



Introduction

Like most things in life, debate tournaments are much easier if you do some thoughtful preparation in advance. However, preparation in debate is not simply a convenience: tournament preparation will have a direct effect on how well you do. While preparation does not guarantee success, every champion of every AGD tournament comes to the tournament very well-prepared.

7+ Days Before the Tournament:

Registration

More than a week before each tournament, you should do three things. First and most importantly, you must register for the tournament. The AGD is very proud of our team and all of our tournament co-hosts. However, we cannot read your mind. If you want to attend one of our tournaments, you must register online. All registration links can be found at <http://agdebate.ning.com/topics>.

Research

Second, you should conduct some research about the topic. The topic for each tournament is always posted on the tournament page (referenced above), and is also posted on <http://agdebate.ning.com/topics>. There are a few kinds of research you may want to conduct:

- A. General background about the topic- This would include major new stories in the headlines that relate to the topic, as well as general background information that you might find in an encyclopedia.
- B. Articles or books that may be useful for one side of the topic- After you conduct basic background research, you'll want to look around for articles and books that you think support the affirmative or the negative side of the topic. This will help give you good ideas for your cases and will give you evidence and proof that will strengthen your case arguments. Make sure to take advantage of the AGD's research resources, which are available at <http://agdebate.ning.com/debater-resources>. You'll have to sign in as an AGD member in order to view this page.
- C. Articles or books that attack a common argument on the topic- Once you feel like you have a good background in the topic literature, you should begin finding articles that have good attacks against common arguments on the topic. This will make your rebuttal speeches seem just as strong as your constructive speeches, and be very helpful in attacking your opponents' arguments.

Casing

Third, you'll want to have cases, which are prepared position papers, on both sides of the topic. You read cases during the constructive speech, and you have 5 minutes to read it. The AGD resource page has sample cases for you to use, but it would be wise to write your own, since your opponents will be very well-prepared against the sample cases. Each case should define the important terms in the resolution, have a framework that tells the judge how to evaluate the debate and compare different impacts, and contentions that explain why your side of the resolution is true. For a step-by-step guide to casing, make sure to visit the debater resource webpage.

Keep in mind that you should have the case completely written out in advance. You should know how to pronounce all of the words you use in your case, and the case should be grammatically correct.

4 Days Before the Tournament

You'll want to figure out how to get to and from the tournament. Make sure you know how to get there, and what the name and street address of the venue is.

1 Day Before the Tournament

Make sure you have all the things you'll need for the tournament purchased and ready. Attend the training session the night before the tournament to make sure that you understand everything and so that you can ask any questions in person. Make sure to get plenty of sleep!

What to Bring to Tournaments

1. Printed our cases for both sides of the topic
2. A timer (cell phones, iphones, etc. are okay).
3. 30 sheets of printer paper
4. 4 pens, 2 different color ink
5. Your cell phone
6. Some money for lunch and snacks
7. Make sure to wear professional/formal clothes!