

How to Make and Handle a Motion

1. To make a motion, you must first be recognized and given the floor by the meeting chairperson or presiding officer. Once you have the floor, state the motion as “I move (state your motion here).”
2. Once the chairperson has heard your motion, any member may second it by saying, “I second the motion,” indicating approval of the motion.
 - A motion may not be discussed or voted on unless it is seconded.
 - If there is no second immediately, the chairperson should ask for someone to second the motion. If there is still no second, the chairperson must declare the motion lost without a vote.
3. Once a motion is made and seconded, the chair repeats the motion and then asks for discussion by the members. All discussion should be addressed to the chair and be about the motion. A member should speak only once to a motion.
 - A motion introducing a new subject or idea must not be made while another motion is being discussed. Such a motion would be declared out of order. Amendments, postponements, adjournments and tabling motions are not considered out of order.
4. After a reasonable length of time for discussion, or when discussion stops, the chair must put the motion to a vote.

Common Motions

Reason for the motion	What to say	Seconder required	Debate allowed	Able to amend	Voting requirements
To ensure a report is recognized in the minutes	I move that the report be adopted...	√			Majority
To protest a breach of rules or conduct	I rise to a point of order				No vote
To add to or delete from a motion	I move to amend by...	√	√	√	Majority
To gain more knowledge regarding the pending motion	Point of information				No vote
To allow research and analysis, to delay action on a motion	I move to refer the matter to committee...	√	√	√	Majority
To take a timed recess when no motion is pending	I move that we recess for...	√		√	Majority
To prevent spending time on unimportant discussion	I move to object consideration of this motion	√			Two-thirds
To postpone discussion to a specific date	I move to postpone discussion until...	√	√	√	Majority
To leave a motion for consideration at an unspecified time	I move to table the motion...	√			Majority
To re-open a discussion	I move to reconsider the vote on...	√	Possibly		Majority
To cancel a motion	I move to rescind...	√	√		Two-thirds
To resume discussion of a table topic	I move to take from the table...	√			Majority
To conclude a discussion and force a vote	I move to close debate	√	√		Two-thirds
To end discussion of a motion	I move to postpone the motion indefinitely	√	√		Majority
To set a time to conclude a meeting	I move to adjourn at [time]	√			Majority
To close a meeting	I move that we adjourn	√			Majority

Common Board Meeting Terms

Term	Definition
Accept a report	Adopt a report, not just receive it
Adjourn	End a meeting officially
Agenda	List of items of business for consideration by the meeting attendees
Amend	Change a resolution or a motion by adding, striking out, or substituting a word or phrase
Assembly	Organized group of people meeting to conduct business
Ballot	Written vote that assures the secrecy of the individual's election decision
Bylaws	Set of rules by which an organization conducts business
Chair	Presiding officer of an organization
Debate	Discuss the merits of a specific question
Floor	Right of a person to speak to people at a meeting and have their undivided attention
Main motion	Method of introducing new business in an assembly
Majority	More than half of the members voting on a issue
Meeting	Assembly of members gathered for any length of time without taking a recess
Minutes	Record of the events of a meeting
Motion	Proposal for action by the group
Objection	Occurs when a member is strongly opposed to the main motion

Term	Definition
Order of business	Order in which the items on the agenda are discussed at the meeting
Point of information	Request for an immediate answer to a question concerning the background or content of a motion or a resolution
Point of order	Objection raised against any process or motion that the member decides is a violation of the rules
Point of personal privilege	Request for the immediate consideration of a matter that affects the comfort, safety, or orderliness of a member
Previous question	Motion requiring an end to debate and asking that a vote be taken on the question being discussed
Quorum	Number of members needed to conduct business
Recess	Short break in a meeting
Refer to committee	Create a committee or instruct an existing committee to do research and report its findings back to the group
Rescind	Make a motion to nullify a vote taken at a previous meeting
Second	Indication that a member wants a motion discussed by the membership
Session	All meetings, even those that were adjourned
Shall the question be discussed?	Mode of stating the question about considering a subject
Table	Motion to place a main motion and all amendments aside temporarily with the intention of bringing them back at a later time for action