



RULES OF DEBATE

These rules are established as an official reference and guidebook on proper debate etiquette, procedures, and behavior. This guidebook especially applies to debates occurring in serious or intellectual channels.

LAST UPDATED OCTOBER 22, 2024



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PRELIMINARY INSTRUCTIONS

Can be cited as [BoF:PI](#) during debates or arguments.

1. **APPROPRIATE CHANNEL:** Before engaging in a debate, it is vital for members to ensure that they are in the appropriate channel. For any serious, controversial, or heated debate, members should direct themselves to the [#serious-debate](#) channel.
 2. **SIDES OF A DEBATE:** Ordinarily, each debate will consist of two sides: the **proposition** and the **opposition**. The **proposition** side is in favor of the resolution, and is the one “affirming” a certain topic. The **opposition** side is opposed to the resolution, and is the one “negating” a certain topic. An example could be a debate on climate change. The party that believes in climate change would be the **proposition**, and the party that denies climate change would be the **opposition**.
 3. **PRIOR KNOWLEDGE:** One is expected to have researched the topic at hand prior to engaging in a debate about it. Entering into a debate with no basic understanding of the topic is unproductive. Instead, take time to research and learn about the topic before partaking in a debate about it. Alternatively, you could watch a debate on the server or ask questions in the appropriate channel to learn from different perspectives.
 4. **AVAILABILITY:** Do not enter into a formal debate if you are unable to engage in the debate within a reasonable time period. If you continuously leave throughout a debate, the debate becomes unproductive, delayed, and disorganized.
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DEBATE PROCEDURES

Can be cited as [BoF:DP](#) during debates or arguments. These procedures, especially the times, may be modified or adjusted with the consent of both parties of the debate. These procedures outline the ideal order of events for a 90-minute (1-and-a-half hour) debate.

PRELIMINARY

- If both sides of the debate wish, a person with the debate arbitrator role may preside over the debate to track the time and ensure abidance by these procedures.
- If both sides wish for the debate to be a competition, they must have a debate arbitrator(s) who, at the end, will analyze the arguments, behavior, reasoning, and evidence of both sides to determine the debate winner.
- Both parties should read over and agree on the rules of debate, and can propose and agree on adjustments to the procedures if they wish.

INTRODUCTIONS

1. The **proposition** will present their argument and claims. The individual leading the **proposition** should deliver the opening statement. They have a maximum of **5 minutes** to do so.
2. The **opposition** will present their argument and claims. The individual leading the **opposition** should deliver the opening statement. They have a maximum of **5 minutes** to do so.



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CLAIMS & EVIDENCE

3. The **proposition** will deliver further arguments and claims, identify areas of conflict, address opposing views, provide evidence, and answer questions raised by the opposition. They have a maximum of **10 minutes** to do so. This should not include a direct rebuttal.
4. The **opposition** will deliver further arguments and claims, identify areas of conflict, address opposing views, provide evidence, and answer questions raised by the opposition. They have a maximum of **10 minutes** to do so. This should not include a direct rebuttal.
5. **5 minute recess** (adjustable w/ agreement from both parties) to allow both sides to prepare their rebuttals.

REBUTTALS

6. The **proposition** will present their rebuttals to the opposition and attempt to defeat the arguments of the other side. They may provide evidence to attempt to debunk claims of the proposition. They have a maximum of **10 minutes** to do so.
7. The **opposition** will address their rebuttals to the proposition and attempt to defeat arguments of the other side. They may provide evidence to attempt to debunk claims of the proposition. They have a maximum of **10 minutes** to do so.



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DISCOURSE

8. The **proposition** and **opposition** may now engage in a back-and-forth discussion with the proposition starting first. You **must take turns** and wait for the other side to respond before your side responds. Cross-examination questions may also be asked to the other side during the discourse stage. The discourse stage can last a maximum of **30 minutes** (if in a VC debate, each side should get around 15 minutes of speaking time).

