

Methods of Voting



How Democracy Works



Vote Defined

As a noun:



“A formal expression of opinion or choice, either positive or negative, made by an individual or body of individuals.”

As a verb:



“To express or signify will or choice in a matter, as by casting a ballot.”

Webster’s New Universal Unabridged Dictionary

Basis for Determining Voting Results

🍌 Majority

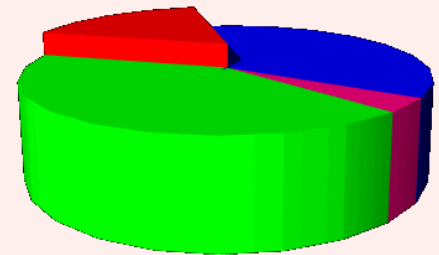
More than half the votes cast

🍌 Two-thirds

At least two-thirds of the votes cast

🍌 Plurality

The largest number of votes for a candidate or proposal when there are three or more choices



Methods Used in Voting

Commonly

- 👉 *Viva voce* (by voice)
- 👉 Rising
- 👉 Show of Hands
- 👉 Unanimous consent
- 👉 Voting Cards
- 👉 Ballot



Occasionally

- 👉 Roll call
- 👉 Absentee
- 👉 Mail
- 👉 Proxy
- 👉 Telephone

Other Methods *Not* Commonly Used



- 🍌 **Black and White Balls**
- 🍌 **Machine or Electronic**
- 🍌 **Preferential**
- 🍌 **Cumulative**

Viva voce

Regular method for motion not requiring more than a majority vote for adoption

“Those in favor of the motion, say aye.” [Pause]

“Those opposed, say no.” [Pause]



Rising Vote

- 👉 Most often used when a voice vote has been taken with an inconclusive result
- 👉 Normal method of voting when a two-thirds vote is required for adoption of a motion

*“Those in favor of the motion will rise...
Be seated.”*

“Those opposed will rise... Be seated.”



Counted Rising

- 👉 When a rising vote is inconclusive, a counted rising vote is used

“Those in favor of the motion will rise and remain standing until counted... Be seated.”

“Those opposed will rise and remain standing until counted... Be seated.”



Show of Hands

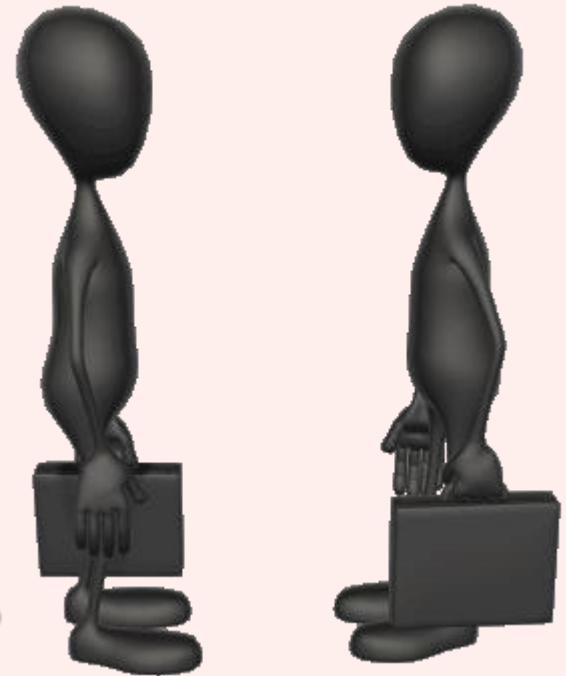


- 👉 **Used in small assemblies to verify voice vote**
- 👉 **Cannot generally be used as a division, which requires a rising vote**

Unanimous Consent

- 👉 Used where there seems to be no opposition in routine business
- 👉 Can be used without stating the question or putting it to vote
- 👉 Can also be used without the formality of a motion at all
- 👉 Very useful to save time when an issue is not controversial

“If there is no objection...”



Voters' Cards

- 🍌 If used, must be authorized by a special rule of order or, in a convention, by a convention standing rule
- 🍌 Usually brightly colored, approximately 3”x12”



“Those in favor of the motion, raise your voters’ cards... Down.”

“Those opposed, raise your voters’ cards... Down.”



Ballot

- 🍌 **Used when secrecy of the members' votes is desired**
- 🍌 **Can be ordered by a majority vote**
- 🍌 **When required by bylaws, requirement cannot be suspended**
- 🍌 **Cannot make unanimous a ballot vote that was not unanimous**

Mail Ballots

- 👉 **Must be authorized in the bylaws**
- 👉 **Generally reserved for important issues**
- 👉 **Can be a secret vote or not secret**
- 👉 **Mailing list must exactly correspond to current membership**



Roll Call

Affirmative	Name	Negative	Abstention
1	Abby Active		
	Bert Befuddle	1	
	Cassidy Cute	2	
2	Don Daring		
3	Ely Efficient		
	Fred Fumble		Present
4	Patti Perky		
	Sam Sullen	3	
	Tess Turmoil	4	
?	(President)	?	?

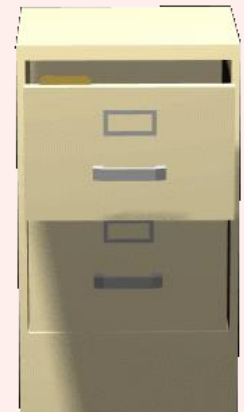
Absentee Voting

- 🍌 **Fundamental principle of parliamentary procedure is to limit the right to vote to those who are present**
- 🍌 **If absentees are allowed, can be by postal or electronic mail, fax, or proxy**
- 🍌 **Must be authorized in the bylaws**



Proxy Voting

- 🍌 A power of attorney given by one person to another to vote in his stead
- 🍌 NOT permitted unless state law requires it or charter or bylaws of organization provide for it
- 🍌 Violates a basic parliamentary concept since the missing person cannot be swayed by the debate



Telephone or Email Balloting

- 🍌 **The approval of an action obtained separately by telephone is NOT the approval of the board or committee. It must be ratified at the next regular meeting to become an official act of the board or committee**
- 🍌 **Not the same as votes taken during a teleconference when all persons can hear each other**

**Both must be authorized in
the bylaws**



Black and White Balls



- 🍌 **Some organizations—particularly secret societies—use black and white balls in voting on the admission of candidates to membership**
- 🍌 **White ball signifies *yes*, a black one, *no***
- 🍌 **One or very few black balls are sufficient to cause a candidate's rejection**
- 🍌 **This custom is apparently declining**

Machine or Electronic

- 🍌 **Rules for voting by machine should be adopted**
- 🍌 **Device must be programmed so that each segment of a ballot is treated as a separate ballot**
- 🍌 **Useful for instant results in large assembly**



Preferential Voting

- 🍌 **Must be authorized in the bylaws**
- 🍌 **The second or less-preferred choices of voters can be taken into account if no single choice obtains a majority on a single ballot when there are more than two possible choices**
- 🍌 **Useful for mail ballots in large organizations to allow multiple voting on one ballot**



Cumulative Voting

- 👉 **Must be authorized in the bylaws**
- 👉 **Each member is entitled to cast one vote for each position**
- 👉 **Votes may all be cast for one, or more than one candidate, as the voter chooses**
- 👉 **This method must be viewed with reservation since it violates a fundamental principle of parliamentary law; common in business**



Parliamentary Principles in Voting

- 👉 **Voting allows individuals to express their opinion on an issue**
- 👉 **The minority has an opportunity to influence the outcome during debate**
- 👉 **Members should be confident that the result is a fair and accurate representation of members' desires**

