

The Thirteen Ranking Motions

Motion	Interrupt?	Second?	Debatable?	Amendable?	Vote?	Reconsider?
Fix the time to which to adjourn – to set the time for another meeting to continue business with no effect on when the present meeting will adjourn	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	Yes
Adjourn – to close the meeting ¹	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Recess – to request a short intermission in the assembly's proceedings ¹	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No
Raise a question of privilege – relates to rights and privileges of the assembly	Yes	No	No	No	Chair rules	No
Call for the orders of the day – requires the assembly to conform to its agenda	Yes	No	No	No	By call of a single member	No
Lay on the table – to temporarily set aside the pending question to handle something else of immediate urgency	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Previous question – brings the assembly to an immediate vote on one or more pending questions	No	Yes	No	No	2/3	Yes ²
Limit or extend limits of debate – to exercise control over debate on a pending or series of pending questions	No	Yes	No	Yes	2/3	Yes ³
Postpone to a certain time – to put off action on a pending question until a definite time or after a certain event	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
Commit or Refer – to send a pending question to a small group of persons for further investigation	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes ⁴
Amend – to modify the wording and meaning of a pending motion	No	Yes	Yes ⁵	Yes ⁶	Majority	Yes
Postpone Indefinitely – kills the main motion and avoids a direct vote on the question	No	Yes	Yes ⁷	No	Majority	Yes ⁸
Main – brings business before the assembly	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority ⁹	Yes

¹ It is a privileged motion if made while another question is pending. When no question is pending, it's a main motion.

² Can be reconsidered before any vote has been taken under the order of the previous question

³ Can be reconsidered before the order limiting or extending debate has been exhausted

⁴ Can be reconsidered if the committee has not begun consideration of the question

⁵ Is debatable whenever the motion to which it is applied is debatable

⁶ A primary amendment applies directly to the main question and is amendable. A secondary amendment is a change in a pending primary amendment, and is not amendable.

⁷ Debate can go into the merits of the main question (a strategy motion)

⁸ An affirmative vote can be reconsidered

⁹ Except when the motion proposes an action for which the bylaws prescribe a requirement of more than a majority; when adoption of the motion would have the effect of suspending a rule of order or a parliamentary right of members; or when adoption of the motion would have the effect of amending something previously adopted.

Incidental Motions (there are more than these listed here)

Motion	Interrupt?	Second?	Debatable?	Amendable?	Vote?	Reconsider?
Point of order – to call upon the chair for a ruling and enforcement of the regular rules	Yes	No	No ¹	No	Chair rules	No
Appeal (from the decision of the chair) – to take a ruling by the chair and allow the assembly to make the final decision	Yes ²	Yes	Yes ³	No	Majority or Tie ⁴	Yes
Objection to the consideration of a question – to avoid a particular main motion altogether when it would be undesirable for the motion to even come before the assembly	Yes ⁵	No	No	No	2/3 in the negative	Yes ⁶
Division of question – to divide a question into its parts when each part can stand on its own	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No
Consideration by paragraph or seriatim – to consider a long motion with sections that are not totally separate questions; allows for perfection section by section.	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No
Division of the assembly – to check the results of a voice vote or a show of hands; requires a rising vote	Yes ⁷	No	No	No	Single member	No

¹ With chair's consent, a member may be permitted to explain his point

² Appeal must be made at the time of the ruling

³ It is debatable unless it relates to indecorum in debate, relates to the priority of business, or is made when immediately pending question is undebatable. No member is allowed to speak more than once except the presiding officer, who speaks first and last.

⁴ The chair may vote, if he is a member of the assembly, and a tie vote sustains the decision of the chair

⁵ It is in order until consideration of the question has begun

⁶ The vote sustaining the objection can be reconsidered

⁷ Must be made before the chair has stated the question on another motion

Motions that Bring a Question Again Before the Assembly

Motion	Interrupt?	Second?	Debatable?	Amendable?	Vote?	Reconsider?
Take from the table – to make pending a motion that was previously laid on the table	No ¹	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Rescind or amend something previously adopted – to change an action previously taken	No ²	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority or 2/3 ³	Yes (neg vote)
Discharge a committee – to take a matter back from a committee	No ⁴	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority or 2/3 ⁵	Yes (neg Vote)
Reconsider – to reconsider a motion already voted on ⁶	Yes ⁷	Yes	Yes ⁸	No	Majority	No

¹ But a member can be recognized for purpose of giving notice ahead of a new motion

^{2,4} But a member can be recognized for purpose of giving notice of intent to offer at next meeting

^{3,5} Requires a majority vote with notice, 2/3 vote without notice

⁶ Can only be made by a member who voted on the prevailing side; the making takes precedence over any other motion whatever and yields to nothing

⁷ Can be made even after another person has been assigned the floor, so long as he has not actually begun to speak

⁸ Is debatable when the motion it applies to is debatable, and debate may go into the merits of the question to be reconsidered