CONCLUSION

9. The **opposition** will deliver their final and closing remarks. They have a maximum of **5 minutes** to do so. This stage should not involve direct rebuttals. Acknowledgments and/or agreements to one or more of the other sides' points are permitted and encouraged.

10. The **proposition** will deliver their final and closing remarks. They have a maximum of **5 minutes** to do so. This stage should not involve direct rebuttals, and may not address the opposition's conclusion. Acknowledgments and/or agreements to one or more of the other sides' points are permitted and encouraged.

RESULTS

Only applies to unofficial debate where both sides agree for it to be a competition and have a debate arbitrator(s) present, or a public debate organized by the server.

If a public debate is organized by the server: The entire audience (present entire time) **OR** the debate panel of at least 3 people will decide and vote on the winning side of the debate after careful analysis of the arguments, logic, behavior, and reasoning of each side.



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If it is an unofficial debate: The debate arbitrator(s) both sides agreed to have in the beginning will decide (or vote if multiple) on the winner of the debate after careful analysis of the arguments, logic, behavior, and reasoning of each side.



PROPER ARGUMENTATION

Can be cited as [BoF:PA](#) during debates or arguments.

Fallacies of Logic

1. **Affirming a Disjunct:** Assuming that one disjunct must be false because the other disjunct is true.
2. **Affirming the Consequent:** Assuming that because 'if P then Q' is true, 'if Q then P' must also be true.
3. **Association Fallacy:** Assuming that properties of one thing must also be properties of another thing if both things belong to the same group.
4. **Continuum Fallacy:** Assuming that two states or conditions cannot be considered distinct, or that none exist at all, because between them there exists a continuum of states.
5. **Denial of Logical Consequence:** Accepting premises as true but refusing to accept the logical conclusion that follows from them.
6. **Denying the Antecedent:** Assuming that because 'if P then Q' is true, 'if not P then not Q' must also be true.
7. **Fallacy of Composition:** Assuming what is true for the part is true for the whole.
8. **Fallacy of Division:** Assuming what is true for the whole is true for the parts.
9. **Fallacy of the Single Cause:** Assuming that there is a simple, single cause of an outcome when, in reality, it may have been caused by a number of causes.
10. **Fallacy of the Undistributed Middle:** Assuming that two things sharing one property must share all properties.
11. **False Cause:** Presuming that a real or perceived relationship between things means that one is the cause of the other. (correlation $\neq$ causation) One example of a false cause fallacy is **post hoc ergo propter hoc**, which inappropriately assumes that because “event Y followed event X, event Y must have been caused by or should be blamed on event X.”
12. **False Dichotomy:** Presenting two opposing options as the only possibilities when more may exist. (aka false dilemma)
13. **False Equivalence:** An equivalence is drawn between two subjects based on flawed or false reasoning.
14. **Faulty Analogy:** Assuming that two things are alike in other ways just because they are alike in one way.
15. **Gambler's Fallacy:** Assuming, with little or no evidence, that past events affect the probability of something irrelevant or independent happening in the future.
16. **Non Sequitur:** Conclusions that do not follow logically from the premises.



Fallacies of Evidence

17. **Anecdotal Fallacy:** Using personal experience or isolated examples instead of sound arguments or compelling evidence.
18. **Burden of Proof:** Making a claim without proving it, and then expecting or asking others to disprove it.
19. **Cherry-Picking:** Selectively presenting evidence to attempt at proving an argument whilst ignoring the vast majority of other reliable evidence about the same issue. (aka texas sharpshooter evidence)
20. **Ecological Fallacy:** Assuming that what is true for a population is true for individual members of that population.
21. **Hasty Generalization:** Drawing a general conclusion from a small or unrepresentative sample.
22. **Quoting Out of Context:** A passage, quote, or piece of evidence is removed from its surrounding matter in such a way as to distort its intended meaning.

