

**ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER MADE EASY
MADE A LITTLE EASIER**

by Monte Akers

Introduction

I am not a fan of *Robert's Rules of Order*. Actually, it is not the rules I dislike, but the way I've seen them used on occasion. They are not the law and were not intended to be the law, but sometimes they are treated as the law. They are a useful tool that can ensure effective meetings, but sometimes they are used for political reasons in order to prevent a City Council from taking particular action, or in order for one person to inflict a private agenda on the majority of the body. If misused, they can lead to less efficient, less effective, and less organized meetings than if they were not followed at all.

The highest and best use of *Robert's Rules of Order* occurs, in my opinion, when the city council or other governing body has (1) agreed to follow and apply the rules, but only so long as they facilitate rather than complicate orderly meetings; (2) all members have a general understanding of the rules; (3) a parliamentarian is present who has an in-depth understanding of the rules or who is allowed to recess and find the correct answer when necessary; (4) the presiding officer relies on the parliamentarian but is prepared to announce that a particular rule will not be followed; and (5) ultimately the will of a majority of the Council prevails, which may be a decision to either follow or not follow a particular rules.

Of course the five foregoing points may also just be a long-handed way of saying that the rules work best if the council agrees to play well together.

The governing bodies in nearly every city in Texas, perhaps the nation, follow or purport to follow the Rules, but in reality most employ an abbreviated, generalized, or mutant version of them, and this is not without good reason. Whereas the Rules, when understood and employed as intended, can be marvelously effective in making city meetings more effective, organized and shorter, there are at least six reasons they are used loosely and/or incorrectly: (1) the Rules were designed for large legislative bodies—a true parliament—and therefore contain various provisions that are unwieldy or inappropriate for bodies of only five to ten members; (2) some of the functions of the Rules, such as quorum, agenda, by-laws, frequency of meetings, minutes, disciplining of members, and others, are controlled by or influenced by state law, such as the Open Meetings Act, or by City Charter; (3) it is very rare that all members of a governing body have a good, working knowledge of the Rules; (4) if the members, or some of them, have a good working knowledge of the Rules, new members or others who do not may feel intimidated and hesitant to contribute; (5) the Rules are sometimes used for strategic or political reasons by members who either know or purport to know the Rules better than other members of the body;

and (6) a true, full understanding of the rules leads to a level of detail and knowledge that few people have time or desire to master.

The challenge, then, is to identify those portions of the Rules that are most useful, educate all members of the Council, boards and commissions in their use, and then follow the Rules “to the fullest extent possible” but never in a way that results in “delay, intimidation, thwarting the will of the (Council, board or commission), or to make ineffective a lawful vote.”

Background and Resources

Robert’s Rules are the best-known of various sets of parliamentary procedure. They were first published in 1873 by Henry M. Robert and are now in their 10th edition (by Henry M. Robert III). In addition to the ten “official” editions, which are substantially the same in substance, there are literally hundreds of publications like *Robert’s Rules Made Easy*, *Robert’s Rules at a Glance*, *Robert’s Rules for Dummies*, and *The Guerilla Guide to Robert’s Rules*. Amazon.com lists 430 such publications. Considering the length of the official editions—over 700 pages—it is not surprising that there is ample room for confusion and misunderstanding. In addition to an “official” edition of the rules, three other books¹ and various internet sites were consulted in the preparation of this paper.

Adapting Robert’s Rules to City Use

The “official” edition of Robert’s Rules is divided into 20 sections.² Of those 20, six focus on the types and priority of motions, while several of the other 14 are either inapplicable to city bodies or address topics that are, for cities, controlled by the Open Meetings Act, the Local Government Code, City Charter, or ordinance. Because the making of motions is an integral part of serving on a governing body, that will be the main focus of what follows. However, before wading into that topic, it is important to focus on some very important basics:

a. Important Non-motion Rules

1. Each speaker must be recognized before speaking: In almost all situations a member of the body should be recognized by the Chair before speaking. There are a handful of exceptions,³ the most pertinent of which will be discussed later. Recognition may be accomplished by simply raising one’s hand or, if doing so is not observed by the Chair, by saying “Mister (or Madam) Chairman.”
2. Debate (i.e. discuss or deliberate) only when there is a motion on the floor. This is a well-established Rule, but one that is often unwieldy for city business. Not all items on a

city agenda are appropriate or intended to be addressed by a motion. Even if a motion is appropriate, members may not know how to word it or may not want to appear to be in favor of an item about which they have not been briefed. Accordingly, three alternatives are available:

