Rules and Procedures

- MUN rules and procedures differ significantly among conferences.
- Rules emphasize the sovereign equality of member states
  - each state receives same treatment as any other
  - goal is to permit all voices to be heard

Two main modes

--Formal debate
- conducted according to former rules of parliamentary procedure
- committee in session; delegates seated
- delegates must be quiet and respectful to speaker
- purpose is defending and debating your position:
  - to convince other countries
  - to build coalitions
  - to get resolution passed (or, to defeat resolution that is opposed to your country’s position)
- when speaking be respectful and diplomatic:
  - "Madam chair, honorable delegates ..."
  - never loose your cool

--Caucusing, also called informal debate
- suspension of committee session
- caucusing
  - breaking into smaller groups
- purpose is:
  - discussion of ideas
  - questioning speakers
  - diplomatic negotiation
  - developing support and consensus
  - developing compromises

Rules of Procedure for formal sessions:
AMUN Rules-Short Form
NMUN Rules-Short Form
MUN sample dialogues, demonstrating rules of procedure--from AMUN site:

**Rule 2.3 - Speeches; Rule 7.8 - Changing the Order of Consideration of Agenda Items; and Rule 7.14 - Consideration of Draft Resolutions**

*Setting: the beginning of Committee discussion. This dialogue assumes that one or more draft resolutions have received the required 25% signatures. Note that the Chair will specify the number of signatures needed to reach 25% at the opening of the session.]*

**C:** This session is now in order. The Chair is looking for speakers on the topic, or for a motion to change the order of consideration. [*Belgium raises placard*] Belgium, you have the floor.

**R:** Point of Information.

**C:** On information, Belgium. Representatives, I would like to remind all of you that, if you have a Point of Order, Information, or Inquiry, you should raise your placard and call out your point. That way, I will know to recognize you before someone who would like to speak on the topic. I’m sorry Belgium, please continue.

**R:** Mr. Chair, how do I go about changing to a different agenda topic?

**C:** That would be Rule 7.8 Representative, Consideration of Agenda Items.

**R:** Thank you, Chair.

**C:** Still looking for speakers; [*Israel raises placard*] Israel, you have the floor.

**R:** Thank you, Chair; at this time Israel moves to Consider Topic II.

**C:** Israel moves Consideration of Agenda Items from Topic I to Topic II; is there a second? [*Sweden raises placard*] Thank you, Sweden. Looking at our Short Form, this motion is not debatable. We will now move to a placard vote on Consideration of Topic II. All in favor [*placards raised and counted*], all opposed [*placards raised and counted*], abstentions [*placards raised and counted*]. By a vote of 40 in favor, 10 opposed and 5 abstentions, the motion clearly passes. The Chair is now looking for speakers on Topic II. [*Spain raises placard*] Spain, you have the floor.

**R:** I move Consideration of Resolution II/3.

**R:** [*Norway raises placard and calls out:*] Second!

**C:** There has been a motion made and seconded to Consider Resolution 3 under Topic II. This resolution has received the required 25% of signatures and is available for discussion on the floor. I’ll give everyone a moment to look over that resolution. [*Pause 15-20 seconds*] We’ll now move into an immediate placard vote ... [*Votes taken, counted, and debate begins on resolution.*]
Rule 4.4 - Amendments; and Rule 7.11 - Consideration of Amendments

[An amendment has been sponsored by the required 15% or more of the body, and brought to the dais. It is given the letter “F.” Note that the Chair will specify the number of signatures needed to reach 15% at the opening of the session.]


R: [Saudi Arabia] I move Amendment F to the floor.

C: Thank you, Representative. Amendment F is now on the floor. Amendment F is sponsored by [Chair reads sponsors]. It reads [Chair reads amendment slowly, clarifying any questions]. Saudi Arabia, as the mover of this amendment, would you like to speak first?

R: [Saudi Arabia] Thank you, Chair, we feel ...

Rule 6.1 - Point of Order

R: [Kenya] I move Closure of Debate on the resolution.

C: Thank you Kenya, I’m now looking for 2 speakers opposed to Closure.

R: [China raises placard] Point of Order!

C: On order, China.

R: Was the motion seconded Mr. Chair?

C: I apologize, and thank you, Representative. Do I hear a second....

Rule 2.4 - Recognition of Speakers; and Rule 6.2 - Point of Information

R: [Representative is recognized at his/her seat by raising placard and calling out:] Point of Order.

C: On order, Representative from Bahamas.

R: Which resolution are we considering?

C: I’m sorry, Representative, that would be a Point of Information, not a Point of Order. However, in response to your question, we are discussing Topic II, Resolution 1.

A different scenario for the same Point...

R: [Representative interrupts the speaker and calls out:] Point of Order.

C: On order, Representative from Bahamas.

R: What resolution are we considering?

C: I’m sorry, Representative, that would be a Point of Information, not a Point of Order. Please note that only Points of Order can interrupt a
speaker. The Chair asks that you wait until the speaker has concluded or approach the dais with your question.

[To the current speaker] I apologize for the interruption, Representative; please continue.

**Rule 6.3 - Point of Inquiry**

R: [Bolivia] ... and in conclusion, I am opposed to this amendment.

R: [Brazil raises placard] Point of Inquiry!

