

# Wichita Rules

A distillation of Roberts Rules of Order<sup>1-3</sup>.

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rbadgett@kumc.edu

## Principles and suggestions:

- Simplify [Robert's Rules of Order](#) and consider using the highlighted text below in your meetings.
- The majority has the right to decide. When a group first convenes, defined whether consensus, 50% or 2/3s.
- The minority has rights
  - Voice during debate
  - Voice after debate (postdecisional voice. Hunton, 1996)
  - Call motions like anyone else
- Encourage participation (Róisín, 2020)
  - ...members should avoid speaking a second time on a question unless everyone else who wants to speak has been able to
  - Encourage views of silent members
  - When you agree with statements of others, verbalize agreement rather than be silent (Bain, 2021)

| To  | Say  | Interrupt speaker | Second Needed | Debatable | Amendable | Decided by (verbal) |
|---|--|-------------------|---------------|-----------|-----------|---------------------|
| Introduce a new item                            | "I move that..."   | No                | Yes           | Yes       | Yes       | Majority            |
| Introduce a new item that was not on the agenda | "I move to suspend the rules and..."   |                   |               | Yes       | Yes       |                     |
|   | "Apologies for my not putting this on the agenda, but should we discuss..."  |                   |               |           |           |                     |
| Amend an item                                   | "I move to amend the motion by..."   |                   |               | Yes       | Yes       |                     |
| Postpone deciding the item                      | Formal: "I move to postpone this question until..."  |                   |               | Yes       | Yes       |                     |
|   | "I suggest we vote on whether to table this issue until we know more - should member X obtain details about y...?" |                   |               |           |           |                     |
| Refer out to a subgroup                         | Formal: "I move that the motion be referred to a committee made up of..."  |                   |               | Yes       | No        |                     |
|   | "Seems we are at an impasse, should we have a subgroup think this through more and bring it back to us?"           |                   |               |           |           |                     |
| Retract a motion you made                       | "I move that we withdraw my motion."   |                   |               | No        | No        |                     |
|   | Formal: "I move that we vote on the question."   |                   |               | No        | No        |                     |

|                                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|---------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| End debate and vote on question | "Seems we may all be agreeing, should we vote and maybe move on...?" |  |  |  |  |  |
|---------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|

### Additional considerations

High-stakes, "Multivoting is where voters are given multiple votes that they can allocate across options" may be best (Johnson, 2021). The ideal number of votes allowed per member is  $\text{votes} > \text{options} * (\text{options} - 1)/2$ . "To illustrate, consider a group voting on three options. If, each voter has  $v = o(o-1)/2$  three votes (3). A voter can express a true ranked-choice preference by allocating two  $3 = 3(3-1)/2$  votes to one option, one vote to a second option, and no votes to a third option." (Johnson, 2021)

Emotional votes may be better done anonymously

### References and more information:

The Wichita Rules is a very simplified cheat sheet to implement informal organization to a meeting. For more information:

1. A more detailed [cheat sheet from the University of North Carolina](#)
2. More detail yet from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert%27s\\_Rules\\_of\\_Order](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert%27s_Rules_of_Order)
3. Even more detail from <https://robertsrules.com/>

Studies on these topics:

4. Bain, Kristin; Kreps, Tamar A.; Meikle, Nathan L.; Tenney, Elizabeth R. (August 2021). "Amplifying Voice in Organizations". *Academy of Management Journal*. 64 (4): 1288–1312. [doi:10.5465/amj.2018.0621](https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2018.0621). [eISSN 1948-0989](#). [ISSN 0001-4273](#). Summary available at <https://journals.aom.org/doi/10.5465/amj.2018.0621.summary>
5. Hunton, James E., Kenneth H. Price, and Thomas W. Hall. "A field experiment examining the effects of membership in voting majority and minority subgroups and the ameliorating effects of postdecisional voice." *Journal of Applied Psychology* 81.6 (1996): 806.
6. Johnson, Michael D; Awtrey, Eli; Ong, Wei Jee (28 September 2022). "Verdicts, Elections, and Counterterrorism: When Groups Take Unofficial Votes". *Academy of Management Discoveries*. [doi:10.5465/amd.2021.0099](https://doi.org/10.5465/amd.2021.0099)
7. Róisín O'Donovan, Eilish McAuliffe, A systematic review of factors that enable psychological safety in healthcare teams, *International Journal for Quality in Health Care*, Volume 32, Issue 4, May 2020, Pages 240–250, <https://doi.org/10.1093/intqhc/mzaa025>

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