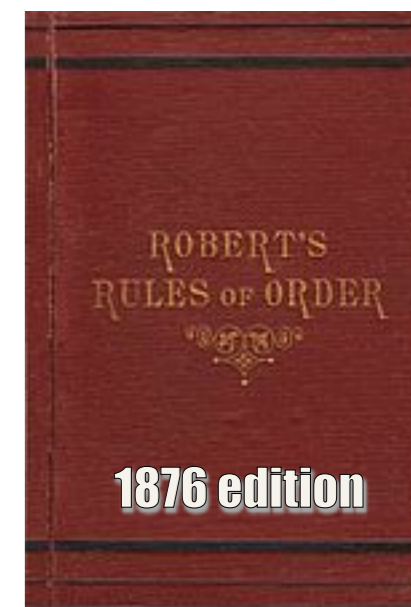
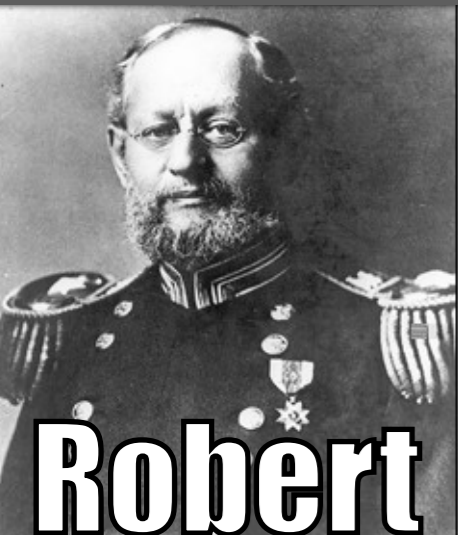


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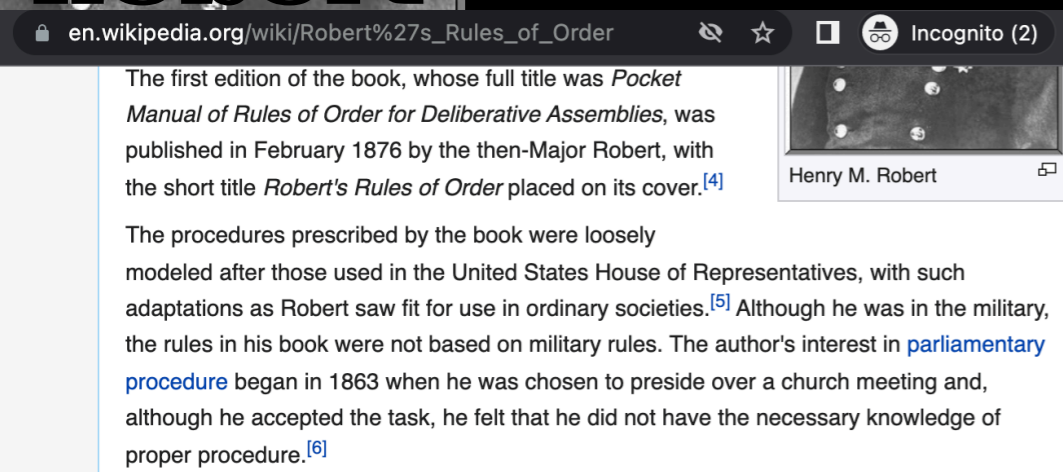
Robert's Rules and how they can keep our org healthy



