



How to host your own Debate



**CAMBRIDGE
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Hosting your own debate in the **Debating Chamber** is your chance to put a twist on a 200-year-old tradition. From historic, world-shaping discussions to delightfully playful motions, the Chamber is perfectly suited to lively, structured debate in an iconic setting.

To get started, you'll need a motion phrased as a statement, such as "This House Believes..." or "This House Would...". Next, appoint two teams of three speakers: the Proposition, who argue in favour, and the Opposition, who argue against. You'll also want a Chair or President to introduce the motion, keep time, and gently (or firmly) keep proceedings on track.

As guests arrive, invite them to cast an initial vote, Aye, Nay, or Abstain, to capture the room's starting opinion. The Chair then opens the debate, introduces the speakers, and calls on the first Proposition speaker to begin, followed by the first Opposition response. From there, speakers alternate, building their case through a structured back and forth of arguments and rebuttals.

For a more dynamic and engaging atmosphere, members of the audience (the floor) can be invited to give short speeches for Proposition, Opposition, or Abstention between rounds. This not only keeps energy high, but also makes full use of the Chamber's famously participatory format.

Once all speakers have had their say, a final vote is held. The winner isn't simply the side with the most votes overall, but rather the one that shifts the most opinion from the initial vote, a true test of persuasion rather than popularity.

And of course, no proper debate is complete without a little spirited interruption. Audience members can raise a "Point of Information" to challenge or question a speaker, who can choose whether to accept and respond. It's all part of the tradition lively, engaging, with just the right amount of chaos and theatrics ensuring your event feels authentic to the Chamber's long and storied history.

Still not sure what we mean? Our YouTube channel is full of recordings of our Debates, including our yearly Great Industry Debate, a Hospitality-centric debate featuring speakers and guest from the local Cambridge Hospitality industry.

Cheat sheet:

1. Decide the motion you want to discuss
2. Appoint The Chair, who will introduce the motion and moderate the Debate
3. Appoint your speakers (Proposition will defend the motion, Opposition will do the opposite)
4. Speakers should prepare their arguments well in advance and address the other team as well as the audience
5. In between speeches, The Chair can open up the motion to the floor
6. At the end of all speeches, the audience should cast their votes by leaving The Chamber through the correct door (Ayes or Nays)
7. Stewards located outside the Chamber count these votes which decide the outcome of the debate
8. After a short break, The Chair announces the results of the debate in a loud statement
9. Watch one of our corporate debates here: [The Great Industry Debate 2026](#)



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