C: On inquiry from Brazil, will the speaker accept questions?

R: [Bolivia] Yes, I will.

C: Brazil, please state your question.

R: [Brazil] Why are you opposed?

R: [Bolivia] Because I am.

R: [Indonesia raises placard] Point of Inquiry!

C: Will the speaker accept the question?

R: [Bolivia] No, Mr. Chair.

C: Thank you, Bolivia; I’m sorry Indonesia, the speaker will not accept any more questions. Noting that Bolivia has returned to their seat, the Chair is now looking for a new speaker on the resolution.

**Rule 7.1 - Suspension of the Meeting**

C: [Congo raises placard] Congo, you have the floor.

R: I move for a suspension of the meeting.

C: Congo, will you please suggest a length of time for that suspension.

R: That would be a 5 minute suspension, Madame Chair.

C: A 5 minute suspension of the meeting has been moved, do I see a second? [Norway raises placard] Thank you, Norway. We will now move to an immediate placard vote, all those in favor of a 5 minute suspension please raise your placards. Opposed? Abstentions?

C: [If motion passes] We are now in a 5 minute suspension. Please return to your seats at [time].

C: [If motion fails] The motion has failed, and I am now looking for speakers.

**Rule 7.3 - Adjournment of Debate**

C: Russian Federation, you have the floor.

R: At this time I’d like to move Adjournment of Debate on the resolution.

C: Is there a second? [Poland raises placard] Thank you, Poland. Now looking for two speakers in favor and two opposed to Adjournment of Debate, which would have the effect of tabling the resolution. Please
remember that a successful adjournment means that, if you wish to reconsider the resolution at a later time, you would need a 2/3 majority vote to reconsider. [Chair recognizes two pro and two con speakers, and vote is taken.]

Rule 7.4 - Closure of Debate; 5.4 - Method of Voting; and 5.7 - Rights of Explanation

R: [Israel] ... and in conclusion, I would like to move Closure of Debate on Amendment G.

C: Thank you representative, is there a second? [Algeria raises placard] Thank you Algeria. Now looking for two speakers opposed to Closure of Debate. [Syria and Jordan raise placards] Syrian Arab Republic and Jordan. Syrian Arab Republic, you have the floor.

R: Thank you, Madame Chair, I oppose closure because ...

C: Thank you, Syrian Arab Republic. Jordan, you have the floor.

R: Thank you, Chair. We oppose closure because ...

C: Thank you, Representatives. We will now move to a placard vote on Closure of Debate. A “yes” vote would have the effect of bringing Amendment G to an immediate vote. All in favor of Closure of Debate on Amendment G. Opposed? Abstentions? [Vote is 40 - 25 - 15] Motion clearly passes, we will now move into a vote on Amendment G. [Chair pauses for possible motions]

C: We are now in voting procedure on Amendment G. Please take your seats and cease all caucusing. Since this is an amendment, we will take a placard vote. Does everyone understand Amendment G? [Pause] Seeing no questions, we will now vote on Amendment G. All in favor of Amendment G, please raise your placards. All opposed. Abstentions. [Vote is 50 - 12 - 20] Are there any nations that wish to have a brief right of explanation on their vote? Please keep in mind that rights of explanation are typically used only to explain a vote by your delegation which was contrary to your country’s stated position. [Chair recognizes all delegations which raise placards] Representatives, if you could please line up at the microphone, you will each have 30 seconds for your rights of explanation. Poland [first country to request rights] you have the floor. [Chair calls all delegations in order recognized] Thank you for your comments, Representatives. By a vote of 50 in favor, 12 opposed and 20 abstentions, the Amendment passes and becomes part of Resolution 2. We are now back in debate on Resolution 2, as amended.
Rule 7.10 - Division of the Question

C: France, you have the floor.
R: Madame Chair, I move to divide the question into 3 parts.
C: Representative, please specify how you wish to divide the amendment.
R: The first part is the proposal to change Operative Clauses 1 and 2; the second part is the proposal to add new Operative Clause 3; the third part is to add new Clause 4.
C: Does any Representative not understand the motion, or the way in which France wishes to divide the amendment? [After seeing no hands, or answering appropriate Points of Information:] Is there a second? [Romania raises placard] Thank you, Romania.
R: [Jordan raises placard and calls out:] Point of Order!
C: Jordan, what is your Point of Order?
R: I don’t think its proper for this motion now. Don’t we have to wait until the end, when we’re ready to vote on this amendment, before we can consider dividing the question?
C: Representatives, if you will refer to Rule 7.10, a motion to divide the question is in order at any time, prior to when voting procedure has begun on the matter regarding the proposed division.
R: Thank you, Chair.
C: Now Representatives, I want to explain the effect of this motion, if passed. If the motion to divide passes, it will have no effect on debate for this amendment. However, when a motion for Closure of Debate on the amendment passes, we would vote on each of the three parts of the amendment separately. Any of the three parts which pass will then be voted on as a whole. If all three parts fail, the amendment fails. Is there anyone who doesn’t understand what happens if the motion for division passes? [Seeing no raised placards] I’m now looking for two speakers in favor, and two against the motion for division. [Chair recognizes two pro and two con speakers; vote is taken, debate resumes.]