

2. **The reports of officers, boards, and standing committees (those listed in the bylaws) are read and discussed.** The officers and standing committees do not need to give a report at every meeting. Place a report on the agenda only when there is something to report to the membership.
3. **The reports of special committees (if there are any) are heard.** Special committees are created for a particular purpose and are not listed in the bylaws. They cease to exist when they have completed their work and made their final report.
4. **Any special orders are presented.** These are motions postponed to the meeting and by a two-thirds vote made a special order so that they come up before unfinished business (see Chapter 6). Or, a special order can be special business that comes up once a year, such as nominations and elections.
5. **Unfinished business and general orders are discussed.** *Unfinished business* is a motion that was under discussion at the time that the previous meeting adjourned. A *general order* is a motion that was postponed to the current meeting but not made a special order. (These terms apply only in meetings of groups that meet quarterly or more often.)
6. **The members proceed to new business. New business proposes an issue that is new to this meeting.** It may be something not discussed before or something that was defeated at a past meeting (or even at the last meeting).
7. **When the agenda items are finished and the assembly has no further business to propose, it's time to adjourn.**

Creating a Specific Agenda

After the general outline of an agenda is prepared, the person preparing the agenda fills in the details. Depending on the needs of the organization, this person can add items to the agenda, and he or she can use special types of agendas. The following discussion explains how to prepare an agenda in a logical manner as well as how to add optional agenda items and adopt, mail, and streamline an agenda.

When preparing the agenda, review the minutes and agenda of the previous meeting, looking for things that weren't accomplished; consult the bylaws or other rules of the organization for business that is to be done at specific meetings, like nominations and elections; and check with the officers, committee chairmen, and members to see if they have business to add to the agenda.

Consulting previous meeting minutes

The most important resource for filling in agenda details is the minutes of the previous meeting. From these minutes, the agenda planner should glean any unfinished agenda items.

In agenda planning, look first for any special orders. These may be special orders that were made for the previous meeting but not disposed of before adjournment. They may be motions that were postponed and made special orders for the current meeting. Special orders are of some priority or importance. The category of special orders was created so that members can complete more important tasks before they take up any other business. Items considered special orders, and therefore of high priority, include nominations, elections of officers, and the voting of new members into membership.

After special orders comes unfinished business and general orders. (The term *old business* can be confusing and should not be used.) The first topic taken up under this category is *unfinished business*, which is any motion that was pending at the last meeting when the meeting adjourned. *Pending* means that the motion wasn't voted on but was being discussed when the meeting was adjourned.

Next is any item that was on the agenda of the previous meeting under unfinished business that the members did not have time to take up before adjournment.