Fallacies of Argumentation

23. **Ad Hominem:** Attacking the character, traits, morality, identity, or associations of the person making the argument, rather than the argument itself.
24. **Argument by Repetition:** An argument or premise is stated over-and-over-again in an attempt to persuade without or to divert argumentation.
25. **Begging the Question:** The conclusion that one is trying to prove is assumed implicitly or explicitly in the premise.
26. **Circular Reasoning:** The reasoner begins with what they are trying to end with; the conclusion is also used as one of the premises.
27. **Courtier's Reply Fallacy:** Dismissing or diminishing an argument by claiming the other person lacks sufficient knowledge, credentials, or experience to credibly comment on the subject matter.
28. **Definist Fallacy:** Improperly defining a term in such a way that makes one's position much easier to defend.
29. **Entitled to my Opinion Fallacy:** The dismissal of an argument against their position by claiming that they have a right to hold their own particular viewpoint.
30. **Exaggeration Fallacy:** Overstating or magnifying a fact to mislead or strengthen an argument.



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31. **Fallacy Fallacy:** Assuming that if an argument contains a fallacy, the conclusion must necessarily be false. Alternatively, this could indicate the misdiagnosis of a fallacy.
32. **Fallacy of Accent:** Emphasizing a word or phrase to give it a meaning different from the one it ordinarily has.
33. **Fallacy of Amphiboly:** Utilizing ambiguous sentence structures to mislead or misrepresent the truth.
34. **Fallacy of Equivocation:** Using a word with multiple meanings ambiguously within the argument, which misleads or alters the logic.
35. **Genetic Fallacy:** Judging something good or bad on the basis of where it comes from, or from whom it comes.
36. **Historian's Fallacy:** This involves assuming that decision makers of the past viewed events from the same perspective and having the same information as those subsequently analyzing the decision.
37. **Inflation of Conflict:** The error of exaggerating the amount of disagreement in a field in order to invalidate claims in that field.
38. **Ludic Fallacy:** The misuse of games or virtual simulations to model or represent real-life situations.
39. **Middle Ground Fallacy:** The argument or assumption that the truth or good result is present in the middle or compromise of two complete opposites.
40. **Moralistic Fallacy:** Arguing that something is or is not a particular way because it should or ought to be or not be that way.
41. **Moving the Goalposts:** Altering the criteria of the argument, introducing previously unmentioned exceptions, or changing the argument as challenges to their position arise.
42. **Nirvana Fallacy:** The assumption that there must be a perfect solution, or that a solution should be rejected because some part of the problem would still exist after it was implemented.
43. **No True Scotsman:** Making an assertion about a category, and then excluding counterexamples without justification.
44. **Oversimplification Fallacy:** Reducing complex issues to simple causes or solutions that ignore real data.
45. **Red Herring:** Introducing irrelevant material to the argument to distract and lead away from the point being argued.
46. **Retrospective Determinism:** Arguing that because something happened under certain circumstances, it was therefore bound to happen due to those circumstances.
47. **Slippery Slope:** Assuming, with little or no evidence, that one thing will inevitably lead to a chain of related events resulting in some significant impact.
48. **Straw Man:** Misrepresenting an opponent's position to make it easier to attack.



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- 49. **Thought Terminating Cliche:** Brief, simplistic phrases that stifle critical thinking and debate, intending to end the debate on a cliché.
- 50. **Tone Policing Fallacy:** Ignoring or neglecting the truth or falsity of a statement, instead focusing on the emotion, attitude, or demeanor with which it was expressed.
- 51. **Tu Quoque Fallacy:** Answering criticism with criticism and/or pointing out hypocrisy instead of responding to the argument.