- A. Make a motion to consider “X” (the matter on the agenda, e.g. purchasing a new fire truck) for the purpose of discussion.
- B. The Chair may state that the floor is open for discussion on the item and then recognize members who wish to speak, at the end of which a motion may be made if appropriate.
- C. A member may ask to be recognized and then request that the body be allowed discuss the matter in order to determine the appropriate motion.

Many city-related agenda items involve or require briefings or statements from city staff members. The Chair should call up such an item, ask the staff member to make his or her presentation, open the floor to questions from the body (each member of which should be recognized before speaking) after which the Chair may call for a motion, if appropriate.

3. Speak only to the Chair. All comments should be directed to the Chair. While the Rules characterize discussion as “debate,” it is not intended to be argument between two or more members.

4. Speak no more than two times on any motion. Under the Rules, each member is allowed (but not required) to speak and, once every member who wishes to speak has done so once, and not before, each member may speak only one more time. The Chair is responsible for enforcing this rule, which is subject to a point of order if not followed. Only if it is obvious that more debate is desirable and beneficial, or if a motion is made and passed for that purpose should the Chair allow an additional round of debate.

5. Talk only about the motion. While it is theoretically possible to have a maximum of seven motions under consideration, only one motion is on the floor at any given time and that is the only motion that may be discussed. For example, if the motion is to have a workshop about the budget at City Hall on Saturday and an amendment is validly offered to have the workshop at the Civic Center instead, the matter on the floor for debate is whether the workshop will be at the Civic Center or City Hall—not whether it will be on Saturday and not whether it will include other topics besides the budget.

b. Motions

1. What color is your motion?

For many people, this is the point at which Robert’s Rules begin to become confusing, and use of the word “color” is facetious. Motions do not come in colors, but they do

come in classifications, types and priorities. It should be noted, however, that in preparing this paper that four different books about the Rules, as well as various internet sites were consulted, and different authors, as well as different bodies, use different terminologies and ways of describing the different species of motions. What follows is intended to be consistent with the “official” Rules, presented in a manner that is easy to understand, but it is certainly not the only way that motions are or may be characterized.

- A. Classes (or classifications) of motions: Although they are sometimes described with different names, and even different totals, there are essentially five *classes* of motions, the first of which breaks out into two sub-groups. They are:
- i. Main motions
 - (a) Original main motions
 - (b) Incidental main motions
 - ii. Subsidiary motions
 - iii. Privileged motions
 - iv. Incidental motions
 - v. Restorative motions

Each class is described briefly as follows:

Main and incidental main motions: a “main motion” is one expressing the action that is desired to be accomplished, the “original main motion” being that which is first made and the “incidental main motion” is one that deals with the business of implementing an original main motion about which a decision has been reached.

Here is an example:

Main motion: “I move that we appoint a committee to study whether Robert’s Rules should be followed.”

Incidental main motion: (at a subsequent meeting after the committee has met and made its presentation): “I move that we accept the recommendations of the Robert’s Rules committee.”

In practice, incidental main motions will only occasionally be made and identified as such, but they are intended to facilitate, rather than modify or complicate, the action intended by the main motion.

Subsidiary motions: These types of motions are the tools whereby a body disposes of a main motion. They include motions to amend, postpone, refer (as to a committee), limit or extend debate, end debate, and lay on the table.

