

Beginner's Guide to the Rules of Procedure

RULES OF PROCEDURE 2024



The following is a timeline of a typical MUN debate. The most important components of each stage will be explained. Memorizing these rules is not necessary as the chairs will fully explain the Rules of Procedure to delegates at the beginning of the debate and when they become relevant. They will also be able to answer any questions you may have throughout the discussion.

Important rules for throughout the debate

The key rules that are relevant throughout the debate.

- **Objective of debate:** The final objective you will be working towards is creating a resolution.
- A **resolution** is a formal document outlining a solution to the issue being discussed. The committee should work towards writing and finally voting on a resolution.
- **Third person speech:** You are representing the views of a country and not yourself. This means that during formal debate you must refrain from first person pronouns and must use phrases such as "we", the "delegation of [insert country]" etc.
- **No cross talking:** During formal debate you may not speak while other delegates are making speeches. To communicate with other delegates you may pass notes or communicate electronically.
- **Raising points and motions:** Points and motions are used to ask questions and to enact various actions such as voting on topics or changing the topic being discussed. You won't need to memorize the wording for all the motions, you will be taught them by the chairs and you will have a booklet with all points and motions available.
- **What is a point?:** During debates if you need to ask a question of a practical nature (asking about the rules of procedure or needing to use the bathroom) you must raise a point.
- **What is a motion?:** A motion is an action regarding the content of the debate like starting voting procedures on an issue.
- **How do I raise them?:** To raise either a point or a motion first wait for the chair to state "are there any points or motions on the floor". You may then raise your placard, and once the chair has recognized you, you may stand and state your point or motion.
- **What kind of points and motions are there?:** A list of important points and motions can be found at the bottom of this guide as well as when they can be raised.

Starting the debate

At the beginning of the debate you will first start with a roll call where you will indicate that you are present. Then the committee will decide on the order of the topics that will be debated, followed by opening speeches.

Opening the debate and setting the agenda: The first major step is to formally open the debate by setting the agenda, which is done by deciding which order to debate the committees two topics.

Initially the chairs will propose an agenda called a preliminary agenda. If anyone in the committee objects to the proposed order of the topics then the chairs will invite a maximum of 2 speakers for and 2 against the provisional agenda. The committee will then vote on the provisional agenda. If it passes then the agenda remains the same, if it fails the order of the topics is reversed.

Roll call: Once the agenda is set the roll call will be made. The chairs will ask whether each member of the committee is "present" or "present and voting. Whats the difference?:

- Present: If you state you are "Present" you may either abstain from voting on a resolution or vote in favor/against it.
- Present and voting: If you state you are "present and voting" you cannot abstain from voting and you can only vote in favor/against a resolution.
- Why be "Present and voting": A question you may ask is why you would you state that you are "Present and voting" when you lose the ability to abstain. This is often a move done to show your countries determination on reaching a certain outcome. This is usually a strategy adopted by countries with veto powers.

Opening statements: After the roll call has been established each country will make their opening statements on the topic being discussed. Typically the opening statement is 1.5 minutes long.



The main debate



At the beginning of the debate you will first start with a roll call where you will indicate that your are present. Then the committee will decide on the order of the topics that will be debated, followed by opening speeches.

General speakers list: Right after the opening statements have finished the chairs will ask who would like to be added to the general speakers list and you may raise your placard to be added. When the speakers list is open each country on the list will make speeches talking about the topic in general for a set amount of time.

- **What might be discussed?:** You may use this time to state what aspects of the topic is important to your country or review what has previously been said and what should be further discussed. Essentially you can talk about anything within the topic.
- **Spans the entire debate:** The general speakers list will be open throughout the entire debate, if there are no more speakers on the list then the debate ends and voting begins, so the list is continuously updated.
- **Making motions or points:** Typically after 2 or 3 people have spoken from the general speakers list the chairs will ask "Are there any points or motions on the floor" which is when you can make a motion.

Motions for Moderated Caucus: The moderated caucus is a motion that essentially moves the debate to a specific sub topic. For example if the debate topic is "The issue of plastic waste" a possible topic for a moderated caucus is "Policies to increase plastic recycling". Once the motion is raised it is voted on. If it passes then the discussion must be focused on this topic for a set amount of time.

- **Importance:** While the general speakers list is good to discuss the overview of a topic the moderated caucus' structure the debate. They help focus the discussion on one key topic at a time.
- **How to motion for it:** After the chair asks for points or motions you may raise your placard and state you wish to motion for a moderated caucus, state your topic, the total time you want to discuss it and how much time each person may speak. The chair may accept a few more motions and then all motions are voted on. If all motions fail to pass you return to the general speakers list. An example:

"We would like to raise a motion for a moderated caucus on the topic of policies to reduce plastic waste, for a total time of 15 minutes and an individuals speakers time of 1 minute".

Motion for an un-moderated Caucus: An un-moderated caucus is essentially the opposite of a moderated caucus. If motioned and voted for, instead of entering a formal debate on a sub-topic, the committee may enter informal debate for a set amount of time. This means that delegates may stand, walk to other delegates and converse directly and may talk in first person.