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First draft: Feb. 1, 2022

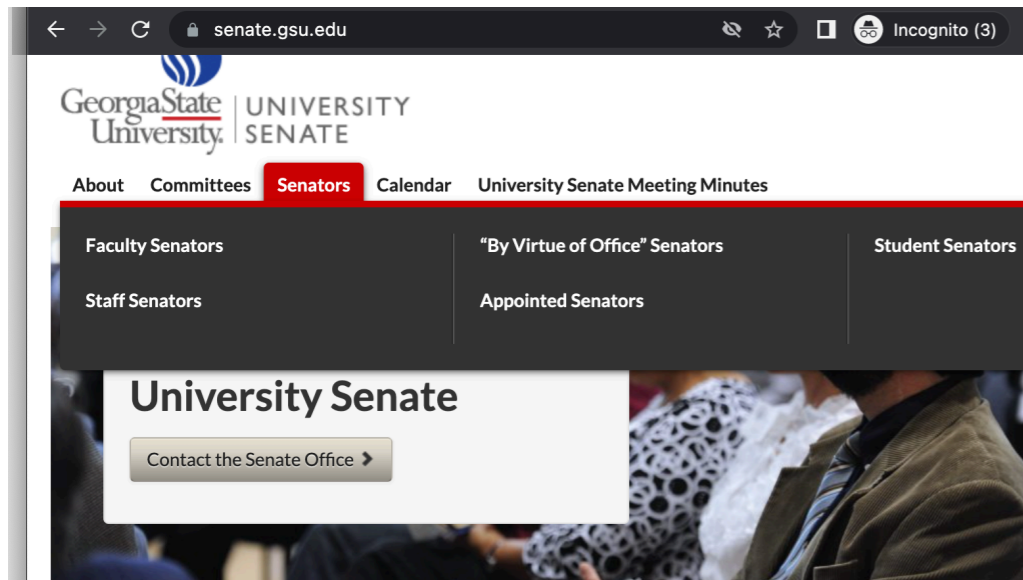
Last revised: Feb. 2, 2022



Thank you to: Marco Orrel and
Dana Wiggins

*All errors in this doc are the sole
responsibility of:* Julie La Corte

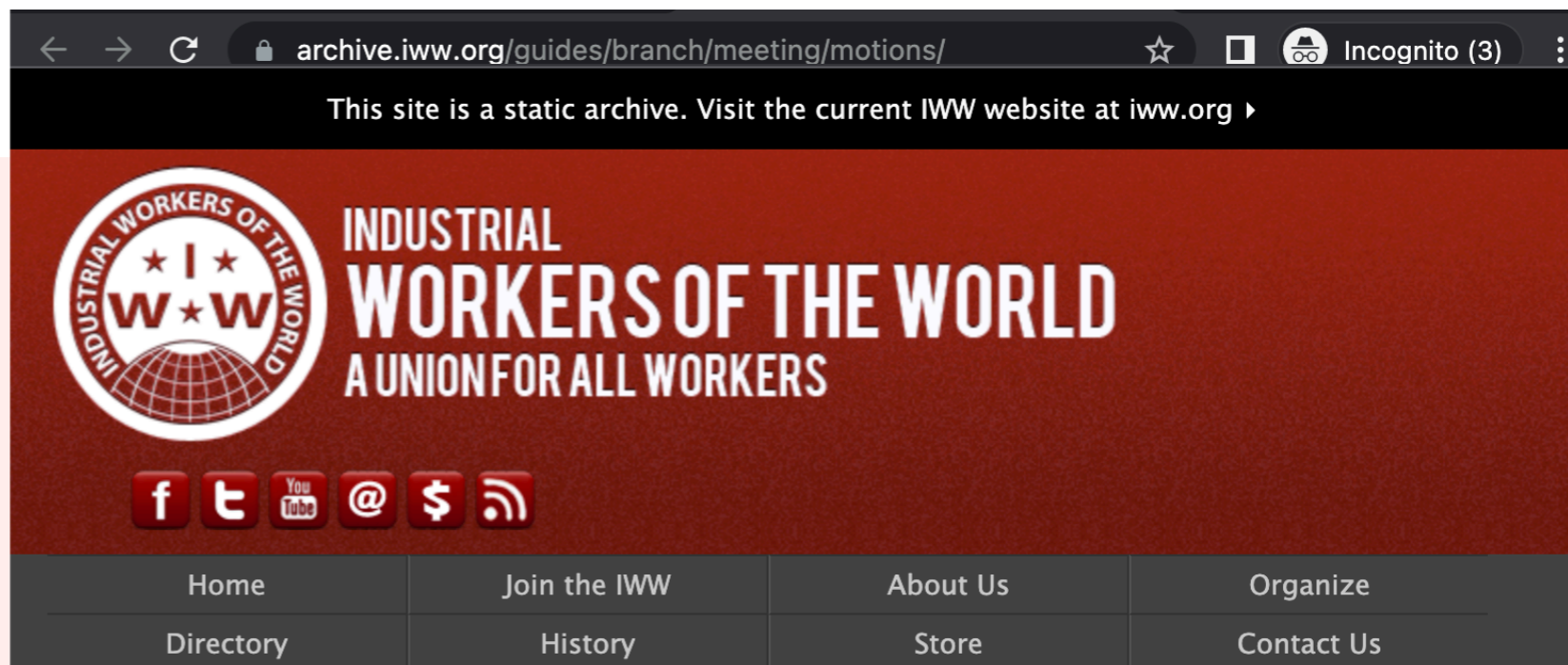
WHO uses Robert's Rules?



