

Motions in order of precedence and their characteristics – Robert’s Rules

Motions	(1) Can interrupt speaker	(2) Requires seconding	(3) Amend- able	(4) Debat- able	(5) Vote required	(6) Can be reconsidered	Notes
Privileged motions (highest precedence)							(a) As to date, hour or place – such amendments are undebatable (b) See renewal: Motion to adjourn must be renewable as soon as there has been progress in business or material progress in debate (c) As to the length of the recess (d) As relates to raising the question of privilege; if the member states the question in the form of a motion, the motion must be seconded (e) Not allowed in Committees (f) An affirmative vote can be reconsidered before any vote has been taken under the order of the <i>previous question</i> , but not after the order has been partly executed. (g) A negative vote can be considered only until such time where sufficient progress in business or debate render it a new question (h) Any amendment is undebatable (i) An affirmative vote can be reconsidered without debate at any time before the order affecting limits is exhausted. If the order is carried out, only the unexecuted part may be reconsidered (j) Debate cannot go into the merits of the main question any more than necessary (k) As to the time and as to making the postponed question a <i>special order</i> (l) Requires a 2/3 vote if it makes the motion a <i>special order</i> (m) For standing committees, amendable as to the committee to which the main question is to be referred; for special committees, amendable as to committee’s composition in a manner of selection; for all committees, amendable as to instructions the committee is to follow (n) Is generally amendable, but there are two degrees of amendment – primary and secondary – and a secondary amendment cannot be amended (o) Undebatable whenever the motion to be amended is undebatable (p) Regardless of the vote required to adopt the question to be amended (q) Appeal must be made at the time of ruling – if any debate or business has intervened, it is too late to appeal (r) Debatable unless it is related to indecorum/transgression of rules of speaking or priority of business, or is made when an undebatable question is pending or involved in the appeal (s) Unless it is a <i>rule of order</i> , it can be suspended by majority vote (t) Until consideration of the question has begun (u) A motion to close the polls requires a 2/3 vote (v) Previous notice of intent can be given after another member, who has not yet begun to speak, has been assigned the floor (w) Majority if notice of intent to make motion was previously given (x) In order when another person has been assigned the floor, so long as that person has begun to speak (y) Calling up of the motion to reconsider is out of order when another has the floor (z) Calling up of the motion does not require a seconder
Adjourning to fixed date	N	Y	Y (a)	N	Majority	Y	
Adjourning without fixed date	N	Y	N	N	Majority	N (b)	
Recessing meeting	N	Y	N (c)	Y	Majority	N	
Raise a question of privilege	Y	N (d)	N	N	Chair decides	N	
Subsidiary motions							
Lay on the table (highest precedence) (<i>tabling motion</i>)	N	Y	N	N	Majority	Negative vote only	
Previous question (<i>voting immediately</i>) (e)	N	Y	N	N	2/3	(f) (g)	
Limit or extend limits of debate (e)	N	Y	N	Y (h)	2/3	(i) (g)	
Postpone to a certain time (or definitely)	N	Y	Y (k)	Y (j)	Majority (l)	Y (g)	
Commit or refer	N	Y	Y (m)	Y (j)	Majority	Only if consideration of the question has not begun	
Amend	N	Y	Y (n)	Y (o)	Majority (p)	Y	
Postpone indefinitely	N	Y	N	Y	Majority	Affirmative vote only	
Point of order	Y	N	N	N	Ruled by the Chair	N	
Incidental motions							
Appeal	Y (q)	Y	N	Y (r)	Majority	Y	
Suspend the rules	N	Y	N	N	2/3 (s)	N	
Objection to the consideration of a question	Y (t)	N	N	N	2/3	Negative vote (sustaining objection) only	
Division of a question	N	Y	Y	N	Majority	N	
Motions relating to the methods of voting and the polls	N	Y	Y	N	Majority (u)	Y	
Rescind (or repeal or annul) / Amend something previously adopted	Y (v)	Y	Y	Y	2/3 (w)	Negative vote only	
Reconsider	Y (x) (y)	Y (z)	N (aa)	Y	Majority	N	
Main motions (Lowest precedence)	N	Y	Y	Y	Majority (bb)	Y	

(aa) When the motion to be reconsidered is undebatable, the motion to reconsider is undebatable

(bb) Exceptions to the majority vote: (a) when a motion proposes an action for which the bylaws or special rules of order prescribe a requirement of more than a majority vote; (b) when adoption of the motion would have the effect of suspending a rule of order or a parliamentary right of members; or (c) when adoption of the motion would have the effect of changing something already adopted