Privileged motions: Not to be confused with priority of motions, or a member making a speech about “a matter of personal privilege” (see below), a privileged motion is one that deals with the comfort of members or special needs, such as a motion to recess (or take a short break), a motion to get the meeting back on schedule, a motion to continue the meeting to another day, a motion to adjourn, or something as simple as a motion to turn up the thermostat on the air conditioning. A privileged motion is one that should be taken care of immediately (e.g. “Would the speaker please use the microphone—we can’t hear you.”) and thus is something for which recognition by the Chair is not required and which rarely requires a second.

Incidental motions, not to be confused with incidental main motions, are those which address how the business of the body is to be accomplished, and include motions to enforce the rules (point of order), to appeal the decision of the Chair, to take a vote by means other than voice vote, to obtain additional information or clarification, to ask a question about procedure (parliamentary inquiry), to withdraw a motion, to read something into the record, or even to suspend the rules. When a member desires to make remarks when no business, or motion, is pending, about some matter he or she believes is important, then this “request for privilege” or “request to raise a matter of personal privilege” is actually an incidental motion rather than a privileged motion.

*Restorative motions*⁴ are those which bring a matter back for more discussion or action, such as motion to reconsider, a motion to revisit, a motion to re-vote, a motion to take a matter back from a committee, or a motion to take from the table. It should be noted that the term “restorative motion” is not found in the “official” editions of the Rules, but it is used in some of the “unofficial” books about the Rules, such as *Robert’s Rules of Dummies*.

B. Types of Motions

The five *classes* of motions are often described as being of three different *types*: basic, secondary and special. Whether or not a particular motion is or is not of a particular type should rarely, if ever, be a matter of concern for a city council, board or commission, and the three types are discussed here briefly, hopefully, provided some clarification. In other words, whether a particular motion is of a particular type is more a question of information and description rather than utilization.

Basic motions are the two types of main motions. They say “let’s do this about that.” *Secondary motions* are subsidiary, privileged and incidental motions. A subsidiary motion says “let’s do this with the main motion.” A privileged motion says “Let’s do this

even though there is a main motion pending.” An incidental motion says “Let’s do this in order to better handle the pending motion.”

Special motions are restorative motions. They say “Let’s undo this and do that instead.”

C. Priority of Motions

A motion’s “priority” means the order in which it may be put down, taken up and acted upon during a meeting. In other words, a motion is of a particular *priority*, regardless of classification or type, based on the deference it must be given during a meeting. The term “precedence” of motions is often used interchangeably with priority, although they are not precisely the same. A motion’s precedence is determined by the order in which it will be decided, with the main motion, being the last motion that will be decided, having the lowest precedence, and usually, but not always, the lowest priority.

Mercifully, the actions of city councils, boards, and commissions rarely depend upon the priority of a particular motion. In fact should the Council, a board or a commission reach a stage at which its effectiveness or ability to function is dependent on a ruling about the priority of one or more motions, the time may have come to suspend the rules. Nevertheless, the priority of motions is an integral part of Robert’s Rules and the subject must be addressed.

The priority of a motion is determined by whether it must be seconded, whether it is debatable, whether it may be amended, whether it may be postponed, whether it may be referred (as to a committee), and whether it may be approved by a majority or a supermajority of the body. Various charts are available online and in publications that list motions by their priority, one of which is reproduced below:

Pri ori ty		Requires a 2nd?	May be Postponed? Reconsidere d? Referred? Debated?	Amendabl e?	Vote Required
1	Fix the Time of the Next Meeting	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
2	Adjourn (End this meeting now)	Yes	No	No	Majority
3	Recess (Halt this meeting for a limited time)	Yes	No	Yes	Majority