- GSU student groups
- academic committees
- town halls

- labor unions
- political orgs
- any democratic^{*}
deliberative body

*Not the US Senate. They use a rulebook called [Riddick's Senate Procedure](#).



[Guides for IWW Members](#) » [Organize Your IWW Branch](#)

Resources

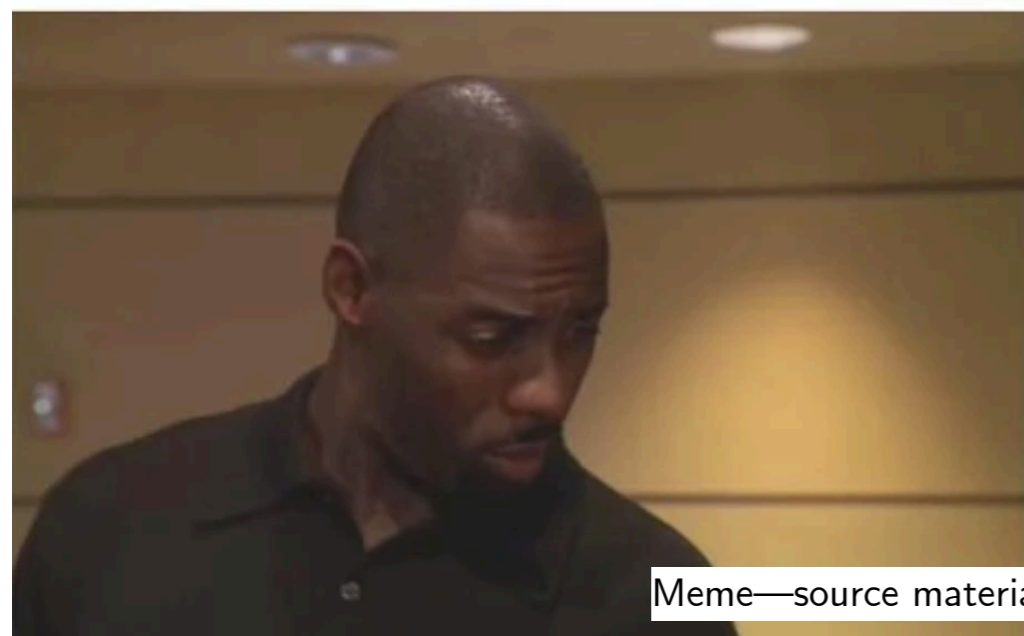
- [Image Galleries](#)
- [Pay Your IWW Dues](#)
- [IWW Headquarters](#)

Roberts Rules of Order (Motions)

Decisions are made by a democratic vote in all IWW business meetings. Most other unions use a similar process. Although small, local business meetings can use an informal process, large, official union meetings tend to use Roberts' Rules of Order, which can be somewhat confusing,

WHO uses Robert's Rules?

