

A Step-by-Step Guide to Making a Motion

According to Robert's Rules of Order, a motion is a proposal that a council or governing body take a specific action. Making a motion can be summarized as a six-step process.



1. Be Recognized. The first step in making a motion is to seek recognition by the chairperson to speak. Any member of the local governing board may speak up and address the chairperson.



2. Make a Motion. After recognition, the member of the council may propose the motion by saying, "I move that funds be allocated for repaving Main Street."



3. Second the Motion. A different member of the council needs to speak up and offer a second to this proposed motion. And all this second member needs to say is, "Second."



4. Repeat the Motion. Once a second has been given, the chairperson repeats the motion back to the group, officially stating by this repetition that the idea as proposed is now available for consideration by the group. The chairperson simply says, "It has been moved and seconded that funds be allocated for repaving Main Street."



5. Discuss the Motion. The head of the council next invites debate about this motion by asking, "Is there any discussion?" Consideration of a motion could include various members offering their ideas and opinions, or it might include referral of the proposal to a committee, or postponed consideration until a later meeting.



6. Vote on the Motion. And as a final step after discussion, the group needs to take some action to dispose of the motion. The chairperson should lead by saying, "If there is no further discussion, we will take a vote. All those in favor of allocating funds for repaving Main Street say, 'aye.' All those opposed say, 'no.'" Then, the chairperson should state the results of that vote, by saying, for example, "The 'ayes' have it and the motion is adopted. Funds will be allocated for the repaving of Main Street."

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