



# 4-H LEADERSHIP & PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

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Beginning

## Parliamentary Procedure

To run successfully, every meeting must have some basic ground rules for its participants. The same holds true for 4-H club meetings. **Parliamentary procedure** provides the rules to conduct a business meeting.

Good leaders are always working to improve their skills. Parliamentary procedure is a skill that you should know so you can take part in meetings and help them run smoothly. This page will provide you with some basic information and activities to strengthen your leadership skills. So what are you waiting for? Let's get started!



Life Skill  
Leadership

## The Role of Officers

A club has officers to make meetings run smoothly. Below are some typical officers a club might have:

- ◆ President
- ◆ Vice-President
- ◆ Secretary
- ◆ Treasurer

What do officers do? The **president** presides over all meetings of the club. The **vice-president** fills in if the president is unable to attend the meeting. The vice-president is also typically responsible for the program. The **secretary** calls the roll and keeps the minutes of the meeting. The **treasurer** keeps up with the financial matters of the group.

Different organizations may have different officers with various names. On a separate sheet of paper list the names and titles of the officers of your 4-H club. Interview them and ask them about their duties as an officer. Share what you learned with your 4-H buddy!

## Serve on a Committee

A **committee** is a small group of people appointed to take care of some specific activity of a club. There are lots of committees that might exist in a club. Some examples include a community service committee, a bulletin board committee and a program committee.

At your next meeting, volunteer to serve on a community service committee. Your task will be to plan and implement a community service project at your next club meeting. Be sure to get others to join your committee!

For community service project ideas visit:  
<http://www.utextension.utk.edu/4H/sos/index.htm>

Make a poster about parliamentary procedure to display at a 4-H meeting. Be sure to work with your 4-H buddy!

## History of Parliamentary Procedure

Source: *Robert's Rules of Order* and <http://www.robertsrules.com>

General Henry M. Robert was an army officer in the late 1800s. He was active in civic and church groups wherever he lived. In both San Francisco, California, and Portland, Oregon, he found that the settlers disagreed about how their meetings should be run. This happened because the settlers came from different hometowns. Robert realized that they needed a book of rules about how meetings should be handled.

Robert decided to write this book. His goal was to create similar rules for all organizations and groups to use. That way, people could belong to different clubs or live in different towns and still use the same rules for meetings.

His first manual was published in 1876. This was the beginning of *Robert's Rules of Order*, the manual still used today to guide us in parliamentary procedure.

Visit your library and find a copy of *Robert's Rules of Order*.



## The Power of the Gavel

You may notice that the presiding officer of a meeting usually has a gavel. What you may not know is how the gavel is used. The gavel is tapped a certain number of times at certain points in the meeting.

- ◆ One tap follows the announcement of the end of the meeting, the completion of a business item or is a message to the members to be seated.
- ◆ Two taps of the gavel calls the meeting to order.
- ◆ Three taps of the gavel is the signal for all members to stand in unison on the third tap.
- ◆ A series of sharp taps is used to restore order at a meeting.

All officers and members should understand the use and meaning of the gavel. It is the symbol of authority. If it is used correctly, the gavel helps create orderly meetings.

Attend a non-4-H meeting where parliamentary procedure will be used. Examples include church business meetings, school board meetings and county commission meetings. Write a report on what you observed and share with a teen or adult leader.

# 4-H LEADERSHIP & PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

## How to Make a Motion

When a 4-H member has an idea that should be discussed by the entire club, the member can introduce the idea at the business part of the meeting. That idea becomes a **motion**. All members of the club should know how to make a motion. To make a motion, follow these simple steps:

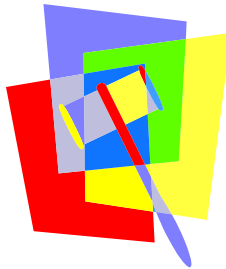
1. Stand and address the chairman. Do this by saying, "Mr. President" or "Madame President."
2. The chairman will recognize you by saying your name. This gives you permission to speak.
3. Make your motion by saying, "I move that . . . [state your motion]." An example might be "I move that we participate in a canned food drive at our November club meeting."
4. Someone else in the club seconds the motion. This means that he or she think your motion is a good idea. This person would say, "I second the motion."
5. The chairman says "A motion has been made by [name] and seconded by [name] to participate in a canned food drive at our November club meeting. Is there any discussion?"
6. This is the chance for any member in the group to give his or her opinion of the motion. Be sure to be recognized by the chairman before you share your thoughts.
7. When discussion stops, the chairman says, "If there is no further discussion, we will vote on the motion to participate in a canned food drive at our November club meeting. All in favor say 'aye.'" Members vote. "All opposed, say 'nay.'" Members vote.
8. The chairman then announces the results of the vote by saying, "The ayes [or nays] have it. The motion to participate in a canned food drive at our November club meeting carries [or fails]." If the chairman is not sure which side had the most votes, he or she may ask for a show of hands.

That's it! If every member knows how to make a motion, your meetings will run much more smoothly.

According to *Robert's Rules of Order*, "Chairman" is a proper title. It is the same for male or female officers. Use "Mister Chairman" or "Madame Chairman" instead of "Chairperson."



FOR MORE IDEAS, CONTACT  
YOUR 4-H OFFICE.



At least twice this year, make a motion at your 4-H club meeting. Be sure and practice with an adult or teen leader before you do. You will want to speak clearly and loudly enough for everyone to hear you.

## Parts of a Meeting

People have meetings for different reasons. The **agenda** is what the group will talk about at the meeting. Officers should know what the agenda is before every meeting. Listed below are some typical parts of a meeting. Circle any of the following that are part of your 4-H club meetings:

Call to Order	Program/Education Component
Pledges	Demonstrations
Thought for the Day	Speeches
Roll Call	Guest Speakers
Read the Minutes	Recreation
Treasurer's Report	Announcements
Committee Reports	Adjourn
Old Business	
New Business	

Remember that non-4-H meeting you visited earlier? Think back on your visit. Put a check by each meeting part listed above that you observed in the non-4-H meeting.

## Additional Resources

There are lots of things to learn about parliamentary procedure. A good leader is always striving to further develop his or her personal skills. This sheet has given you the opportunity to begin exploring parliamentary procedure and leadership. Use the resources listed below to continue learning about parliamentary procedure, leadership and personal development.

- School & public libraries
- People who are in leadership roles
- The book *Robert's Rules of Order* or the official Robert's Rules of Order Web site: <http://www.robertsrules.com>
- Your county's 4-H officer handbook
- 4-H project groups
- The 4-H leadership and personal development Web site:

[www.utextension.utk.edu/4h/projects/leadership.htm](http://www.utextension.utk.edu/4h/projects/leadership.htm)

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