4	Question of Privilege (The speaker is inaudible or the comfort of the members is affected)	No	No	No	Chair rules
	Appeal from Decision of Chair (asks assembly to overrule the Chair)	Yes	Debatable Postponable	No	Majority
	Close Nominations	Yes	No	Yes	2/3 vote
	Call for Division of the House (Asks for written ballot or roll call vote, rather than voice vote)	No	No	Yes	2/3 Vote
	Object to Consideration (The motion is not the proper business of this body) (Must be made before debate starts}	No	No	No	2/3 Vote
5	Parliamentary Inquiry (Asks Chair what is proper procedure)	No	No	No	Chair responds
	Point of Order (Asks Chair to rule on procedure)	No	No	No	Chair rules
	Suspend the rules (Rearrange the agenda; permit a non-member to speak, etc.)	Yes	No	No	2/3 vote
	Request for Information (Asks will the speaker yield for question?)	No	No	No	Chair rules
	Withdraw motion (Must be requested by member who made the motion)	No	No	No	Majority
6	To Table or Postpone Temporarily (Consider the motion later in this meeting)	Yes	No	No	Majority
7	Close Debate (Bring the motion to a vote now)	Yes	No	No	2/3 vote
8	Limit debate (Limit each speaker to X minutes)	Yes	No	Yes	2/3 vote

9	Postpone to Specific time (Put the motion on the agenda of later meeting)	Yes	Debatable	Yes	Majority
10	Refer to Committee (Have Committee study the motion)	Yes	Debatable	Yes	Majority
11	Amend an Amendment (Change the amendment to read...)	Yes	All	No	Majority
12	Amend (Change the motion to read)	Yes	All	Yes	Majority
13	Postpone Indefinitely (Kills motion for this session!)	Yes	Debatable	No	Majority
14	Main motion (new business}	Yes	All	Yes	Majority
	To Rescind (Move to cancel an action taken at a previous meeting)	Yes	All	Yes	2/3 vote
	Set Special Order of Business (Put a motion first on agenda of another meeting)	Yes	Debatable Reconsider	Yes	2/3 vote
	To Reconsider (Applies only to motions made at this meeting)	Yes	Debatable Postponable	No	Majority
	To Take from the Table (Resume consideration of a postponed motion)				

c. Making and presenting motions

Although most people have been making or observing the making of motions for many years, here is a step by step approach taken from an internet site for a particular organization. While it is entirely appropriate to implement this series of steps or one similar, there is nothing sacrosanct or mandatory about the words used, and neither the Chair nor the body should either feel obligated to use it precisely.

1. Obtaining the floor
 - a. Wait until the last speaker has finished.
 - b. Rise or raise hand and address the Chair by saying, "Mr. (or Madam) Chair."
 - c. Wait until the Chair recognizes you.
2. Make Your Motion
 - a. Speak in a clear and concise manner.

- b. Always state a motion affirmatively. Say, "I move that we ..." rather than, "I move that we do not ...".
 - c. Avoid personalities and stay on your subject.
- 3. Wait for Someone to second your motion
- 4. Another member will second your motion or the Chair will call for a second.
- 5. If there is no second to your motion it is lost.
- 6. The Chair states your motion
 - a. The Chair will say, "it has been moved and seconded that we ..." Thus placing your motion before the membership for consideration and action.
 - b. The membership then either debates your motion, or may move directly to a vote.
 - c. Once your motion is presented to the membership by the Chair it becomes "assembly property", and cannot be changed by you without the consent of the members.
- 7. Expanding on your motion
 - a. The time for you to speak in favor of your motion is at this point in time, rather than at the time you present it.
 - b. The movant is always allowed to speak first.
 - c. All comments and debate must be directed to the Chair.
 - d. Keep to the time limit for speaking that has been established.
 - e. The mover may speak again only after other speakers are finished, unless called upon by the Chair.
- 8. Putting the Question to the Membership
 - a. The Chair asks, "Are you ready to vote on the question?"
 - b. If there is no more discussion, a vote is taken.
 - c. On a motion to move the previous question may be adapted.

