Rules Governing Debate

The term debate applies to the discussion on the merits of a pending question.

[Note that less formal rules apply to boards and committees. Also, smaller groups may relax the formality of these rules.]

1. A member may note speak until recognized by the chairman.

2. When no special rule relating to the length of speeches is adopted by the group, a member can speak no longer than ten minutes unless the consent of the group is obtained.

3. Rights in debate are not transferable. A member cannot yield an unexpired portion of his/her time to another member (the chairman controls who speaks) or reserve any portion of time for later.

4. No member may be allowed to speak more than twice to the same question on the same day.

5. Proper decorum in debate must be observed:
   A. Remarks must be germane to the question before the group.
   B. Speakers should speak loudly and clearly.
   C. Speakers should refrain from attacking another member's motives.
   D. Remarks should be addressed through the chairman.
   E. Speakers should stand when speaking.
   F. Thomas Jefferson's advice is still good: "No one is to disturb another in his speech by hissing, coughing, spitting, speaking or whispering to another, etc."
   G. If any member objects, a speaker has no right to read from or to have the secretary read from any paper or book as part of his/her speech, without permission of the assembly.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Appropriate motion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present an idea for consideration or action</td>
<td>Main motion or Resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consider subject informally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve a pending motion</td>
<td>Amend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Division of the question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulate or cut-off debate</td>
<td>Limit or extend debate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Previous question (vote immediately)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delay a decision</td>
<td>Refer to committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Postpone definitely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Postpone indefinitely (kills motion)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suppress a proposal</td>
<td>Object to consideration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Postpone indefinitely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Withdraw a motion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet an emergency</td>
<td>Question of privilege</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Suspend rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lay on the table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gain information on a pending motion</td>
<td>Parliamentary inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Request for information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Question of privilege</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Request to ask member a question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question the decision of the chair</td>
<td>Point of order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appeal from decision of chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enforce rights and privileges</td>
<td>Division of assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Division of question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parliamentary inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Point of order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appeal from decision of chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider a question again</td>
<td>Resume consideration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reconsider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rescind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change an action already taken</td>
<td>Reconsider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rescind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amend motion previously adopted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terminate a meeting</td>
<td>Adjourn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOTION (by order of precedence)</td>
<td>Interrupt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjourn</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recess</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question of Privilege</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Privilege</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary Inquiry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Point of information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orders of the Day</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lay on the table</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous Question</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limit or extend debate</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postpone to a certain time</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refer to committee</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amend</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postpone Indefinitely</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAIN MOTION</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RECONSIDER</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESCIND</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMEND MOTION PREVIOUS ADOPTED</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**INCIDENTAL MOTIONS -- NO ORDER OF PRECEDENCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INCIDENTAL MOTIONS -- NO ORDER OF PRECEDENCE</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Majority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appeal from decision of chair</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Majority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suspend the rules</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object to consideration</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2/3 against con.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Point of order</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdraw a motion</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Majority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division of question</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Majority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division of assembly</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>