step F)

b. Two-thirds vote

F. Lay on the table (motion sets aside the motion for later consideration)

1. Phraseology example: *"I move we table this motion concerning the Christmas party."*

2. Rules for procedure:

a. Requires 7 steps of the proper procedure - omit discussion (step F)

b. Majority vote

3. Motion to take from the table is the method used to bring the motion back on the floor for discussion after a period of time has elapsed, Say, "I move we take from the table the motion...". The same rules as for lay on the table apply.

IV. OTHER USEFUL MOTIONS

A. Withdraw a motion (to retract, recall or take back a proposed motion)

1. Phraseology example: *"I wish to withdraw the motion concerning the party."* Note: This motion is made by the originator of the motion.

2. Rules for procedure:

a. If a member objects to the withdrawal, a motion by another member is in order. (example: *"I move that Senator Smith be permitted to withdraw her motion."*)

b. Requires 7 steps of the procedure- omit requirement of a second. (step D)

c. Majority vote.

B. Reconsider (motion to bring an old motion on to the floor)

1. Phraseology example: *"I move we reconsider the vote on the motion to have a party."*

2. Rules for procedure:

a. Requires 6 steps of the proper procedure - omit interruption of speaker (step A) and recognition by chairperson (step B)

b. Majority vote

C. Point of order (member indicates an error in parliamentary procedure)

1. Phraseology example: *"I rise to a point of order."*

2. Rules for procedure:

a. May interrupt a speaker; does not need recognition; does not need a second

b. Decision made by chairperson

D. Parliamentary inquiry (member tactfully asks if an error has been made in parliamentary procedure)

1. Phraseology example: *"I rise for parliamentary inquiry."*

2. Rules for procedure: same as for point of order

E. Division (to obtain an accurate account of the vote)

1. Phraseology example: *"I call for division."*

2. Rules for procedure: same as for point of order

F. Questions of privilege (to bring up urgent matter concerning personal comfort)

1. Phraseology example*: "I rise to a question of privilege,"*

2. Rules for procedure: same as for point of order

G. Adjourn (motion to end the present meeting)

1. Phraseology example: *"I move we adjourn."*

2. Rules for procedure:

a. Requires 7 steps in proper procedure - omit discussion

b. Majority vote

How to Attempt to Carry or Defeat Motions

How to attempt to pass a motion

1. Second the motion immediately.

2. Give arguments for it during the discussion.

3. Vote for the motion.

4. Vote against any motion to postpone the motion indefinitely.

5. Move to amend it, to perfect or improve it.

6. Vote against the motion to refer.

7. Vote against the motion to postpone.

8. Vote against the motion to close debate.

9. Vote against the motion to table.

10. Vote against the motion to recess.

11. Vote against the motion to reconsider.

12. Carry out motions immediately, so the motion to rescind cannot be used.

13. Vote against motion to adjourn.

14. The only way to carry a motion is to get the votes. Have your supporters at the meeting and encourage them to vote your way.

How to attempt to defeat a motion

1. Do not second the motion.

2. Give arguments against it during the discussion.

3. Vote against the motion.

4. Move to postpone indefinitely in an attempt to "kill" it.

5. Move to amend it to make it undesirable or complicated.

6. Move to refer it to a committee to delay action.

7. Move to postpone it to the next meeting to delay action.

8. Move to close debate to stop further discussion of good points.

9. Move to table the motion.

10. Move to take a recess to delay the discussion and strengthen your side.

11. If opponents win, move to reconsider the motion.

12. If opponents win and action has not been taken, move to rescind it.

13. Move to adjourn in order to prevent voting.

14. The best way to defeat a motion is to vote it down. Get your supporters to the meeting. Encourage them to stay and vote your way.