Pointers to Utilize and Mistakes to Avoid

1. **Tabling:** A "motion to lay on the table" under the Rules is one to set aside a pending motion temporarily in order to take up something more pressing or urgent. It is intended that once the more urgent matter is addressed that the body will return to the tabled matter, at the same meeting. What most members mean when they move to table an item, and what they should say, is that they move to postpone, either indefinitely or to a date certain. Contrary to popular belief, an approved motion to postpone, or table, does not automatically cause a matter to be set aside until the next meeting. If the member moving to postpone desires that it be on the next meeting's agenda, or on some other occasion, he or she should so state in the motion.

Why does it matter? Because, under technical application of the Rules, a motion to lay on the table outranks (has greater priority) than a motion to postpone to a certain time. A motion to table is neither debatable nor amendable, whereas a motion to postpone is both amendable (as to time) and debatable.

2. Amendments, friendly and otherwise: Many bodies utilize what they call or consider to be “friendly amendments” whereby a member moves to amend a main motion and the maker of the main motion is asked if the amendment is acceptable. If so, it is then added to the main motion but if not it is not, and may or may not become the subject of an “unfriendly”(?) amendment.

In fact, there is no such thing as a friendly or unfriendly amendment under the Rules. A main motion may, and should, be amended by following the normal procedure. That is, after a main motion has come to the floor by being made and seconded, and when the person desiring to amend it has been recognized, he or she may move to change the main motion in a way that is germane by saying, for example “I move that we amend the motion by inserting the words ‘etc.’” or “by striking the words ‘xyz’ and replacing them with ‘abc.’” That motion to amend, which is called “a primary amendment” or an “amendment of the first degree,” must then be seconded, debated, and voted up or down.⁵

An amendment to amend the pending amendment is a “secondary amendment” or an “amendment of the second degree.” Like the primary amendment, it must be seconded and debated. During the debate on the secondary amendment the members may only speak about the substance of the secondary amendment, not the main motion or the primary amendment, and once the secondary amendment is resolved, debate, or action returns to the primary amendment and then to the main motion.

Note that each amendment must be germane. In other words, it must be relevant to the matter being amended. If the main motion is to buy a red truck and the primary amendment under consideration is to buy a green one instead, a motion to go out for pizza would not be germane. Whether a particular amendment is germane is sometimes difficult to determine, and it is the duty of the Chair to rule on whether a matter is not germane if there is a question. Should the Chair rule in a manner with which a member disagrees, the member may move to appeal the Chair’s ruling and to rule by majority vote whether the matter is or is not germane.

A type of amendment that is sometimes used and sometimes treated as a unique type of motion is a *substitute motion*. A substitute motion is one that replaces the motion under consideration, as opposed to merely adding or subtracting from it, but it is actually just another flavor of an amendment. Like other amendments, once made and seconded, it becomes the subject of debate and, if adopted, may supplant or replace either the main motion or a prior amendatory motion. It is also called an *amendment by substitution*.

3. Points of Order: As mentioned above, “rising to a point of order” is the one time a member may speak without first being recognized. Its purpose is to correct a mistake, bring up a rule that has been overlooked or broken, or to otherwise fix a breach of the Rules. It is not to be used for the purpose of delay or to otherwise confuse the proceedings, but to genuinely correct a mistake. The reason this type of incidental motion may be made without first being recognized is because, in some circumstances, delay can be crucial, particularly if the body is about to vote on a motion.

The proper procedure for raising a point of order is for a member to say “Point of Order,” or “Madam (or Mister) Chairperson, I rise to a point of order.” The Chair should then say “the member shall state his (or her) point of order,” and, once the member has done so, the Chair should rule on it. If the Chair is not certain, it may be necessary to request a ruling by the parliamentarian or to take a short recess while the matter is reviewed or, the Chair may prefer to let the body decide by saying something like “The chair is in doubt on the member’s point. All those who consider the point to be valid (or, e.g., the matter to be germane), will say aye and those opposed will say no.”

