House Rules Manual: Summary of Contents

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Printed as a “House Document,” the Manual is usually authorized by House resolution at the end of a Congress for printing at the beginning of the following Congress. As such, the House document number reflects the Congress that authorized the printing although the cover page identifies the applicable Congress for the contents (114-192 is the Manual for the 115th Congress).

**Preface**

The first section of the House Manual identifies the more substantive rules changes made by the House resolution adopting the rules of the current Congress. It also identifies citations to volumes of precedents referenced in the parliamentarian’s annotations.

**Contents**

The next section is the table of contents. Unlike the index, which references section citations, the contents identifies page citations.

**Order of Business**

Following the contents is a one-page description, with rule citation, of the General Order of Business and Special Order of Business in the House.

**Constitution**

The Constitution and the 27 amendments to it are printed in their entirety in the Manual, along with appropriate annotations, especially to Article I.

**Jefferson’s Manual**

Jefferson’s Manual was prepared by Thomas Jefferson for his use as President of the Senate from 1797 to 1801. In 1837, the House provided by rule that the provisions of the Manual “should govern the House in all cases in which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the standing rules and orders of the House and joint rules of the Senate and House of Representatives.” Sections 283-620 of the House Manual are from Jefferson’s Manual. The portions of the Manual that refer exclusively to Senate procedures are omitted in the House Manual, as are paragraphs from the Constitution.

**Rules of the House**

This section includes the 29 rules of the House as well as extensive notes and annotations, and comprises sections 621-1105d. Reprinted at the end of the section are provisions of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (1106-1107) that are applicable to both houses.
Joint and Select Committees
Sections 1108-1112c identify existing authority for the joint and select committees.

House and Congressional Offices

Early Organization of the House
This section, 1126, includes provisions from the Committee Reform Amendments of 1974 addressing the early organization meetings of the House to be held in December of an election year.

Miscellaneous Provisions of Congressional Budget Laws
Reprinted in this section are excerpts from the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (but not the Impoundment Control Act), the Budget Enforcement Act of 1990, and the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 that relate to legislative procedure, with annotations, but only a single section number for each of the three laws. For example, it provides provisions relating to the floor procedures for considering the concurrent budget resolution, the budget timetable, reconciliation, and the authority of the Budget Committee.

Legislative Procedures Enacted Into Law
This section, 1130, includes provisions from the congressional disapproval statutes that prescribe special procedures in the House for reviewing executive actions. These procedures are technically rules of the House and are customarily reincorporated by reference in the resolution adopting the rules for a Congress.

Index
An extensive index contains references to sections in the Manual, whereas the contents refers to page numbers.

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Congressional Procedure
A Practical Guide to the Legislative Process in the U.S. Congress
Richard A. Arenberg