The **minutes** of the meeting are a written record of what was said and done.



Meme—source material, *The Wire* (TV series)

In *The Wire*, a criminal enterprise tries out Robert's Rules.

Comedy ensues.

WHO uses Robert's Rules?

The **minutes** of the meeting are a written record of what was said and done.



Image source: "[Civil disobedience](#)." Britannica.com. Retrieved Feb. 2, 2022.

Caption: "Evelyn Thomas: protest of Don't Ask, Don't Tell"

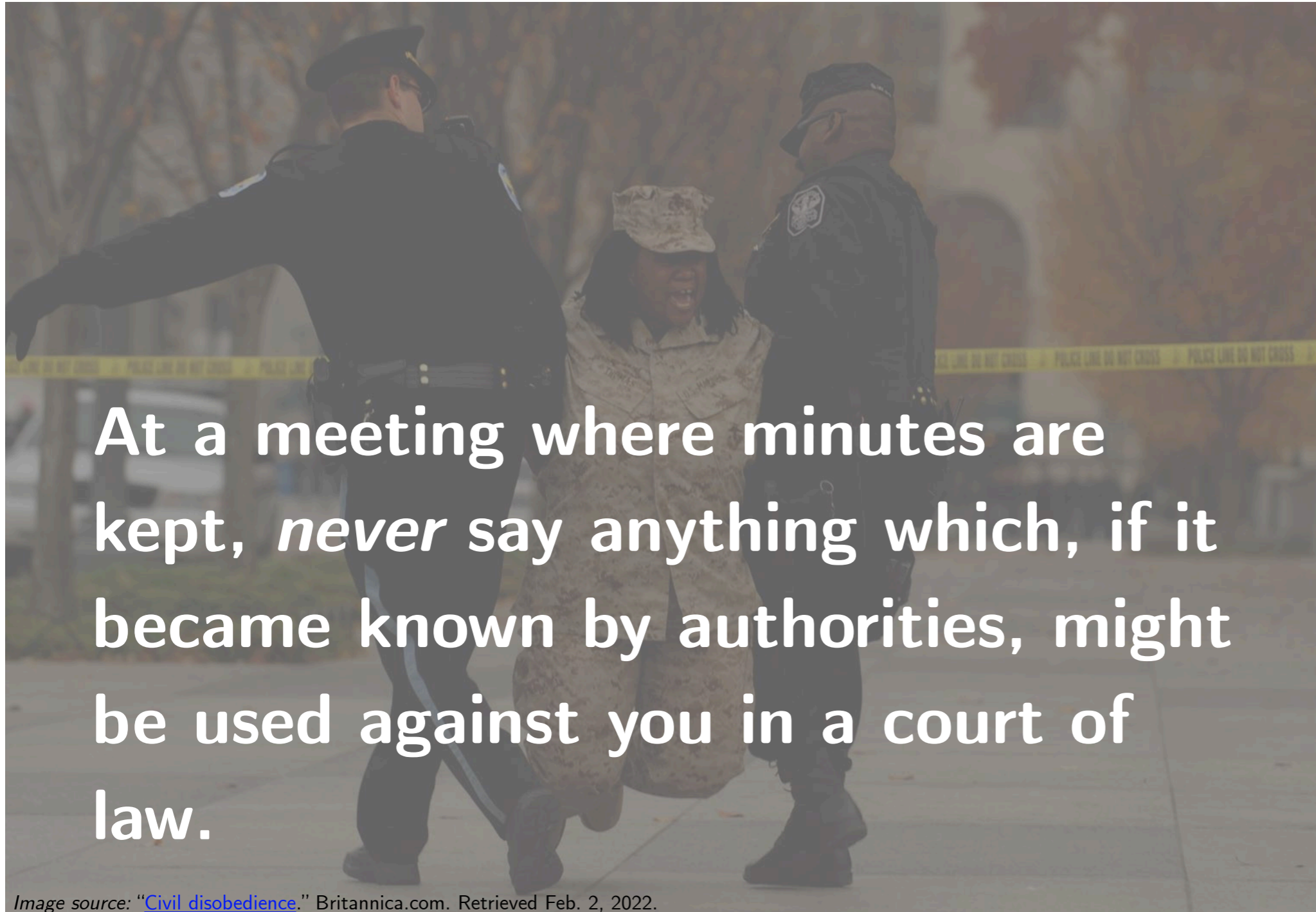
The Wire was a joke example.