However, a point of order is not debatable, cannot be amended, and cannot be reconsidered. The Chair is obligated to decide the matter, and although he or she may elect to turn the matter over to the body for a vote, doing so does not open up the floor to members for the purpose of discussing and analyzing its merits. Should a member not understand what is going on, he or she may make another incidental motion such as a point of information or point of clarification, and once the Chair rules, as with other such rulings, a member may appeal the ruling, but may not ask that it be re-considered or modified.

4. Calling the question: Another common occurrence at the meeting of a body is that a member will suddenly say “Call the question,” at which point the Chair will, or may, say something like “The question has been called. Discussion will cease and we will not vote.” As with friendly amendments, however, this is a practice that is not found in the Rules.

The proper method of accomplishing what is intended in this situation is quite different. What should occur is that a member (1) asks to be recognized; (2) moves that debate cease, or be closed; (3) no second is needed; (4) no debate or amendment occurs; and (5) the motion to close debate must receive a 2/3 vote in order to be approved. If only a majority of the body votes to close debate, then it continues. If, on the other hand, the Chair responds by announcing that the question has been called and it is time to vote, a point of order is appropriate.

5. “So moved:” Another common practice is for a member to simply say “I so move,” or “so moved” instead of stating a motion. So long as everyone, particularly the

person keeping the minutes, knows exactly what is being proposed, no harm is done but the practice can be risky. In fact, the result can be the exact opposite of what a body intends if the motion gets entered incorrectly into minutes that are subsequently approved. Some city councils will ask the City Attorney to compose a motion, particularly if the subject is complicated or involves a legal issue. In other cases the body will ask its secretary to read, or state, the motion as it has been made or has evolved from debate. In either case, if the movant agrees with such wording and the other members heard and understood it, saying “I so move” can save a little time or embarrassment. However, the best practice is for a member to state a motion completely when it is made, and for the Chair to repeat it fully prior to the vote being taken.

6. Reconsidering a vote: A commonly misunderstood provision of the Rules is “reconsideration.” In particular, a body or one of its members will often declare, with firm conviction, that a particular matter may not be placed on an agenda, or may not be considered at a meeting because the member desiring its placement or consideration was not one of those who previously voted favorably (or in particular manner) on the matter when it first came before the body.

There is, in fact, such a rule, but it applies only during the same meeting at which the matter was first considered and for 24 hours thereafter. For example, if the body votes, four to three, to buy a new truck, one of the three who voted against doing so may not, during that same meeting or within 24 hours, move that the body reconsider buying the truck. However, one of the four who voted to buy it may move to reconsider during the meeting or within 24 hours.

One of the reasons why the rule about reconsideration is confusing is because, under Robert’s, there is one reconsideration rule for assemblies and another for standing or special committees. One may argue whether a city council is an assembly or a standing committee, but for purposes of applying the Rules to a city, it is assumed that it is the equivalent of an assembly, for which the rule is more restrictive. If one considers the council to be a standing committee, then the rule is meaningless because any committee member may move to reconsider, at any time, regardless of how he or she voted previously.

The 24 hour rule is a situation in which the Texas Open Meetings Act and Robert’s Rules happen to coincide, but for unrelated reasons. The Texas Attorney General has ruled that a governing body may postpone a meeting, without posting a new agenda, but for not more than 24 hours. The reconsideration provision in Robert’s Rules for assemblies is stated as being applicable during the “session” for which the assembly is convened, so that “in a convention or session of more than one day, a reconsideration can be moved only on the next or the next succeeding date after the original vote was

taken,”⁶ Therefore, if a city council may postpone a meeting for 24 hours, it theoretically has a “session” of more than one day, so that the motion to reconsider may be made only on the next or the next succeeding date, but because the Council may only postpone its meeting for up to 24 hours, such reconsideration is limited to that period.

What controls in regard to cities is the rule that any member of the body may place an item of his or her choice on the agenda unless the body has adopted a different procedure for setting the agenda. In the event that a member insists on placing the same item on every agenda, a motion may be made and approved by a majority of the body to not allow it to be on a future agenda, at least for a stated period of time.

