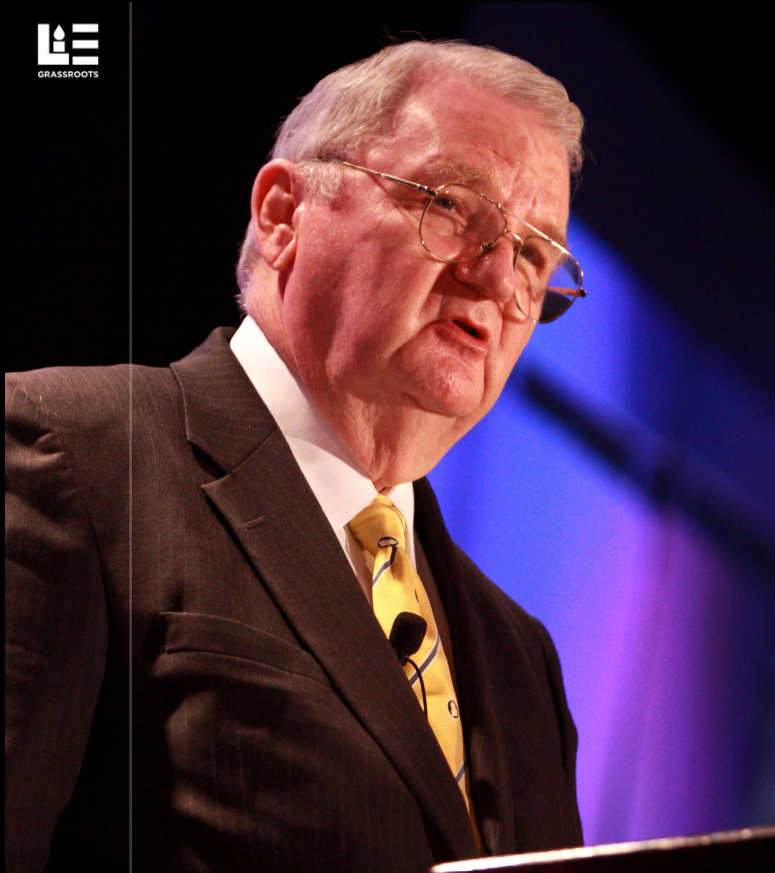




# Crash Course in Robert's Rules of Order

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Morton Blackwell founded the Leadership Institute in 1979.

Our Mission is to increase the effectiveness of conservatives in the public policy process.

Since then, over **324,000** conservative activists have been trained.

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## **The Leadership Institute is a 501(c)3**

**We have an open admissions policy.**

**We do not support or oppose candidates or proposed legislation.**

**Faculty views are not necessarily those of the Leadership Institute.**



# SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook@Lleadershipinstitute

Twitter @LeadershipInst



The image shows the Facebook profile page for the Leadership Institute. The cover photo features the White House with the text "Learn to win." overlaid. The profile picture is a circular logo with a stylized "L" and a flame. The page name is "Leadership Institute" with 83K followers and 37 following. Navigation tabs include Posts, About, Mentions, Reviews, Followers, Photos, and More. The "Intro" section describes the organization as a nonprofit training conservatives, with contact information for LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE INC. in Arlington, VA. The "Posts" section shows a recent post from 20h ago about Riley Gaines and the Christian Statesman Summit, accompanied by a group photo of attendees.

Learn to win.

**Leadership Institute**  
83K followers · 37 following

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**Intro**  
The Leadership Institute trains conservatives. Its grads are activists, students, and leaders who kn

**Page** · Nonprofit organization  
LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE INC is responsible for this Page  
1101 N Highland St, Arlington, VA, United States, Virginia  
(703) 247-2000  
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**Photos** See all photos

**Posts** Filters

**Leadership Institute**  
20h  
LI was so glad to have Riley Gaines in the house!  
Thank you to all attendees of the Christian Statesman Summit for a wonderful training.

