

# DEBATING FOR TOASTMASTERS

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## What Is Debate and How Can You Benefit?

A debate is a speaking event in which two sides use reasoned discourse to argue about a particular subject. Debating develops ...

- ✓ listening skills
- ✓ speaking skills
- ✓ thinking skills
- ✓ ability to make quick responses
- ✓ ability to present coherent arguments
- ✓ ability to clearly present your views

## Organizing the Debate

### I. Proposition

A debate begins with the proposition, or subject, to be debated. It should be a declarative sentence that advocates a change from the way things presently are being done. A debate proposition generally will be one of three general types: a question of policy, fact, or belief. A good debate topic is usually one based on policy rather than fact or belief. A factual proposition allows too little room for argument, while a proposition based on belief or opinion often permits too much room for argument.

Examples of typical debate propositions would be:

“Resolved: That the national government should guarantee the opportunity for a higher education to all qualified high school graduates.”

“Resolved: That the city should put a crosswalk in front of the library.”

### II. The Affirmative Side and the Negative Side

A speaker or speakers will take the affirmative side of the proposition (support it), while the other speaker or speakers will take the negative side (oppose it). Each team then is identified merely as “the affirmative” or “the negative.”

### III. Debate Format:

#### Traditional (Four Speakers) v. TI Debate Format (Four Speakers)

##### Constructive Speeches

- Affirmative #1 – 10 Minutes
- Negative #1 – 10 Minutes
- Affirmative #2 – 10 Minutes
- Negative #2 – 10 Minutes

##### Rebuttal Speeches

- Negative #1 – 5 Minutes
- Affirmative #1 – 5 Minutes
- Negative #2 – 5 Minutes
- Affirmative #2 – 5 Minutes

##### Constructive Speeches

- Affirmative #1 – 5 Minutes
- Negative #1 – 5 Minutes
- Affirmative #2 – 5 Minutes
- Negative #2 – 5 Minutes

##### V. Cross-examination and Refutation

- Negative #1 cross examines Affirmative #1 – 3 min.
- Affirmative #2 cross examines Negative #2 – 3 min.
- Negative #2 refutation and summary – 3 min.
- Affirmative #1 refutation and summary – 3 min.

Note: Traditionally, the burden of proof is upon the affirmative speakers to prove that present conditions are such that a change from the *status quo* is desirable.

### IV. Issues

Issues in a debate are important questions that will be answered yes by the affirmative and *no* by the negative.

#### Typical Affirmative Issues

1. Is there a need (or is it desirable) for a change?
2. Is there a plan by which the need can be satisfied?
3. Would the benefits of the plan outweigh the disadvantages?

#### Typical Negative Issues

1. The present system is satisfactory or improving.
2. The proposed plan would be disadvantageous.
3. The proposed change will not be a practical solution to the problem.

# Speaker Responsibilities

## Constructive Speeches

### Affirmative #1

1. Give the introduction
  - a. State the resolution.
  - b. Show the purpose and importance of the debate.
  - c. Give a brief history.
  - d. Define the terms of the resolution.
  - e. State the general terms.
  - f. Summarize the affirmative position.
  - g. Explain the procedure (what you will cover; what your partner will cover).
2. State the body (proof) of the case.
  - a. Cover the need issue (or whatever is the first main argument).
  - b. Support the first issue with examples, facts, etc., always giving the sources.

### Affirmative #2

1. Give brief refutation of the negative #1's charges or questions.
2. Refer again to the plan you are adopting by reiterating the need issue covered by your partner.
3. Give your portion of the body of your case.
  - a. Cover the practicability issue (or whatever is the second issue in the case).
  - b. Provide evidence (proof) for your arguments.
  - c. Cover the benefit issue (or whatever is your third major argument).
  - d. Provide evidence to support the third issue.
4. Summarize your arguments
5. Provide the close of the affirmative case by restating your position and by appealing to the audience for acceptance of your case.

## Refutation and Rebuttal Period

Refutation is an attack upon what has been said by the opposition, while rebuttal is a reinforcement of what has been advanced by your own team. The negative team should have some opportunity to confer before the rebuttal speeches begin.

### Negative #1

1. Summarize what your partner has said, and amplify those parts you think necessary.
2. Concentrate on impracticality of affirmative plan and point out new evils emerging from adoption of their plan.
3. Discount any advantages cited by affirmative for their plan.
4. Attempt primarily to prove there is no need for change from *status quo*.
5. End with short summary.

### Negative #2

1. Summarize debate to that point, emphasizing crucial issues still under consideration.
2. Refute what the affirmative has established, especially the *prima facie* point.
3. Avoid calling for more information, because it can be supplied by affirmative #2 and not refuted.
4. Review all major objections the negative has to the affirmative proposal.
5. Close with direct appeal to audience to concur with the negative.

### Negative #1

1. After greeting audience, accept or reject definition of terms as presented by affirmative #1.
2. Fill in any necessary information missing from the affirmative #1's introduction of the debate question (such as history, analysis of the problem, etc.).
3. Give general refutation of the points covered by affirmative #1.
4. Summarize the negative position (what you will cover, what your partner will cover).
5. Present your part of the negative argument.
  - a. Cover your "no need" argument, or whatever is your first issue.
  - b. Provide evidence and proof for your contentions.
6. Summarize your points and refer again to what your partner will cover.

### Negative #2

1. Give refutation of affirmative #2's charges or questions.
2. Give further reference and support for your partner's points in your over-all plan.
3. Give your portion of the body of the negative argument.
  - a. Cover the "not practicable" issue, or whatever was selected for the second main issue.
  - b. Provide supporting evidence of your arguments.
  - c. Cover the "no benefit" issue, or whatever is your third main argument.
  - d. Provide supporting evidence of the third argument.
4. Summarize your main points.
5. In closing the negative presentation, restate your position and try to secure audience acceptance.

### Affirmative #1

1. Summarize high points of the debate so far, presenting the affirmative case in terms of what has been established and the negative arguments in terms of what the affirmative has said about it.
2. Counter all the Opposition's arguments directly, pointing out weaknesses in logical structure.
3. Restate all the contentions of the affirmative team.
4. End with a short summary.

### Affirmative #2

1. Analyze entire debate and boil down to the critical issues.
2. Fairness requires that no new or uncalled-for material be introduced.
3. Refute arguments advanced by the negative.
4. Provide rebuttal material to strengthen your team's case.
5. Tie all major points together and point out what affirmative has accomplished.
6. Restate how need has been established and how recommended plan meets that need.
7. Close asking for concurrence with affirmative position.

**TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL  
DEBATE JUDGING SHEET**

**NOTES:**

RESOLVED: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Affirmative Team \_\_\_\_\_ Negative Team

(Record major points developed by each team in appropriate space below.)

1st Affirmative	1st Negative
2nd Affirmative	2nd Negative

**Refutation**

1st Affirmative	1st Negative
2nd Affirmative	2nd Negative

Allot 1 to 5 points, with 5 representing the highest score. When making each over-all evaluation consider the following: ANALYSIS - REASONING - EVIDENCE - REBUTTAL - ORGANIZATION - DELIVERY.

	Constructive Speech	Refutation	Total
1st Affirmative Speaker			
1st Negative Speaker			
2nd Affirmative Speaker			
2nd Negative Speaker			

In my opinion the better debating was done by:

\_\_\_\_\_ (Affirmative or Negative)

\_\_\_\_\_ Names of winning team members

\_\_\_\_\_ Signature

Tellers will collect your ballot.

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