7. Point of information to give information: A member will sometimes move for a point of information or clarification when his or her real purpose is to give, rather than receive, information. In other words, a member who needs additional input in order to understand a matter or to make a decision should make an incidental motion for information (e.g. “I need the City Manager to explain why we need this new truck”). A point of information does not need a second, and is not debatable or amendable. When raised, the Chair should direct the appropriate person to provide the information or to otherwise shed additional light on the subject before returning to debate on the pending motion. What often happens, however, is that the member uses this type of motion to make his or her own point by telling the rest of the body what he or she believes. When this occurs, a point of order is appropriate.

Role of the Parliamentarian

Considering the length of the Rules, plus so many different publications about them, as well as training sessions, trainers, and policies that have been confused with the Rules, it is not unusual for debate to break out about how they operate in a particular situation. It is extremely useful, then, to have a parliamentarian present or available who knows how the Rules should be applied. However, the parliamentarian’s role is to advise the Chair on the proper way to rule on a matter—not to actually make the ruling. He or she merely consults with the Chair and, hopefully, provides that person with correct information on which the ruling may be based (and makes the Chair look good). This may sometimes require a short recess while the Rules are consulted, and the Chair may elect to disregard the advice of the parliamentarian (a decision that may be appealed).

An Abbreviated Robert’s Rules of Order

If the 700+ pages of an official version of the Rules, or the 337 pages of *Robert’s Rules for Dummies*, or the 12 pages of this paper are too much to digest, then rely on the following basics:

1. Don't speak unless recognized by the Chair except for (1) privileged motions (e.g. "use the microphone"); (2) point of order; (3) appeals (from a ruling of the Chair); (4) objection to consideration; or (5) reconsideration.
2. Although more than one motion may have been made, only one may be discussed at a time.
3. Decide the main motion last.
4. Speak to the Chair.
5. Speak only twice on each motion.
6. Use a "privileged motion" to take care of something necessary for comfort ("please turn up the heat") or functioning ("can we take a short break").
7. Rely on the parliamentarian for advice to the Chair; not for rulings.
8. Move to postpone; not to table.
9. Don't "call the question;" move that debate be closed.
10. Just "amend" a main motion or an amendment (including "substitute motions"); don't use "friendly" amendments.
11. Rise to a point of order if something is being done incorrectly.
12. Use a "point of information" or a "point of clarification" when you need more explanation.
13. Be courteous, be patient, be quiet unless you have something to say about the matter of pending business; and be an example for everyone else

¹ *Parliamentary Procedure at a Glance*, by O. Garfield Jones, *The Complete Guide to Robert's Rules of Order Made Easy*, by Rita Cooke, and *Robert's Rules for Dummies*, by C. Alan Jennings.

² I: The Deliberative Assembly: It's Types and Rules; II: The Conduct of Business in a Deliberative Assembly; III: Description of Motions in All Classifications; IV: Meeting and Session; V: The Main Motion; VI: Subsidiary Motions; VII: Privileged Motions; VIII: Incidental Motions; IX: Motions that Bring a Question Again Before the Assembly; X: Renewal of Motions, Dilatory and Improper Motions; XI: Quorum: Order of Business and Related Concepts; XII: Assignment of the Floor; Debate; XIII: Voting; XIV: Nominations and Elections; XV: Officers, Minutes and Officers' Reports; XVI: Boards and Committees; XVII: Mass Meetings: Organization of a Permanent Society; XVIII: Bylaws; XIX: Conventions; and XX: Disciplinary Procedures.

³ Questions of privilege; orders of the day; points of order; appeals, objections to consideration, and reconsideration.

⁴ “Restorative motions” is a term provided in certain books about the Rules. The “official” editions refer to such motions as

⁵ An amending motion is also called an “appendage motion,” which is one that takes its priority from the motion to which it applies.

⁶ *Robert’s Rules of Order*, Sec. 36, p. 310 (ScottForesman, 9th Ed., 1990)