The thing you've been complaining about for two years has a mechanism. This is it.

How to Write and Propose a Motion

General guidance, not a rulebook - every building's circumstances differ, so take what's useful and leave the rest.

If there is one piece of strata knowledge worth having, it's this one. **Any owner can put a motion to a general meeting.** You don't need to be on the committee, you don't need permission, and in most schemes you don't need a seconder.

Most owners never do it, usually because nobody told them they could.

What a motion actually is

A motion is a written proposal that the owners vote on. If it passes, it becomes a resolution — a decision of the owners corporation with force behind it. That's the difference between raising something and settling it.

The kinds of resolution, and why it matters

Every motion needs a particular kind of resolution to pass, and the thresholds differ by state. Getting this wrong is the most common reason a motion fails on a technicality rather than on its merits. Ask your strata manager which category yours falls into **before** you submit it.

Queensland

Resolution	What it takes
Ordinary	More votes for than against. If a poll is called, it's decided on contribution schedule lot entitlements instead of a head count.
Majority	Votes for must be more than 50% of the lots entitled to vote on the motion.
Special	**All three** must be satisfied: at least two-thirds of the votes cast are in favour; votes against are no more than 25% of the total number of lots in the scheme; and the contribution schedule lot entitlements of the votes against are no more than 25% of the total for the scheme.
Without dissent	No vote counted against. Abstentions are fine.

New South Wales

Resolution	What it takes
Ordinary	A simple majority of the votes cast.
Special	Not more than 25% of the value of votes cast are against it. Value is worked out by unit entitlement.
Unanimous	No vote cast against.

A separate, easier test applies to sustainability infrastructure resolutions — worth asking about if your motion is about solar, EV charging or water saving.

Victoria

Resolution	What it takes
Ordinary	A simple majority of the votes cast at the meeting. If a poll is called it's one vote per unit of lot entitlement, and the poll result replaces the show of hands. By ballot: a majority of votes returned, and at least a quorum's worth.
Special	75% — but of the **total** lot entitlements or **total** votes for every lot in the owners corporation, not of the votes actually cast.
Unanimous	Every lot. Again measured on the total, not on who turned up.
Interim special	If at least 50% of the total votes are in favour and no more than 25% against, it passes as an interim special resolution. It becomes a full special resolution 29 days later unless owners holding more than 25% of the total votes petition the secretary against it.

Western Australia

Resolution	What it takes
Ordinary	More than 50% of the votes cast — counted by number of lots, or by unit entitlement if anyone entitled to vote demands it.
Special	A two-part test, and both parts must be met on **both** counting bases: at least 50% of the lots in the scheme **and** at least 50% of the scheme's unit entitlements in favour; and less than 25% of the lots **and** less than 25% of unit entitlements against.
Unanimous	The vote attached to every lot in the scheme is cast in favour.
Without dissent	No vote cast against. Abstentions are fine.

Small schemes are carved out. In a 2-lot scheme, anything needing a special resolution or a resolution without dissent must actually be unanimous. In a 3, 4 or 5-lot scheme the test is a fixed number of lots in favour (2, 3 and 4 respectively) plus at least 50% of unit entitlements, with no cap on votes against. Every WA resolution type also requires **14 days' notice of the terms** of the proposed resolution.

The trap almost everyone falls into

Watch what the percentage is counted on. *In New South Wales a special resolution is measured against the votes actually cast, so people who don't vote don't count. In Victoria and Western Australia it's measured against the whole scheme — which means* ***every owner who doesn't vote is effectively a vote against you.*** *That single difference decides more motions than any argument made at the meeting. If you're in Victoria or WA and your motion needs a special resolution, chasing proxies isn't optional.*

Sources: Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997 (Qld) and Queensland Government guidance; Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 (NSW) s 5; Owners Corporations Act 2006 (Vic) ss 86, 89, 95, 96 and 97; Strata Titles Act 1985 (WA) ss 122 and 123. Current as at August 2026. Thresholds also depend on your scheme type and module - always confirm with your strata manager before submitting.

Anatomy of a motion that passes

Part	What it does	Example
The action	Says exactly what is to be done, in the words that will be voted on	"That the owners corporation engage ABC Waterproofing to reseal the level 3 balcony membrane..."
The amount and the source	Says what it costs and which fund pays	"...at a cost of $14,300 including GST, funded from the capital works fund."
The authority	Says who may sign, vary or act	"...and that the committee be authorised to execute the contract and approve variations up to 10%."
The explanatory note	Not voted on. The reason, the background, the alternatives considered.	Attach the quotes and the report. This is where you win the vote.

Two versions of the same motion

Weak

> *"That something be done about the water coming into the basement."*

Nobody can vote on this. What's to be done, by whom, at what cost, from which fund? A chair will either rule it out or the meeting will spend forty minutes rewriting it in the room.

Strong

> *"That the owners corporation accept the quotation from [contractor] dated [date] for investigation and rectification of water ingress to the basement carpark, at a cost of $8,450 including GST, funded from the administrative fund, and that the committee be authorised to engage the contractor and approve variations up to 10% of the quoted amount."*

Same problem. One of these gets fixed this year.

Getting it on the agenda

Task	Who's doing this	By when
☐ Find out your meeting's notice period and work backwards — submissions close well before the notice goes out		
☐ Ask the strata manager what form they need it in, and who to send it to		
☐ Confirm which kind of resolution it needs **before** submitting		
☐ Get quotes first if there's money involved — a motion with a number attached beats one without		
☐ Write the explanatory note. This is what people actually read.		

Task	Who's doing this	By when
☐ Send it in writing, and ask for confirmation it's been received and will be included		
☐ Talk to a few owners before the meeting — motions fail from surprise more often than from opposition		
☐ If it needs a special resolution in VIC or WA, chase proxies from anyone who won't attend		

Give yourself more runway than you think

Notice periods differ: Queensland is 21 days for an AGM; New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia are 14. Your submission deadline is earlier than that again — ask, don't assume.

If it doesn't pass

It's information, not a verdict. Ask what would have to change for people to support it, and bring it back. Motions that fail the first time and pass the second are completely normal, and the second version is usually better.

Your motion, drafted

Use this to think it through before you write the formal version.

Item	Yours
What outcome do you want?	
What exactly should the owners resolve to do?	
Cost, and which fund pays	
Who is authorised to act on it	
Which kind of resolution does it need?	
Submission deadline	
Who do I need to talk to before the meeting?	
What goes in the explanatory note	