5



The Leadership Institute teaches conservatives how to fight the liberal left.

“You owe it to your philosophy to study how to win.”

Morton Blackwell

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If you found  
today helpful  
and  
informative:



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**QUESTIONS?**



A wooden gavel with a brass band is positioned on a wooden block in the foreground. In the background, a person wearing a dark suit and tie is seated at a desk, holding a pen and writing on a document. The scene is set in a well-lit room with a window in the background.

# Robert's Rules of Order: A Crash Course

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# Parliamentary Terms

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- Majority: More than half of the votes cast by persons entitled to vote, excluding blanks or abstentions.
- Minority: The smaller part of a group; less than half of the votes cast. In parliamentary terms, it refers to members who did not vote with the majority.
- Germane: Relevant or pertinent to the subject at hand. In parliamentary procedure, amendments or discussions must be germane to the motion being considered.
- Assembly: A group of members gathered for a meeting to conduct business under parliamentary rules.
- Floor: The right to speak or present a motion in a meeting. "Having the floor" means a member is currently speaking or presenting.
- Motion: A formal proposal made by a member of an assembly that the assembly take certain action.



1. The Rights of the Organization  
Supersede the Rights of the Individual Members
2. All members are equal and their rights are equal
3. A quorum must be present to do business
4. The majority rules
  - a) All questions at any legally convened meeting shall be decided by simple majority of the votes cast, unless stipulated otherwise in the Bylaws.
5. Silence means consent
  - a) Those members that do NOT vote AGREE to go along with the decision of the majority by their silence.
6. Two-thirds vote rule: A 2/3rds vote is necessary whenever limiting or taking away the rights of members or changing a previous decision.
7. One question at a time and one speaker at a time.
  - a. "Motions must be related to matters under consideration"
8. Once a member has been 'recognized' this individual has been granted 'the floor' and may not be interrupted by another member except under special circumstances
  - a. Motions must receive full debate
9. The meeting chair may not put a motion to vote as long as members wish to debate it
  - a. The debate can only be cut short by a 2/3rds vote
10. Once a decision made, an identical motion must not be brought forward at the same meeting
  - a. Such a motion shall be ruled out of order by the meeting chair

## Ten Basic Rules of Parliamentary Procedure

# Bonus Rule:

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Personal remarks in a debate are ALWAYS out of order

- Debate Motions not Motives
- Debate must be directed to Principles and not Personalities
- All motions and discussions must only address the Chair





# History of Robert's Rules of Order

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## Henry Martyn Robert

Author of Robert's Rules of Order published in 1876

Engineer

United States Army General -1901

Country's Leading Parliamentarian



## Designing The Rules...

“Based, in its general principles, upon rules and practices of Congress, and adapted in its details of the use of ordinary societies”

**Part 1, Main Motions.** These motions are listed in order of precedence. A motion can be introduced if it is higher on the chart than the pending motion.  
§ indicates the section from Robert's Rules.

§	PURPOSE:	YOU SAY:	INTERRUPT?	2ND?	DEBATE?	AMEND?	VOTE?
§21	Close meeting	I move to adjourn	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
§20	Take break	I move to recess for ...	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
§19	Register complaint	I rise to a question of privilege	Yes	No	No	No	None
§18	Make follow agenda	I call for the orders of the day	Yes	No	No	No	None
§17	Lay aside temporarily	I move to lay the question on the table	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
§16	Close debate	I move the previous question	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
§15	Limit or extend debate	I move that debate be limited to ...	No	Yes	No	Yes	2/3
§14	Postpone to a certain time	I move to postpone the motion to ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
§13	Refer to committee	I move to refer the motion to ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
§12	Modify wording of motion	I move to amend the motion by ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
§11	Kill main motion	I move that the motion be postponed indefinitely	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
§10	Bring business before assembly (a main motion)	I move that [or "to"] ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority

