

Commonly Used Motions for Committees

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Motion	Purpose	What to Say	Special Characteristics
Main Motion	Introduce an item of business	"I move to adopt the proposed budget." "I move to approve the resolution on . . ."	Can only be moved when no other motions are pending.
Postpone Indefinitely	Kill a sensitive main motion without a direct vote	"I move that the main motion be Postponed Indefinitely."	No amendment.
Amend	Change the wording of a main motion	"I move to Amend the main motion by striking out \$750 under the line item for Postage and inserting \$785."	Forms: Add or Insert; Strike Out; Strike Out and Insert; Substitute (entire main motion).
Refer to Subcommittee	Allow further study of a main motion	"I move to Refer the main motion to the X subcommittee (with instructions to report to the main committee at the March regular meeting)."	Can amend as to which subcommittee and the instructions to it.
Postpone	Delay decision on a main motion until later	"I move to Postpone the main motion to the next regular meeting." "I move to postpone the main motion until after lunch."	Can amend as to the time of postponement, but cannot extend beyond the next regular meeting.
Previous Question	Force a vote without further debate or amendment	"I move the Previous Question." "I move the Previous Question on all pending questions."	2/3 vote required. No debate. Normally, not allowed in a committee.
Recess	Allow an interlude in a meeting	"I move to Recess for 15 minutes."	Can amend as to the length of the recess.
Point of Order	Identify an error in procedure	"Point of Order! Our rules/charter/policies require that we _____."	One member can demand that the rules be followed. No second, debate, or amendment.
Request for Information	Ask a factual question, directed to staff, officers, or subcommittee chairs.	"I have a question regarding the budget."	Most common tool for exercising duty of care. No second, debate, or amendment.

Note: motion to "*Table*" is ambiguous and often misused. Instead, use *Postpone* to delay a decision, and *Postpone Indefinitely* to indirectly dispose of or kill a motion.