Fallacies of Appeals

- 52. **Appeal to Authority:** Arguing something must be true because it is endorsed by an authority, not because of evidence.
 - 53. **Appeal to Consequences:** An argument that concludes a hypothesis to be either true or false based on whether the premise leads to desirable or undesirable consequences.
 - 54. **Appeal to Emotion:** Attempting to manipulate an emotional response instead of presenting a valid argument.
 - 55. **Appeal to Ignorance:** Claiming something is true because it has not been proven false, or vice versa.
 - 56. **Appeal to Incredulity:** The assertion that a proposition must be false because it contradicts one's personal expectations or beliefs, or is difficult to imagine.
 - 57. **Appeal to Nature:** Claiming something is good solely because it is 'natural', or bad solely because it is 'unnatural'.
 - 58. **Appeal to Novelty:** Opposite to the appeal to tradition fallacy, this fallacy is the assumption that a practice or policy is inherently correct because it is newer.
 - 59. **Appeal to Popularity:** Arguing something is true because it is widely believed or accepted by many people. (aka bandwagon fallacy)
 - 60. **Appeal to Tradition:** Arguing that a practice or policy is inherently correct because it has a tradition of being done that way.
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RELIABLE SOURCES

Evidence provided within debates should be from a reliable and credible source. The evidence must be relevant, and must serve to refute, prove, or address a claim or argument.

Reliable sources include, but are not limited to:

1. Peer-reviewed studies found via PubMed, JSTOR, or other credible study databases;
2. Public records from court decisions, investigations, or other government documents;
3. Historical records;
4. Direct quotations from texts or books;
5. Research from the CDC, NIH, or other credible government organizations;
6. Secondary sources from reliable news sources that are not blacklisted below.

Unreliable sources include:

1. Opinion articles, blogs, or videos (unless written by an individual who disagrees with the individual presenting the evidence);
2. Unreliable news sources (unless the article is opposite of what would usually be expected in relation to bias);



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ORGANIZATION	POLITICAL BIAS
CNN	LEFT
THE NEW YORK TIMES	LEFT
POLITICO	LEFT
MSNBC	LEFT
USA TODAY	LEFT
VOX	LEFT
VOGUE	LEFT
VICE	LEFT
SLATE	LEFT
PINK NEWS	LEFT
HUFFPOST	LEFT
THE ATLANTIC	LEFT
THE YOUNG TURKS	LEFT
FOX NEWS	RIGHT
THE FEDERALIST	RIGHT
THE HERITAGE FOUNDATION	RIGHT
FAMILY RESEARCH COUNCIL	RIGHT
THE DAILY WIRE	RIGHT
NEWSMAX	RIGHT



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ENFORCEMENT

This document is enforced under [Rule 6A | “Insubstantial Arguments”](#) of the Bridges of Faith Community Guidelines. It is considered a minor offense to violate the procedures and/or rules outlined in this document, and the severity can increase overtime by repetitive violations.

Moderation is the **last resort** when it comes to enforcing the rules and procedures of this document. This document is intended for members to enforce **amongst themselves**. This section mostly applies to the enforcement of this document in unofficial debates that aren’t organized by the Bridges of Faith Staff Team, or that don’t have an active debate arbitrator. In debates that do have a debate arbitrator, then he or she may regulate and monitor the debate, settling relevant disputes or concerns. If there are multiple arbitrators, a majority of the arbitrators present may decide on different types of enforcement or action. They cannot, however, issue mod actions – unless they are part of the Staff Team.

1. The first and preferred route to addressing a breach of this document is for members themselves to point out, cite, and inform the other individual(s) of the specific policy or procedure of this document that they are not following. It is preferred that members resolve disputes amongst themselves before any other intervention.
2. If the first route does not work, the second route to addressing a breach of this document is by pinging the **Debate Arbitrator** role for an arbitrator to come review and resolve the situation. Some arbitrators are moderators, some are not. They will not issue mod actions, but will instead attempt to settle the dispute as an independent party outside of the debate.



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3. If neither of the above routes work, you may make a moderation ticket in the #support channel and request intervention by the Staff Team. We usually issue warnings for the first few offenses of this document.
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