**Part 2, Incidental Motions.** No order of precedence. These motions arise incidentally and are decided immediately.

§	PURPOSE:	YOU SAY:	INTERRUPT?	2ND?	DEBATE?	AMEND?	VOTE?
§23	Enforce rules	Point of Order	Yes	No	No	No	None
§24	Submit matter to assembly	I appeal the decision of the chair	Yes	Yes	Varies	No	Majority
§25	Suspend rules	I move to suspend the rules	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
§26	Avoid main motion altogether	I object to the consideration of the question	Yes	No	No	No	2/3
§27	Divide motion	I move to divide the question	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
§29	Demand a rising vote	I move for a rising vote	Yes	No	No	No	None
§33	Parliamentary law question	Parliamentary inquiry	Yes if urgent	No	No	No	None
§33	Request for information	Point of information	Yes if urgent	No	No	No	None

**Part 3, Motions That Bring a Question Again Before the Assembly.**

No order of precedence. Introduce only when nothing else is pending.

§	PURPOSE:	YOU SAY:	INTERRUPT?	2ND?	DEBATE?	AMEND?	VOTE?
§34	Take matter from table	I move to take from the table ...	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
§35	Cancel previous action	I move to rescind ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	2/3 or Majority with notice
§37	Reconsider motion	I move to reconsider ...	No	Yes	Varies	No	Majority

# Common Motions Used and What they Require

# Classes of Motions

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Main Motions



Motions That Bring a  
Question Again Before  
the Assembly



Incidental Motions



Subsidiary Motions



Privileged Motions

# Main Motions (Class of Motion)

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Brings before the assembly a question or business consideration



In order only when no other motion is pending



Only one main motion on the floor at any time



Requires second, debatable, usually approved by majority vote, unless some provision in bylaws require different vote

# Debate

---



Chair begins debate by asking for discussion



Maker of motion has right to speak first, if properly recognized



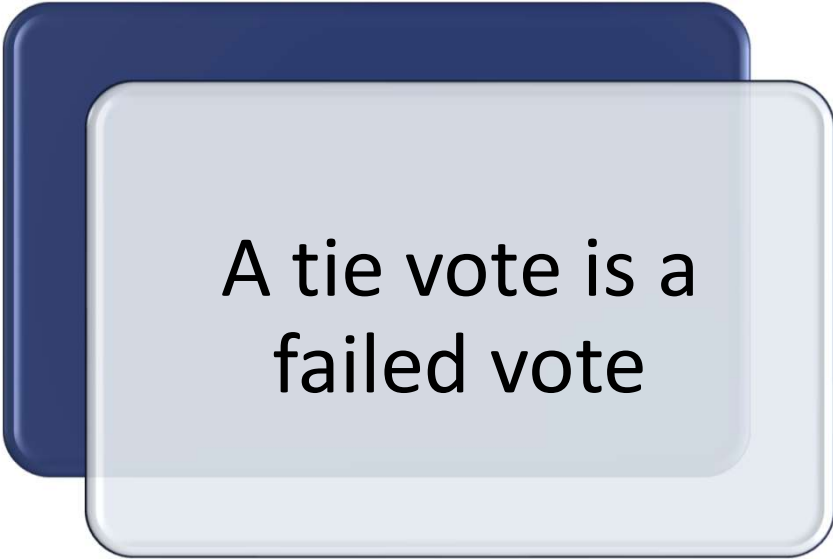
Can only speak twice on same question during the same day



