

## Ten rules of order you need to be familiar with in order to follow and participate in most debates:

1. **To speak at a meeting, you must first be “recognized” by the chair of the meeting.** This means that the Chair gives you, and only you, permission to address the group, usually by saying something like “The delegate at microphone one” or by saying your name.
2. Generally, **discussion is held on specific motions.** A motion is a specific way of explaining what action will happen and why it is necessary.
3. **First someone “moves” a motion.** For instance, a delegate would say to the Chair of the meeting, “I move to adopt the recommendation of the task force.” (At larger meetings or conventions, the resolutions committee often moves the motion, and this opens the floor for debate.)
4. **Motions require a seconder.** This means that another delegate must say, “I second that motion.” If not, it means no one is interested in this motion and it “dies.”
5. **Once motions are moved and seconded and “on the floor”, they may be amended.** That means that other delegates propose changes to the motion. The amender says to the Chair, “I move to amend the resolution by adding the following words to the second sentence . . .”
6. **If an amendment is moved, delegates can only speak about the motion to amend** and the idea it represents. If someone wants to propose a different amendment, they have to wait until after the vote on the first amendment.
7. **When delegates believe there has been enough debate on the motion or on the amendment, someone can be recognized and “call the question.”** This means they want to end debate and have the delegates vote right away. The Chair then calls for a vote about whether the delegates are ready to end debate. If two-thirds of them vote to end debate, debate ends, and then the Chair calls the vote on the amendment (or motion, depending on what is on the floor).
8. **People vote “yes” or “no”** on the amendment (or motion, depending on what is on the floor). If an amendment fails (gets voted down), another delegate may then propose a different amendment. Debate continues on the new amendment, and so on.

**9. After all amendments have been debated, delegates are asked to vote on the motion itself.**

**10. Debate on a motion can be stopped if someone moves to “table” the discussion** and if a majority of delegates vote in favour of tabling. Motions to table will either say when the debate will continue (e.g., after lunch, following the report from the Finance Committee) or they will not, which means that the motion may never appear again.