- **Importance:** This motion is useful when the committee wants to begin writing a resolution. When in an un-moderated caucus its a good time to organize a google doc, add delegate emails and potentially create blocs.
- **How to motion for it:** Simply state your motion, the total time and purpose, for example:

"The delegate of the United States would like to motion for an un-moderated caucus of 15 minutes with the purpose of creating blocs."

- **Why not conduct the entire debate in an un-moderated caucus:** Although in theory it sounds quicker to debate topics without the extensive rules of procedure, in practice in a committee of more than 10 people discussions become extremely chaotic and bog down. As well as this it is often the case that not everyone is able to contribute their ideas due to the chaos.

Typically in the later half of the debate, delegates will start writing their draft resolutions. Delegates will work together to write the draft resolution during the debates.

When to start?: Usually once the committee has conducted a few moderated caucus topics and has agreed upon a few possible actions that can be taken to solve the issue the committee will go into an un-moderated caucus and begin writing down their ideas. Typically a google doc is created and delegates work together on a single document.

The three steps to a resolution: There are three steps to reaching a final resolution. The first is writing a working document, then a draft resolution then finally voting upon the resolution.

- **Working paper:** A working paper is simply a document with the broad ideas of the committee. There is no formal structure needed. To be able to discuss this document you must make a motion to introduce your working paper after sending it and getting approval from your chair.
- **Draft resolution:** The draft resolution is the final step before voting. This document must follow a strict format, your chair will explain what these requirements are. You must first send the draft resolution to your chairs to be checked and then once you get approval you may motion to introduce it.
- **Final resolution:** You cannot consider your document a resolution until it has been passed by the committee. Once the debate is closed and the resolution is voted on and hopefully passed it officially becomes a resolution.

Amendments: An amendment is a suggested change to a part of an already introduced resolution. The chair will typically announce when they are accepting amendments. You must first send your amendment to the chair and then motion to introduce it. It is then debated and voted on. The exact process is better explained by the chairs during the debates.

Voting and ending the debate



How to initiate voting procedures: To begin voting procedures a delegate must raise a motion to close the debate and begin voting procedures.

- **Objections:** If there are objections there will be 2 speakers for and 2 against closing the debate, then a procedural vote is conducted, if the vote passes the committee commences voting procedures. If there are no objections no vote is required.

The different types of voting: After you have motioned to begin voting procedures you will have the option to motion for two voting methods:

- **Vote by placard:** This method is the simplest voting procedure. Here the delegates will all raise their placards whether they are for or against at the same time.
- **Vote by roll call:** Here, each countries name will be called in alphabetical order and the delegate will stand and state whether they are voting for or against.

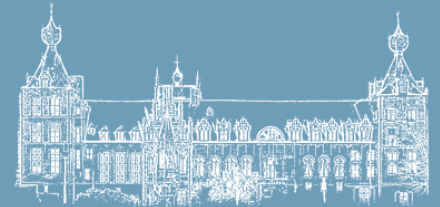
Voting: At long last, once voting begins all electronic devices will be turned off and all logistics staff and journalists will leave the room and voting will begin.

Veto powers and consensus: The UNSC and NATO have special voting conditions.

- **UNSC:** In the UNSC the five permanent members (United Kingdom, The United States of America, The People's Republic of China, The Russian Federation and France) have veto powers. This means that if any one of these countries votes against the resolution automatically fails no matter how many votes in favor there are.
- **NATO:** Voting works using the consensus model. This means that for any document to pass everyone must vote in favor.

If you feel a bit overwhelmed by these rules, don't worry, you don't need to remember all of these rules by heart as the chairs will go over them and will be there to guide you through the debate. The rules will be much clearer once you actually use them during the debate. Also you may email us or the chairs for any questions you might have.

Useful points and motions:



Motions:

- Motion for a moderated caucus: A motion to focus debates onto a specific sub topic. When stating your motion include the topic, total time and speakers time:
 - *"The delegate of the United States would like to raise a motion on the issue of policies to reduce plastic waste with a total time of 15 minutes and an individual speakers time of 45 seconds."*
- Motions for an un-moderated caucus: A motion to move into an informal debate for a set amount of time. When stating your motion include the total time and the purpose of the un-moderated caucus:
 - *"The delegate of China would like to raise a motion for an un-moderated caucus of 15 minutes with the purpose of joining resolutions."*
- Motion to suspend the meeting: A motion to temporarily suspend the debate, usually for coffee breaks and lunch.
 - *"Motion to suspend the debate until after the coffee break"*
- Motion to close the debate: A motion to end the debate and move into voting procedures. Will require 2 speakers for and 2 speakers against before voting is initiated:
 - *"We would like to motion to close the debate"*

Points:

- Point of parliamentary inquiry: A point raised to ask for help from the chairs regarding the rules of procedures
 - *"Point of parliamentary inquiry, how can we raise a motion for a moderated caucus?"*
- Point of personal privilege: A point used to request that a issue of convenience be resolved during formal debate. For example if you need to use the bathroom, or if a delegate making a speech isn't loud enough. (Note: the only case where you may make a point of personal privilege during a delegate's speech is if you cannot hear them)
 - *"Point of personal privilege, may the delegate leave the room to use the rest room." / "Point of personal privilege, we cannot hear the delegate of America's speech."*
- Point of order: A point used to bring a procedural error to the attention of the chair:
 - *"Point of order the chairs have forgotten to vote on the last moderated caucus."*