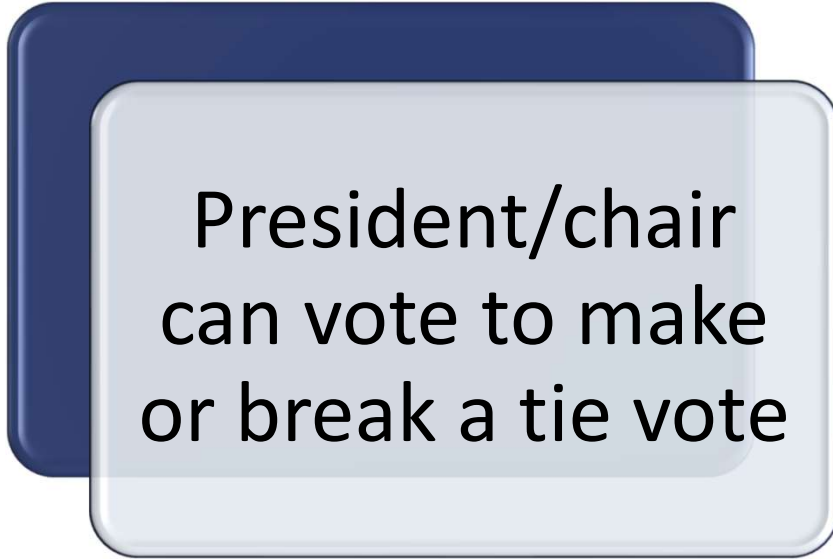
Any motion that stops or limits debate requires a 2/3 vote

# Tie Votes

---



A tie vote is a  
failed vote



President/chair  
can vote to make  
or break a tie vote

# Motions that bring a Questions Again before the Assembly

---



**Brings back to the assembly a question that has already been considered**



**Requires a second**



**May or may not be debatable**

Take from table, non-debatable



**To reconsider**



**To rescind**



**To take from the table**

# Reconsider

---

Must be made by  
a member who  
voted on the  
prevailing side

Can only be made  
in the same  
meeting

Can not interrupt a  
speaker

Requires a second

Debatable if the  
motion to be  
reconsidered is  
debatable

Not Amendable

Majority Vote



# Rescind Something Previously Adopted

---

Used to cancel a previous action by the Assembly

Can be applied to anything

Can not interrupt a speaker

Requires a second

Debatable

Amendable

2/3<sup>rd</sup> Vote, or a majority vote if previous notice given

# Take from the Table

---

In order when no other  
business is pending

Motions have to be  
taken from the table  
before a quarterly time  
period has elapsed

Can not interrupt a  
speaker

Requires a second

Not debatable

Amendable

Majority rules

# Subsidiary Motions

---

Assisting in treating or disposing of a main motion

All require second

Debatable: Depends

Requires majority vote unless involving rights of others

- Call for previous question (2/3)
- Limit or extend of debate (2/3)

Most widely used is “Amend”

# Subsidiary Motions

---

To lay on the  
table

To call for the  
previous  
question

To limit or  
extend debate

To postpone  
to a definite  
time

To refer to a  
committee

To amend

To postpone  
indefinitely

# Tabling a Motion

---

Proper form of motion is  
to “Lay on Table”

Misuse of “Postpone  
Indefinitely” or “Postpone  
to a Definite Time”

Intention sometimes is  
“Refer” or “Commit”  
which sends to committee  
for further review

Out of order when no  
business is pending

Definite time to “Take  
From the Table”

- If next meeting within quarter,  
by end of next meeting
- Over quarter, end of current  
session

# “Call the Previous Question”

---



**Actual motion is “Call the Previous Question”**

Must be recognized by chair to make motion, cannot be just shouted out



**Is a vote to stop debate and not to vote on pending motion**



**Requires a 2/3 vote to pass**

2/3 votes are taken by rising vote



**If receives 2/3 vote, motion passes and debate is stopped and a vote is taken immediately on pending question**



**If does not receive 2/3 vote, motion fails and debate continues**

# Limit or Extend Debate

---

To limit or extend  
the amount of time  
used to debate a  
motion

Cannot interrupt

Requires a Second

Not Debateable

Requires a 2/3<sup>rd</sup>  
vote

# Postpone to a Definite Time

---

To put off an item  
of business until a  
later specified  
time

Time must be  
specified or it acts  
as Postpone  
Indefinitely

Cannot Interrupt

Requires a Second

Debatable

Amendable

Majority Vote



# Refer to a Committee

---



Allows for additional information or study of issue before voting



Motion to Refer should include details of who the committee will be and who will appoint



