

Asian Parliamentary debate

Two teams of three, six main speeches, two replies, 30 minutes of prep. The format of the United Asian Debating Championship. Times vary by league, so check your rules.

3 vs 3

Government and
Opposition

8

speeches: 6 main, 2
replies

7 min

each main speech
(most leagues)

4 min

each reply

30 min

prep

Speech order

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|-------|
| 1 | Prime Minister | 7 min |
| 2 | Leader of the Opposition | 7 min |
| 3 | Deputy Prime Minister | 7 min |
| 4 | Deputy Leader of the Opposition | 7 min |
| 5 | Government Whip | 7 min |
| 6 | Opposition Whip | 7 min |
| 7 | Opposition reply | 4 min |
| 8 | Government reply | 4 min |

Signals: single at 1:00 and 6:00 (POI window), double at 7:00. Replies: single at 3:00, double at 4:00. Replies are given by the 1st or 2nd speaker, Opposition first. Some leagues use 6 or 8 minute speeches; junior divisions often use 4 and 2.

Points of information

- Offered by the other side in main speeches, between the first and last minute.
- None in protected time, and none in replies.
- Stand and say "Point of information". The speaker accepts or declines.
- About 15 seconds or two sentences. Accept one or two per speech.

Motions and prep

Prep: 30 minutes after release, without coaches or the internet. Most rulebooks ban phones and laptops.

Vetoes: many tournaments release three motions; each team ranks them, and a motion either team ranks last is struck out.

Shapes: This House would (a policy), believes that (a judgment), regrets (looking back), supports or opposes (a trend).

Tips and common mistakes

- **Prep:** agree on the definition and split first, then build arguments.
- **Whips:** two or three big clashes beat a list of everything said.
- **Reply speakers:** step back and compare; don't give a second whip speech.
- **Take POIs.** Refusing them all looks evasive.
- **Manner is 40%.** Talk to the judges, not your notes.

Before the round

- ☐ Motion vetoes ranked (if used)
- ☐ Definition agreed
- ☐ Team split decided
- ☐ Likely opposition arguments and answers ready
- ☐ Who gives the reply speech decided
- ☐ Timer and POI signals agreed

What each speaker does

GOVERNMENT

Prime Minister

Defines the motion, sets what Government must prove, gives the first arguments and the team split.

OPPOSITION

Leader of the Opposition

Accepts or fairly challenges the definition, rebuts the PM, sets Opposition's stance and first arguments.

GOVERNMENT

Deputy Prime Minister

Rebuts the Leader of the Opposition, rebuilds the case, adds the rest of Government's arguments.

OPPOSITION

Deputy Leader of the Opposition

Rebuts Government's case, defends and extends Opposition's case.

GOVERNMENT

Government Whip

Rebuttal organized by clash. New arguments are discouraged; new examples and analysis are fine.

OPPOSITION

Opposition Whip

Same job for Opposition. No new arguments, except to answer new material from the Government Whip.

BOTH SIDES

Reply speeches

By the 1st or 2nd speaker, never the whip: a look back at the key issues and why your side won them. No new arguments, no POIs.

How judges score

CATEGORY	WEIGHT	WHAT IT COVERS	AVERAGE MAIN	AVERAGE REPLY
Matter	40%	Arguments, examples, rebuttal, POI content	30 / 40	15 / 20
Manner	40%	Voice, eye contact, confidence, persuasion	30 / 40	15 / 20
Method	20%	Structure, role, teamwork, timing, POI strategy	15 / 20	7.5 / 10
Total	100%	Main speeches usually run from about 69 to 81	75 / 100	37.5 / 50

Higher team total wins; no draws. Many tournaments record a margin: close, clear or a "thrashing" (up to about 12 points).

Key terms

Team split

How a team divides arguments between speakers.

Veto

Striking out one of three motions offered.

Margin

How clearly a team won.

Reply speech

Short closing summary, Opposition first.

Clash

A point where the two sides directly disagree.

Protected time

First and last minute of a main speech; no POIs.

Flow sheet

Note each argument as it is made, and the other side's answer next to it. Print as many copies as you need.

GOVERNMENT ARGUMENTS	OPPOSITION RESPONSES	WHO IS WINNING IT?