

Efficient decision-making is a cornerstone of successful meetings. Well-structured motions play an important role in ensuring that your decisions are clear and have the best chance of being put into practice. A motion sets out the specific decision to be made by a group, providing clarity and focus for discussion and debate.

A motion is a matter to be decided during a meeting. The best way to write a motion is to ask yourself, "What do I want the meeting to 'decide?'"



Example motion text

A well-written motion provides a precise framework for what is being proposed, allowing members to focus on the issue at hand and make informed decisions. You can use the following example motions for standard agenda items for your organisation's committee meetings and general meetings.

- **Attendance and apologies:** That the attendance record be received and a leave of absence be granted to apologies.
- **Minutes of previous general meeting:** That the minutes of the previous general meeting be confirmed as a true and correct record.
- **Business arising from minutes of previous general meeting:** That the matters arising from the minutes of the previous general meeting be noted and the proposed actions be endorsed.
- **Correspondence:** That the inward correspondence be received and the outward correspondence be endorsed.
- **Review and adoption of policies:** That the [NAME OF POLICY] be received and adopted as an official policy of the association.
- **President's report:** That the president's report be adopted.
- **Treasurer's report, auditor's report and financial statement:** That the treasurer's report, auditor's report and annual financial statement for the [DATES] financial year be received and adopted.
- **Subcommittee and other reports:** That subcommittee reports and other reports be adopted.
- **Declaration of interests:** That the declarations of interest provided by committee members be received and recorded in the minutes.
- **Declaration of remuneration:** That for the [insert year] financial year, the organisation paid [number] people a total [total amount] in remuneration and benefits.
- **Election of office bearers:** That the following members be elected to office bearer positions: [LIST POSITIONS AND NAMES].
- **Appointment of volunteers to designated positions:** That the following volunteers be appointed to designated positions for the period [DATES]: [LIST VOLUNTEERS AND POSITIONS].
- **Appointment of patron:** That [NAME OF PATRON] be appointed as patron for the period [DATES].
- **Election of life members:** That [NAME OF LIFE MEMBER(S)] be awarded life membership of the association.
- **Admission or rejection of membership applications:** That all applicants for membership, who have applied for membership since the previous management committee meeting, be admitted into the class of membership applied for, with the exception of [list applicants the management committee wishes to reject, if any].
- **Appointment of auditor:** That [NAME] be appointed as the auditor (or accountant) for the [DATES] financial year.
- **Accounts for payment and paid accounts for ratification:** That accounts to be paid be approved for payment and accounts already paid be ratified.
- **Determination of fees:** That the fees for the [DATE] financial year be set at [PROPOSED FEE STRUCTURE FOR EACH CLASS OF MEMBERSHIP].
- **Confirmation of income tax exemption:** That the association confirms it has self-assessed as income tax exempt under the relevant provisions of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997, and has completed the required annual notification to the Australian Taxation Office.
- **Insurance review:** That the insurance policies of the association be received and the renewal of coverage with [INSURER] be approved.
- **Date of next meeting:** That the next meeting be scheduled for [DATE AND TIME].

Motion steps

Pre-meeting preparation

1. Notice of meeting

The secretary formally issues a notice of meeting to members, adhering to the required notice period. The notice includes a call for motions to be added to the agenda.

2. Submission of motions

Members submit well worded motions to the secretary. It's recommended that motions are submitted at least a few days before the meeting to allow time for the agenda to be finalised and circulated.

3. Agenda circulation

The secretary circulates the completed agenda, including all motions, well before the meeting.

Guidelines for writing motions:

- Begin with the word 'That'
- Clearly specify the decision being sought
- Avoid the first-person
- Limit motions to one sentence

Example: That the organisation allocates \$2,000 to purchase new training equipment for the junior development program.

During the meeting

1. Move the motion

When the relevant agenda item is reached, the person who proposed the motion formally moves it. Moving the motion is the official terminology for introducing the motion to the meeting. The mover provides an explanation, stating their reasons for the motion.

2. Seconding the motion

Another member seconds the motion, indicating support for it to be debated. If no one seconds the motion, it lapses and is not debated further during the meeting. The same motion (or similar) can be moved at a subsequent meeting.

3. Debate and Amendments

The meeting debates the motion. Amendments may be proposed, debated and incorporated if necessary. Formal meeting rules, also known as 'Standing Orders', can be followed if there is a need to add additional structure to the meeting to maintain order. See the *Sport HQ Meeting guide* for example Standing Orders.

4. Voting

Eligible members vote on the motion. The motion passes (becomes a resolution) if a majority (i.e. more than 50% of those people voting) vote 'Yes'. The motion is 'lost' if a majority is not achieved. If votes are tied, the chairperson may cast a deciding vote (if such a provision is included in the organisation's constitution), or the motion is lost.

While the formal process of moving motions is not always required, being aware of it can help you maintain order during a meeting when debating large or contentious decisions.

Post-meeting actions

1. Record in the minutes

- Who moved and seconded each motion
- The outcome of the vote
- The planned actions resulting from the resolution

2. Distribute minutes promptly to members

If your agenda is well constructed with good motions and has all supporting documents and reports attached, creating great minutes is quick and easy. It's simply a matter of recording who moved and seconded each motion, the result of the vote and, most importantly, how that decision will now be put into action.



Special resolutions

Special resolutions are required for significant organisation decisions, such as amending the constitution, changing the organisation's legal name or dissolving the organisation. These resolutions ensure that important changes are made transparently and with broad support from members.

A special resolution must be presented at a general meeting of members, whether at an Annual General Meeting (AGM) or a Special General Meeting (SGM). This ensures every eligible member has the opportunity to attend the meeting to vote on the decision. For a special resolution to pass, it requires a 'Yes' vote from at least **75% of members present and entitled to vote**.

Example special resolution motions

- **Amending the constitution:** That [Organisation Name] adopts the proposed amendments to its constitution, as circulated to members prior to this meeting.
- **Changing the organisation's legal name:** That the name of [Current Organisation Name] be changed to [Proposed New Name], effective immediately upon approval by the relevant authorities.
- **Dissolving the organisation:** That [Organisation Name] be dissolved in accordance with the organisation's constitution and any remaining assets be distributed as outlined in the constitution.
- **Approving amalgamation with another organisation:** That [Organisation Name] amalgamate with [Other Organisation Name], with the new entity to operate under the name [New Entity Name].