But civil disobedience is a legitimate and honorable tradition.

Be mindful of your personal safety at all times.

WHO uses Robert's Rules?

The **minutes** of the meeting are a written record of what was said and done.



At a meeting where minutes are kept, *never* say anything which, if it became known by authorities, might be used against you in a court of law.

Be mindful of your personal safety at all times.

Image source: "[Civil disobedience](#)." Britannica.com. Retrieved Feb. 2, 2022.

Caption: "Evelyn Thomas: protest of Don't Ask, Don't Tell"

WHEN do we use Robert's Rules?

When there are about 5 or more people, and the org needs to make decisions.

This isn't a hard and fast rule.






It's okay to use some degree of personal judgment about when to use Robert's Rules.

What makes a bad meeting?

- No decisions are made.
- Waste of time.
- Criticizing without proposing alternatives.
- Dominated by some participants.
- Unnecessarily argumentative.
- ...

The Five Rights

Robert's Rules facilitate the exercise of...

- the right of the Majority  to get things done
- the right of the Minority  to make its case
- the right of the Individual  to be heard
- the right of Absentees  to know what they're missing
- the right of the Whole  to carry out its mission

Bad meetings violate at least one of these rights.

What is “Robert’s Rules” though?

Robert’s Rules is a 700-page book.

notice this doc is much shorter

- It is a book of rules for conducting business democratically.

Such a rulebook is called a “[parliamentary authority](#)”.

- It covers practically every imaginable situation.

It takes some getting used to.

- The language isn’t like daily-life language.
- That might be because we’re not used to *democratically run* meetings.

What is “Robert’s Rules” though?

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How to play “Robert’s Rules”

“The session is called to order.”

MAIN MENU

I move to

I have a

I rise to
privilege

I have a
informa

inquiry.

personal

The Chair “calls
the session to
order”

to get it started.

more

How to play “Robert’s Rules”

“You have the floor.”

MAIN MENU

I move to...

I have a

Only one person
may speak at once.

inquiry.

I rise to
privilege

personal

I have a
informa

That person is said
to “have the
floor”.

more

How to play “Robert’s Rules”

“I rise to seek recognition.”

MAIN MENU

I move to

I have a

I rise to
privilege

I have a
informa

Once the session has begun, any member can “**rise to seek recognition**”.

Then the Chair says,
“The Chair recognizes so-and-so.”

inquiry.

personal

more

How to play “Robert’s Rules”

“You do not have the floor. The Chair asks you not to speak until recognized.”

MAIN MENU

I move to	
I have a	inquiry.
I rise to	personal
privilege	
I have a	
informa	

Once the session has begun, any member can “**rise to seek recognition**”.

Then the Chair says, “*The Chair recognizes so-and-so.*”

Once the Chair says they “recognize” you, you “*have the floor.*” No one else can speak.

How to play “Robert’s Rules”

MAIN MENU

I move to

I have a

I rise to
privilege

I have a
informa

When you “have
the floor,”
it’s your turn.

Choose an action
from the main
menu.

inquiry.

ersonal

more

How to play “Robert’s Rules”

MAIN MENU

I move to...

I have a parliamentary inquiry.

I rise to a question of personal privilege.

I have a request for information.