Usually defines time for committee to report

# Amendments

---

Only two amendments can be pending at any one time

- Primary
  - Applied to Main Motion
- Secondary
  - Applied to primary amendment
    - Can have infinite number of secondary amendments as long as only two total amendments pending at any one time

Vote on amendments in reverse order

- Secondary then primary

## Amending a Motion

Most used Subsidiary Motion

Methods of Amending

- Insert (inside the motion)
- Add (at the end)
- Strike out
- Strike out and insert (words only)
- Substitute (a paragraph)

Must be germane to main motion

# Postpone Indefinitely

---

Used to dispose of  
a main motion for  
that session

Will allow a  
motion to brought  
up again at  
another session

Cannot interrupt

Requires a second

Is debatable

Not Amendable

Majority Vote

# Privileged Motions

---

Do not relate to  
pending business

Related to the rights  
and privileges to the  
assembly or to its  
members

Not Debatable

To fix the time to  
which to adjourn

To adjourn

To Recess

To rise to a question  
of privilege

To call for the order  
of the day

## Fix time at Which to Adjourn

---

Cannot  
interrupt a  
speaker

requires a  
second

Is not  
debatable

Majority vote

# Adjourn

---

Next to highest ranking motion

Fix the time to which to adjourn is highest

Can not interrupt a speaker

Requires a second

Not debatable

Majority rules

Chair can adjourn without motion

- If no other business is pending
- If time is reached on an adopted agenda

# Recess

---

Used to take a  
break, needs to be  
specific on  
timeframe

Cannot interrupt a  
speaker

requires a second

Is not debatable

Amendable

Majority Vote



# Rise to a Question of Privilege

---

Used to raise a question  
about the comfort of  
the members and  
individual privilege

Can interrupt a speaker

Doesn't require a  
second

Is not debatable

Is not amendable

Chair Rules

# Call for the Orders of the Day

---

Used to make the  
assembly stick to its  
agenda

Cannot interrupt a  
speaker

Doesn't require a  
second

Is not debatable

Upon the call, members  
must immediately  
return to the items on  
the agenda

Agenda can be  
overruled by a 2/3<sup>rd</sup>  
vote

# Incidental Motions

---

Incidental to pending motions  
or business at hand

Not debatable

- To suspend the rules
- To withdraw a motion
- To call for reading of papers
- To object to consideration
- To rise to a point of order
- To rise to a parliamentary inquiry
- To appeal the decision of the Chair
- To call for a division of the house
- To call for a division of the question



# Suspend the Rules

---

Temporarily  
suspends a  
rule of order

Cannot  
interrupt a  
speaker

requires a  
second

Is not  
debatable

Requires a  
2/3<sup>rd</sup> Vote

Cannot  
suspend  
bylaws

# Withdraw a Motion

---



**Motion can be withdrawn at any time  
prior to voting**



**Before restated by chair belongs to  
maker**

Can be withdrawn, changed or modified in any  
way with only approval of maker



**After restating, belongs to assembly**

# Withdraw a Motion

---

Maker of motion must ask permission from the Chair to withdraw their motion

Treated first as a unanimous consent request

If motion to withdraw is made by another member after the request to withdraw then no second is required

