

## ***Robert's Rules: Some basic rules***

### **Closing debate: 4 methods:**

- A. A motion of the previous question (“call the question”):
- To move the previous question you must be recognized.  
(No shouting out of turn!)
  - The motion of the previous question is not debatable.
  - To pass, the motion of the previous question requires a 2/3 majority.
- B. Consensus:
- The chair asks: “Are you ready for the question?”
  - If there are no objections, the assembly votes on the motion.
  - If there is even one objection, debate continues.
- C. A motion to postpone debate:
- Two different forms:
    1. Motion to postpone to a specific time or date.
    2. Motion to postpone indefinitely.
  - The motion to postpone debate is debatable.
  - To close debate on the motion to postpone debate requires method A or B above.
  - To pass, the motion to postpone debate requires a simple majority.
- D. A motion to lay on the table (“motion to table”):
- Used only to set aside debate temporarily while some more urgent matter is addressed. (Its use should thus be very rare.)
  - The chair should not allow the assembly to abuse the motion to table as a means to close or postpone debate.
  - The motion to table is not debatable.
  - To pass, the motion to table requires a simple majority.

**Rationale:** It should be difficult to close debate.

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**Frequently asked questions:** See:

<http://www.robertsrules.com/faq.html>

## ***Robert's Rules: Some more basic rules***

### **Amending a motion: 2 methods:**

#### A. A motion to amend:

- The motion to amend is debatable.
- To pass, the motion to amend requires a simple majority.

#### B. Consensus:

- The chair asks if there are any objections to a proposed amendment.
- If there are no objections, the amendment is approved.
- If there is even one objection, the amendment is debated.

**Rationale:** Once moved and seconded, the motion belongs to the assembly.  
(There are no “friendly amendments”!)

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### **Decorum in debate:**

- Debate issues, not personalities.
- Stick to the subject.
- Do not raise your hand while another member is speaking.
- Do not speak until you are recognized.  
(Exception: “point of order”)
- Address all remarks to the chair.
- Do not refer to other members by name.

**Rationale:** Debate should not generate personal antagonisms.

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