...more...

there are more actions we
can discuss later

How to play “Robert’s Rules”

Making a motion

MAKE A MOTION

I move to...

introduce/adopt...

amend...

table.

commit.

end debate.

extend time for debate.

This slideshow explains what kinds of “motions” you can make when you have the floor.

How to play “Robert’s Rules”

Making a motion

MAKE A MOTION

I move to...

introduce/adopt...

amend...

table.

commit.

end debate.

extend time for debate.

The various types of “motion” are shown here

How to play “Robert’s Rules”

“I second the motion.”

MAKE A MOTION

I move to

introduce

amend

table

commit.

end debate.

extend time for debate.

A motion must
be **seconded**
in order to be
discussed.

How to play “Robert’s Rules”

“The Chair will hold a vote on the motion.”

MAKE A MOTION

I move to

introduce

amend

table

commit.

end debate.

extend time for debate.

Once a motion has been seconded, it must be **voted** on.

How to play “Robert’s Rules”

“My resolution says that our org will...”

MAKE A MOTION

I move to...

introduce/adopt...

A “resolution” is a proposal for what our org will do.

extend time for debate.

How to play “Robert’s Rules”

“If adopted, my resolution will bring about...”

MAKE A MOTION

I move to...

introduce/adopt...

Move to “introduce”
your “resolution”
if you want the org
to *actually do*
what you propose.

The *motion* must be
seconded.

extend time for d

Otherwise, the
meeting moves on.

How to play “Robert’s Rules”

“The resolution is adopted. Does anyone else seek recognition?”

MAKE A MOTION

I move to...

introduce/**adopt**...

amend

table.

comm

end de

exten

After a resolution has
been introduced,

you can move
that we “**adopt**” it.

If adopted, the org must
follow the resolution.

e.

How to play “Robert’s Rules”

“By unanimous consent, the resolution is adopted.”

MAKE A MOTION

I move to...

introduce a resolution

amend

table

concur

end

extend time for debate.

A resolution can
be adopted
without debate
if everyone
agrees to it.

How to play “Robert’s Rules”

Debate mode

MAKE A MOTION

I move to...

introduce a motion

amend

table

con

end

extend time for debate.

Otherwise, the
meeting goes
into
debate mode.



How to play “Robert’s Rules”

Debate has to *end* after a *specified* amount of time

MAKE A MOTION

I move to...

introduce a motion

amend

table

commit

end

extend time for debate.

A set amount of time for debate must be specified before debate begins.



Alternate between speakers FOR and AGAINST.

How to play “Robert’s Rules”

Debate mode needs a timekeeper

MAKE A MOTION

I move to...

introduce a motion

amend

table

con

end

extend time for debate.

Someone must be chosen to keep time and to announce when the time for debate is almost up.



Alternate between speakers FOR and AGAINST.

How to play “Robert’s Rules”

“I move to extend time for debate by 1 minute.”

You can move to “**extend time**” for debate if time runs out, but you still have concerns.

MAKE A MOTION

•

uce/adopt...

...

it.

debate.

extend time for debate.

Anyone can move to extend time.



How to play “Robert’s Rules”

Proposing an amendment

MAKE A MOTION

I move to...

introduce/adopt...

amend...

take...

During debate about
a resolution,

you can move to
“**amend**” (change)
the resolution.

... for debate.

How to play “Robert’s Rules”

Debate mode, again, but different: it’s a debate-within-a-debate

MAKE A MOTION

I move to...

introduce/adopt...

amend...

table

The
amendment
then must be
debated.

... for debate.

How to play “Robert’s Rules”

“Can the Chair clarify, are we debating the resolution right now, or an amendment to it?”

MAKE A MOTION

I move to...

introduce/adopt...

amend...

table

The Chair keeps track of whether the **amendment** or the **resolution** is being debated at any given time.

... for debate.

