



SERGEANT AT ARMS

You keep track of the club's physical property, such as the banner, lectern, timing device and other meeting materials. You arrive early to prepare the meeting place for members and stay late to stow all of the club's equipment. You are also in charge of the meeting place itself, obtaining a new space when necessary and maintaining contact with the people who allow you to use the space for your club meetings.

The sergeant at arms also has a role to play during business meetings, speech contests and other special club events. For example, the sergeant at arms escorts potential new members outside of the club's meeting place while the members vote on admitting them to the club. The sergeant at arms stands at the door while contestants compete in speech contests to ensure that the speaker is not interrupted by latecomers.

CLUB CONSTITUTION FOR CLUBS OF TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL

Article VII: Duties of Officers, Section 7

The club sergeant at arms is responsible for club property management, meeting room preparation, and hospitality. The sergeant at arms chairs the social and reception committee.

SERGEANT AT ARMS RESPONSIBILITIES

Tend to Club Property

You keep the club's banner, gavel, lectern, award ribbons, supplies and other equipment safe and secure.

BASIC CLUB SUPPLIES

- Ribbons
- Ballots and brief evaluation forms
- Timing device
- Banner
- Lectern

Arrive early to set up the meeting space.

Stay late to dismantle and clear the meeting space.

Stow all club property.

Leave the meeting room the way you found it. Track the status of supplies ordered by the secretary.

Coordinate Club Meetings

You act as a liaison between the club and the management of the meeting place.

Notify the management at least three weeks in advance if there are changes in your meeting schedule.

Common Meeting Changes

- Moving to another venue
- Meeting a different day of the week
- Planning a special event

If yours is a corporate club, reserve the meeting room by whatever method the company prefers, such as the company intranet, calendar or sign-up sheet.

SUMMARY OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Before Club Meetings

- Confirm meeting room reservations a few days before the meeting.
- Ensure that plenty of blank ballots are available for voting.

Upon Arrival at Club Meetings

- Arrange the meeting room and equipment at least 30 minutes before so the meeting starts on time.
- Arrange tables and chairs.
- Set out the lectern, gavel, club banner, the national flag (optional), timing device, ballots, trophies and ribbons.
- Place a table near the door to display promotional brochures, name tags, the **Guest Book** (Item 84) and educational materials such as manuals, club newsletters and the *Toastmaster* magazine for members to see.
- Check the room temperature and adjust it if the room is too hot or too cold.
- Ask all guests to sign the **Guest Book** and give each a name tag to wear during the meeting.

During Club Meetings

- Sit near the door to welcome late arrivals and help them be seated. Prevent interruptions and perform any necessary errands.
- Coordinate food service, if any.
- Collect ballots and tally votes for awards when necessary.

After Club Meetings

- Return the room to its original configuration.
- Pack up all materials and store them in a secure place.
- Pick up and dispose of any stray items or trash.

▲★ COMMON SCENARIOS SERGEANTS AT ARMS FACE

Following are examples of scenarios you may encounter in your role as sergeant at arms and suggestions for how to resolve them. As you successfully respond to your own experiences in this role, be sure to share them with the Club Quality and Service Team at World Headquarters (clubquality@toastmasters.org).

Scenario: It's difficult to find the time to arrive early and set up the meeting space, especially at lunchtime meetings.

Possible solutions: Ask for volunteers to assist you when your work or life schedules get busy; tap into the enthusiasm of new members to help with the role.

Develop a minimalist, basic configuration for your club's meeting space and use it on those days when you have little extra time.

Scenario: The club roster has become too large for the current meeting place and a new site is needed.

Possible solutions: First, find out if there are larger meeting spaces available in the same building. If not, look for a new meeting place that's as close as possible to the existing one. There are many possible solutions: clubs, churches, hospitals, restaurants, coffee shops, veterans' centers, senior centers or city government offices.

Work with the president and vice president public relations to tell everyone about the new location as soon as possible.

Scenario: The club's usual meeting room is temporarily unavailable.

Possible solutions: Work quickly to find a temporary solution and communicate it to members. There are many options: banquet facilities in local restaurants, pushing together some tables at a local coffee shop or finding a different space in the same building.

Canceling the meeting should be a last resort.

Sergeant at Arms Resources

Distinguished Club Program and Club Success Plan (Item 1111)

www.toastmasters.org/1111

Ordering club supplies

www.toastmasters.org/meetingsupplies

Ballots and Brief Evaluations (Item 163)

www.toastmasters.org/163