If voted on requires a majority vote

# Object to the Consideration of the Question

---

Meant to prevent  
to Assembly from  
entertaining a  
motion

Can interrupt a  
speaker

Does not require a  
second

Is not debatable

Is not Amendable

Requires a 2/3<sup>rd</sup>  
Vote

# Rise to a Point of Order

---

Used to correct a  
mistake in  
procedure

Can interrupt a  
speaker

Doesn't require a  
second

Is not debatable

Chair rules

Must be raised at  
time of mistake  
before action has  
been taken



# Rise to a Parliamentary Inquiry

---

Used to ask a  
question about  
Parliamentary  
Procedure

Cannot interrupt a  
speaker

Doesn't require a  
second

Is not debatable

Chair or  
Parliamentarian  
rules

# Appeal the Decision of the Chair

---

Used to overrule  
a ruling of the  
CHair

Can interrupt a  
speaker

Requires a  
second

Is not debatable

Assembly votes  
on the appeal,  
majority vote

# “Call for a Division of the House”

---

- Questions results of a vote
- Only in order if a questionable vote
- Can be made by a single member
- Can interrupt a speaker
- Is not debatable
- Does not require a vote
- Made only by rising vote or show of hands
  - Counted vote must be made in form of motion
  - Chair can ask for counted vote at any time



# Call for a Division of the Question

---

Used to divide a motion into multiple motions

Cannot interrupt a speaker

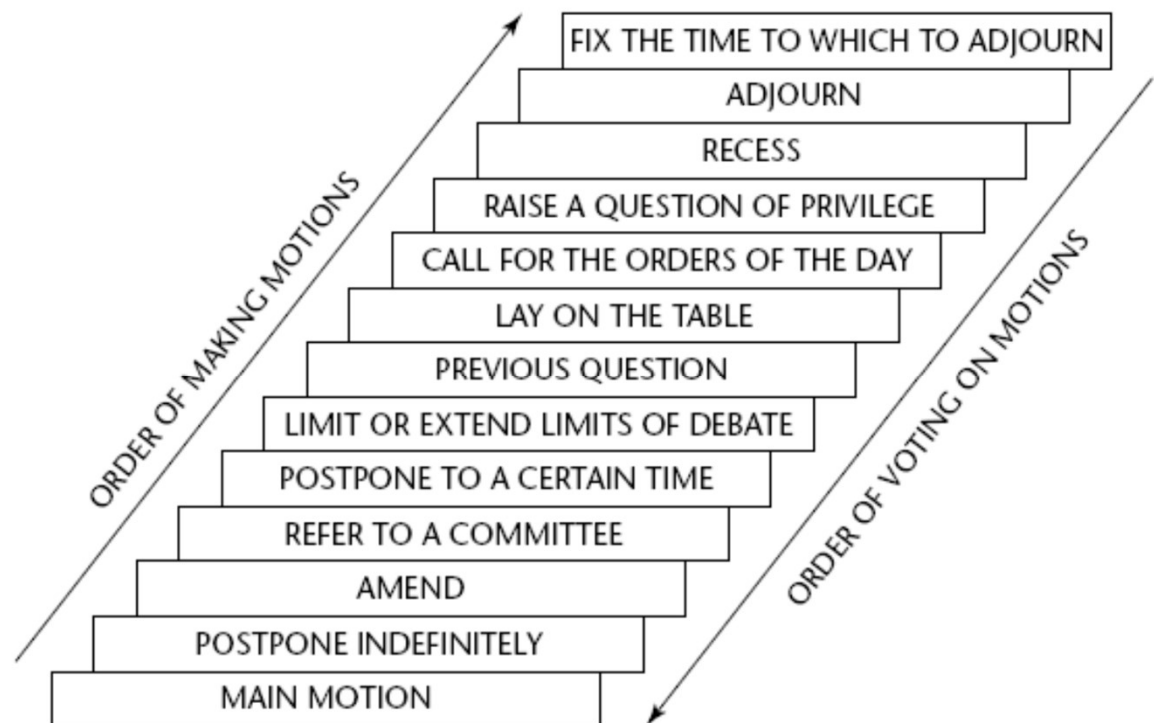
requires a second

Is not debatable, but is amendable

Requires a majority vote but cannot be reconsidered

# Order of Pending Motions

- Privileged Motions
- Subsidiary Motions
- Incidental Motions (non-ranked)
- Motions That Bring a Question Again Before the Assembly
- Main Motions



# Summary

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When you know and understand Robert's Rules of Order you will be able to smoothly and efficiently run meetings and attend conventions without getting confused. This will also allow you to better be able to organize any meetings you are part of







# Thank you

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