

BEGINNING THE ROUND

PROCEDURE

When the debaters, speaker, and judge are all in the room, the judge or the speaker should flip a coin, asking one of the debaters chosen at random to "call" it. The team which wins the coin flip may choose either the resolution or the side which it prefers. The losing team chooses whichever of these items the winning team does not choose. Before it is required to pick one of these options, the winning team is entitled to hear and/or see the resolutions offered for the round.

Therefore, as soon as the coin flip is completed, the judge or the speaker opens the envelope containing the resolutions and reads them aloud and/or shows them to all of the debaters.

The team choosing the resolution does so. The other team then chooses the side, Government or Opposition, which it prefers. The Government retires from the room and each side has 10 minutes to prepare their case.

(Text courtesy of Mr. Philip Hansen, modified by Thom Peters)

S P E A K E R ' S S C R I P T

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATING

When the debaters are properly seated (Government to your right, Opposition to your left, facing each other) and the judge has taken his/her place (opposite and facing you), say:

"I call the House to order. I call upon the Prime Minister to open the case for the government.

The Prime Minister speaks for up to five minutes. You should give him/her and each of the other debaters time signals indicating how much time is left. The Prime Minister should stop speaking and sit down when you indicate that there is no time left. If he/she fails to do so, a member of the Opposition may rise and say, "Mr. Speaker, I rise to a point of order." The Prime Minister must stop speaking. You say, "State your point." The Opposition member will say, "The Prime Minister has exceeded his/her time." If this is correct, you say, "Point well taken. Will the Prime Minister please apologize to the House and end his/her speech." If it is not correct, you say, "Point not well taken. The Prime Minister may continue for _____ (minutes) (seconds)."

You should follow this procedure whenever a Point of Order or Point of Personal Privilege is raised. If it is not obvious whether or not the point is "well taken," ask the judge to make a ruling on the point. If the point is "well taken," the member who was speaking loses the time consumed by this procedure. If it is not, the time consumed by this procedure should be restored to the member's total speaking time.

When the Prime Minister finishes speaking, you say

"We thank the Prime Minister for his/her remarks, and call upon the Member of the Opposition to open the case for the Opposition."

(Member of Opposition speaks for up to eight minutes.)

"We thank the Member of the Opposition for his/her remarks, and call upon the Minister of the Crown to continue the case for the Government."

(Minister of Crown speaks for up to eight minutes.)

"We thank the Minister of the Crown for his/her remarks, and call upon the Leader of the Opposition to conclude the case for the Opposition."

(Leader of Opposition speaks for up to eight minutes.)

"We thank the Leader of the Opposition for his/her remarks, and call upon the Prime Minister to conclude the case for the Government, reminding him/her that he/she has three minutes in which to do so, and may introduce no new evidence or lines of argument."

(Prime Minister speaks for up to three minutes.)

"We thank the Prime Minister for his/her remarks, and we declare this House adjourned."

At this point, the judge may choose to make any constructive comments desired, but the judge should not reveal the outcome of the debate.

Once the judge completes the scoresheet, s/he should turn it over to a runner before beginning the following round.

RULES OF PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE

1. The debate will be presided over by Mr. or Madam Speaker.
2. The government team (the side in favour) shall sit on the right hand side of the Speaker. The Opposition (the side against) shall sit on the left.
3. The speaking order will be as follows: The Prime Minister, followed by the first Opposition member then the Minister of the Crown (second Government speaker) and followed by the Leader of the Opposition (second Opposition speaker). Finally, the Prime Minister will deliver the Government rebuttal.
4. Maximum speaking times are 5 minutes for the Prime Minister's first speech, 8 minutes for the other speeches and 3 minutes for the Prime Minister's rebuttal. There are no minimum times. A 30-second grace period will be allowed for each debater.
5. During the rebuttal, members (debaters) may not bring up any new arguments or new evidence except in direct refutation of material which has already been presented.
6. All remarks must be addressed to the Speaker of the House and not to anyone else, e.g. say "Mr. Speaker," not "Mr. Speaker, honourable judges." The member must address Mr. Speaker in his/her first sentence.
7. Other members (debaters and members of the audience) should be referred to by their constituency (e.g. the member for their last name or their city), office (e.g. the prime minister) or as "The Honourable Member" or "The Honourable Gentlemen" or "The Honourable Lady." They may be referred to as "he" or "she" but never as "you."
8. Members will speak only when called upon by the Speaker, except for points of order, privilege, and heckles.

9. Points of order are raised when the person speaking has broken the rules of the house. Typical reasons for points of order are: going significantly overtime, failure to address Mr. Speaker, addressing someone other than Mr. Speaker (.e.g. referring to your opponents as "you"), using inappropriate language or introducing new arguments in the rebuttal. Points of order do NOT include the debater putting his hands in his pockets, not wearing a tie or jacket or speaking from somewhere other than his/her side of the House.
10. Points of privilege are raised if a member has been misquoted, significantly misrepresented, or personally insulted.
11. Points of order or points of privilege are raised while another member has the floor (i.e. is speaking). If a member wishes to raise a point of order or privilege, he/she should stand and say "Point of order, Mr. Speaker" or "Point of Privilege, Mr. Speaker." The person who was delivering his/her speech must stop talking and Mr. Speaker will ask the member what the point is. The member raising the point should state it as briefly as possible. The Speaker will then rule it well taken or not well taken. The member who was delivering his/her speech will then continue it, taking appropriate action if the point was ruled well taken (e.g. if he/she had not addressed Mr. Speaker, he/she should do so, or if he/she was introducing new arguments in his/her rebuttal, he/she should stop doing so). The time taken to raise a point is not included as part of the member's speaking time.
12. Points should neither be too frequent nor trivial.
13. Heckles are brief comments from other members, usually but not necessarily witty. They should not be so frequent that the member does not have a fair chance to speak.
14. The resolutions will be straight resolutions, and there will be no redefinition of the topic.

15. The government may introduce a plan for implementing the resolution if they wish to, but they are not required to do so. If they do propose a plan, they must fully explain it during the Prime Minister's speech.
16. If, and only if, the government introduces a plan, the Opposition may introduce a counterplan, but it is not required to do so. A counterplan is an alternative method of implementing the resolution which is significantly different from the government plan and is demonstrably better than the government plan. If the Opposition wants to introduce a counterplan, they must fully explain it during the address of their first speaker.
17. Props (e.g. drawings, models) may not be used.
18. Courtesy must be shown to all other members at all times.