

## Clear Vision: Bob's Rules of Order

*For most organizations in which people share a common sense of trust and a common vision, these simple rules are enough to run meetings in a friendly efficient manner – without the need for using hundreds of specific and sometimes obscure rules of parliamentary procedure.*

1. To speak at a meeting a person must be recognized by the chair. Only one person can be recognized at a time.
2. A main motion must be made and seconded before discussion can begin on any proposal for action.
3. Only three things may happen to a main motion: it may be amended, tabled, or either adopted or rejected.
  - a. An amendment can be debated, amended itself, and finally adopted or rejected.
  - b. A motion to table requires a majority of those voting. If a main motion is tabled it cannot be brought up again at that meeting.
  - c. The main motion (as amended) can be adopted or rejected by a majority of those voting. Once the main motion has been voted upon, there can be no further discussion of it.
4. After sufficient discussion has taken place on an amendment or a main motion, anyone can “call the question”, i.e., move to end debate and proceed immediately to vote. This can be done ***informally*** or ***formally***.
  - a. If the question is called ***informally*** then the chair asks if everyone is ready to vote. If there is no objection an immediate vote is taken, with no more debate allowed.
  - b. If the question is called ***formally***, then an immediate vote with no discussion allowed is taken. If two-thirds of those voting wish to end debate, then no more discussion is allowed and a vote on the motion is taken. If less than two-thirds of those voting wish to end debate, then discussion continues till someone else “calls the question”.

*Under “Bob's Rules of Order,” all other questions regarding the running of the meeting should be decided by the chair on the basis of...common sense!*

*If someone tries to speak out of turn or disrupt the meeting in any way the chair can rule that person “out of order”.*

*If anyone objects to a decision by the chair, that person can “challenge the chair.” When this occurs, each voting person can speak to the challenge once and for only one minute. Then debate is ended and a vote is taken immediately to uphold or reject the decision of the chair. If the majority of those voting uphold the decision of the chair then the meeting proceeds. If the majority vote to reject the ruling of the chair, then the chair must announce a different decision, which can also be challenged if it is not acceptable.*

