

# Parliamentary Procedure

Parliamentary Procedure is a quick, efficient, organized and democratic way to conduct business at a meeting. The majority rules yet the rights of the minority are protected. The purpose of this publication is to give you the basics that you will need in conducting a meeting and business associated with a 4-H club.

## Motions

A main motion is the motion used when someone wants an idea to be considered, an action to be taken or a rule or policy to be adopted or simply “something to be done”.

To make a main motion you should:

1. Stand
2. Say Mr./Madame President  
The President says “Yes, (the person’s name)” or they can say “The chair recognizes the member to...(my right, left, or wherever that person is standing)”
3. The member (still standing) says, “I move...” (Not I make a motion).  
The motion should be short and sweet, but all points should be covered. Be sure to include locations, times, etc. for events. Remember the secretary has to write down the motion you make word for word. **Example:** I move that our club talent show be held Friday, June 14<sup>th</sup> at the Community Center, beginning at 7:00 pm.
4. The member sits down.
5. Another member then says “Second” if they agree with the motion (No third is necessary). If the motion is not seconded then the motion dies due to a lack of a second.
6. The president then says, “the motion has been made and properly seconded that (repeat the motion) is there any discussion?”

To discuss a motion you should:

1. Stand
2. Say Mr./Madame President  
The President recognizes the member as in the above.
3. The member then states why they agree or disagree with the motion.
4. The member is seated

To vote you should:

1. When there is no more discussion (the President can ask “is there anymore discussion”) the motion should be voted on.
2. The president should say, “We will now vote on the motion to (repeat the motion). All those in favor say “aye”. All those opposed say “nay”.
3. The president will then announce the...(ayes or nays) have it. The motion (passes or fails).

To amend a motion you should:

1. Stand and say Mr./Madame President  
The President recognizes the member in the same manner as when making a motion.
2. Member says, "I move to amend the main motion by...  
Deleting the words \_\_\_\_\_  
Adding the words \_\_\_\_\_  
Substituting the words \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_
3. Member is seated
4. Another member seconds in the same manner as above
5. Discussion follows in the same manner as with a motion
6. A vote is then taken on the amendment (not the original motion).  
The President would say, "We will now vote on the motion to amend the main motion by. ... (deleting, adding, substituting) the words... All those in favor say "aye". All those opposed say "nay". The amendment... (passes or fails).
7. If the amendment passes then the main motion is to be discussed as it is amended.
8. If the motion fails then the main motion is to be discussed as it was originally stated.

## Refer to a Committee

To refer something to a committee you should:

1. Stand and say Mr./Madame President  
The President will recognize the member
2. Member says, "I move to refer the (item) to...to a committee consisting of \_\_\_ (number of) people appointed by (usually the President) to report back (usually the next meeting). It is recommended that this be an odd number.
3. Another member seconds
4. The president says, "The motion has been made and properly seconded that we refer the (item) to a committee consisting of \_\_\_ people, appointed by \_\_\_ to report back \_\_\_\_\_. Is there any discussion?" After discussion it is time to vote. This motion requires a 2/3-majority vote, (see chart) so a counted vote must be taken.
5. The President would say "We will now vote on the motion to refer ...to...to a committee consisting of \_\_\_ appointed by \_\_\_ to report back \_\_\_\_\_. All those in favor raise your right hand. All opposed same sign." If the motion passes the president (or whomever the motion stated) appoints the committee. The committee chair should be the vice-president and is included in the number of members (usually an odd number). The vice-president or chair of the committee only votes during a tie. If the motion fails, discussion continues on the item. (The committee must report by the next two meetings or the motion dies and the secretary deletes it).

## Methods of voting

Depending on the circumstances you should call for a:

1. Voice vote: Say “aye” or “nay”
2. Counted vote: Standing (stand up)  
Hands (raise right hand)
3. Ballot vote: (Write your vote on a piece of paper and place in a central location to be read by the president);

(The President only votes in the event of a tie, to make a vote a tie and when secret ballot is used.)

### Announcing passes or fails

1. The President must call voice votes one way or another (even if they are close). If the losing team feels that it was close, or that they should have won the vote, anyone that voted on the losing side may say “Division” or “Division of the House” (you do not have to be recognized). A counted vote must then be taken.

## Point of Order

When a member, including the President does something that is against proper parliamentary procedure and the president does not correct it you should:

1. Stand and say “I rise to a point of order”.  
You do not have to be recognized and you may interrupt anyone that is speaking.
2. The President should then say, “State your point”.
3. The member will then say “the member (president, whomever you are referring to) to my (right, left, etc.) ...” For example, “the member to my right was not properly recognized before speaking.” Or “the president called for a voice vote and a division requires a counted vote”. The member is then seated.
4. The President will then say, “your point is well taken”, or “your point is not well taken”. If the president says, “Your point is not well taken”, but you still feel that you are right, you should move to appeal the decision of the chair. A vote is then taken whether to sustain the decision of the chair. A majority or tie vote, even if the President vote ties it, sustains the decision.

## Table for determining number of votes needed for passage

# VOTING	MAJORITY	2/3	# VOTING	MAJORITY	2/3
1	1	1	13	7	9
2	2	2	14	8	10
3	2	2	15	8	10
4	3	3	16	9	11
5	3	4	17	9	12
6	4	4	18	10	12
7	4	5	19	10	13
8	5	6	20	11	14
9	5	6	21	11	14
10	6	7	22	12	15
11	6	8	23	12	16
12	7	8	24	13	16

## Nominations for Office

When nominating a person for office you should:

1. Stand and say Mr./Madame President  
After being recognized by the President
2. The member will say, “ I would place in nomination for the office of (name of office), (Name of person).
3. The member will be seated. (There is no second needed for nominations.)
4. The President will ask for other nominations for the office 3 times.  
Hearing no further nominations, the President will ask for a motion that nominations cease. A person may enter the motion before nominations are asked for 3 times. It should be noted that only a member eligible to vote could introduce a motion to cease nominations or place a name in nomination for a particular office. Another member will second the motion. (There should be no discussion.)
5. The President will ask for a vote. Those in favor of the motion will raise their right hand. (There should be a 2/3 majority in favor before nominations can be closed.)  
Once the nominations are made for all offices, you may proceed in one of two ways.
  - a. If there is no competition for any of the offices, a member may rise, address the chair, and after being recognized may say, “I move that the slate of officers be elected by acclamation (this means that we think that these are the best people for the jobs otherwise other people would have been nominated). Speeches by nominees as to why they wish to be elected should be encouraged.
  - b. If there is competition, speeches by the nominees for each office should be given and a ballot vote taken.

## Use of the Gavel

3 taps	All members rise
2 taps	<i>Meeting</i> comes to order
1 tap	All members sit down
	Used after the ruling on a vote on a motion
	Used after announcing adjournment
1 Sharp tap	Used to get <i>members</i> to come to order
Series of Sharp Taps	Used to get <i>members</i> to come to order

## Miscellaneous Information

There can only be one **main** motion on the floor at one time. No other motion can be made until the motion on the floor is voted upon or withdrawn.

A member **CANNOT** talk **against** his or her own motion.

A member **CAN** vote against his or her own motion.

A vote that ends in a tie, fails, even if the President votes and thus creates the tie. A president can vote if he/she is a member of the assembly (club).

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Reference  
Robert's Rules of Order. Robert, Henry M. 1876. Revised by Darwin Patanode 1989.  
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