How to play “Robert’s Rules”

What to say when debate is *deadlocked* or *too heated*

MAKE A MOTION

I move to...

introduce / identify...

amend...

table.

commit.

end debate

extend time for debate.

To “table”
a resolution
means
to *stop debating*
for now.

How to play “Robert’s Rules”

“I move to introduce last week’s resolution concerning...”

MAKE A MOTION

I move to...

introduce/adopt...

amend...

table.

commit.

end debate.

extend time for

If a resolution is tabled, someone must move to **introduce** it again to resume debate on it.

How to play “Robert’s Rules”

“I move to commit the resolution to the Budget Committee.”

MAKE A MOTION

I move to...

introduce/adopt...

amend...

table.

commit.

end debate.

extend time for debate.

Here is a very powerful tool for action—or for delay.

How to play “Robert’s Rules”

Why “committees” are called that

MAKE A MOTION

I move to...

introduce/adopt...

amend...

table.

commit.

end debate.

extend time for debate.

To “commit”
means
to send
the resolution
to a
committee.

How to play “Robert’s Rules”

“I move to commit the resolution to the Budget Committee.”

MAKE A MOTION

I move to...

introduce/adopt...

amend...

table.

commit.

end debate.

extend time for debate.

This forces
a *committee*
to consider
the
resolution.

How to play “Robert’s Rules”

“I move to commit the resolution to the Budget Committee.”

MAKE A MOTION

I move to...

introduce/a

amend...

table.

commit.

end debate.

extend time for debate.

If a resolution
is vague or weak,

the committee
can strengthen it.

Then it’s more likely the org
will vote to **adopt** it...

How to play “Robert’s Rules”

“I move to commit the resolution to the Budget Committee.”

MAKE A MOTION

I move to...

introduce/a

amend...

table.

commit.

end debate.

extend time for debate.

If a resolution
is vague or weak,

the committee
can strengthen it.

Then it’s more likely the org
will vote to **adopt** it...

eventually.

How to play “Robert’s Rules”

“Does the Budget Committee have anything to report?”

MAKE A MOTION

I move to...

introduce/a

amend...

table.

commit.

end debate.

extend time for debate.

On the other hand,
a resolution may
“wither and die in
committee.”

How to play “Robert’s Rules”

Forcing a vote

MAKE A MOTION

I move

Move to **end debate** if you want the org to vote *now* on whether to adopt the resolution.

end debate.

extend time for debate.

How to play “Robert’s Rules”

Forcing a vote

MAKE A MOTION

I move

The motion to **end debate** must be voted on.

If the org votes to end debate, the next vote must be about whether or not to adopt the resolution.

end debate.

extend time for debate.

How to play “Robert’s Rules”

Forcing a vote

MAKE A MOTION

I move to...

introduce a resolution

amend

table

concur

end

extend time for debate.

When debate has ended, the Chair will hold a vote.

ALL VOTES MUST BE YES, NO, or ABSTAIN.

How to ask, “*How does this work?*” during a meeting

MAIN MENU

I move to...

I have a **parliamentary inquiry**.

I rise to a question of **parliamentary procedure**.

A **parliamentary inquiry** is a question about how the org’s rules work.

more

How to ask, “*How does this work?*” during a meeting

MAIN MENU

I move to...

I have a **parliamentary inquiry**.

I rise to a question of **personal privilege**.

I have a request for **information**.

...more...

The resident expert on the org’s rules is called
the **parliamentarian**.

Resolution debate mode vs. Amendment debate mode

A sample session

- A **motion** is **introduced**.
- It is **seconded** by another member.
- DEBATE ON THE RESOLUTION BEGINS.
- An amendment is introduced.
- At least one person likes the amendment, so they **second** it.
 - WE ARE NOW DEBATING THE AMENDMENT.
 - The amendment is **voted** on.
- DEBATE ON THE RESOLUTION RESUMES.
- Etc...

There's more to come...

...but we're off to a great start.

Dunwoody



Sprites from...

