

## Robert's Rules of Order – The Basics

**1. Motions:** Motions are proposals by a member of the body to either bring up an item for discussion or to make amendments to an item currently under discussion.

*Note: There can only be one active motion on the floor at any one time. Once an item has been called for debate, only one amendment to that item can be discussed at a time.*

### **2. Motion Types**

- **Amendments:** These motions propose a potential amendment to the current motion: either to add or remove language. Motions require a “second” from at least one additional member of the body. A seconded-motion then becomes the current item of debate.
- **“Call the question:”** This is a motion requesting the body to cease debate on the current item or motion under discussion. If seconded, this motion must immediately be voted on. If the vote is favorable, then the current item under debate must come to a vote and all discussion cease.

### **3. Flow of a Motion**

Delegate recognized → Delegate makes motion → Chair repeats the motion and asks for a “second” → once “second” is heard Chair calls for discussion → Delegates are then free to line up at microphones to be recognized to speak in favor or against the motion, or to propose an amendment → amendments must be “seconded” as well → once an amendment is “seconded” discussion begins on the amendment → amendment must be accepted or rejected by the body before discussion can renew on the original motion → members can “call the question” and, if seconded, a vote is made to end debate → if the vote to “call the question” is successful, the Chair immediately ends all discussion and calls for a vote on the *current* (not necessarily original) motion → if the result of a vote is ever unclear, the Chair will take a count of each delegate individually.

### **4. Other Things You Can Do (that aren't motions)**

- **Points of Information:** These are requests for more information on an item under debate or procedure during the course of debate. Similar to a motion but in this case, you simply ask your question by stating “point of information” before your question.
- **Points of Order:** These are used to point out a failure by the body or an individual to follow the rules of parliamentary procedure. Points of order take precedence over ALL other debate and motions, and you simply yell it out, rather than waiting to be called!

### **5. Example Debate**

- Main Motion: Jamal Jones – Washington High School - I move that TAAAC order pizza for the next meeting.
- Chair: The Chair recognizes the motion. Is there a second?
- Another Delegate: I Cheryl Smith--Franklin Elementary School--second the motion.
- Chair: So moved. Is there any discussion on the motion?
- Another Delegate: I Frank Perez—Tubman Middle School--move to amend the current motion to replace ordering pizza with having a salad bar.
- Another delegate: Janice Hall—Douglass Elementary School—I second!