

Ringling up and Down

Notes / Hints on Ringling Up and Down.

Ringling Up

Remember the tenor is a bigger bell with a longer clapper which swings more slowly than the treble and smaller bells' clappers. As a band the quickest you can chime in peal is at the speed of the slowest bell's clapper. So the treble and smaller bells have to be part way up before the tenor can chime successfully in peal.

There are 2 ways to start off. Make sure you know which is being used before your first pull.

1) Bristol fashion. - ie first swing just treble strikes, next swing 1 and 2, next swing 1+2+3 etc. This will quite quickly get the treble part way up before the tenor joins in. Then slow down as the tenor can't pull up as fast as the treble.

2) Cornwall some bands start all together on the 3rd 'Scat' (pull). Everyone pulls gently together, not enough to make a bell strike. 3 pulls are needed to get a medium or larger sized tenor swinging enough to strike when checked the first time. Although you all start together, as the larger bells swing more slowly, by the 3rd pull the bells will usually be just separated in order time wise. On the 3rd pull, make it a sharp check to stop the bell while the clapper continues to swing and strikes the sound bow.

Note for the leader - If the tenor ringer is having a struggle to keep the bell down to chime the same speed as the treble, then the treble and smaller bells needs to go up more!

Keep close to the bell in front so that there is space for the second strike to slot in.

Every bell is different so watch and listen and be prepared to adjust on nearly every stroke.

As you all ring up you should keep closer than in normal rounds ringing.

Because the tenor swings more slowly, the trebles will get nearly up while the tenor is only half way up. If it were up as far as the little bells it would be striking a lot slower.

Small bells have to stay below the balance for some time as the tenor comes up towards the balance. When bells are nearly up it takes much less effort to take them up further, and therefore slow them down compared with a bell that is only half way up. Beware, on a small bell near the balance it is easy to overdo it, zoom up to the balance and therefore slow down the striking speed too much. The tenor and other larger bells cannot follow this so the small bell can suddenly gets out of sequence.

As the tenor gets closer to the balance it's striking will slow down so the small bells should edge up towards the balance to slow down at the same rate as the tenor.

As you get pretty close to the balance the tenor can start to back off from the other bells, so the others should space out gently into the spaces that emerge.

Ringling Down

Treble will hopefully remember to tell the band how it will end - 3 miss and catch in rounds/Queens/ etc

Get good steady rounds before starting to descend. Start by closing the bells up. Do not go down until the treble says "downwards".

Make sure you ring the bells down rather than letting it fall down, making sure you strike the bell accurately. Try not to overpull as this can result in irregular striking. Aim to keep your distance from the bell in front by moving up the rope 1 cm at a time every 2 or 3 pulls ie small changes. Shorten the rope to control the descent. (arm's weight only for most of our bells).

The trebles have to stay quite high until the tenors are further down to keep their relative speeds the same. Treble beware coming down too quickly at first.

If you find you are getting too close to the person you are following, stop taking in rope and pull harder and longer to stop lowering the bell which stops the strike rate getting quicker (Think - Pull away). Unless you are way out of place, don't try to raise the bell again - just wait for the rest to come back to you. The other bell should start to drop away from you (or catch you up if you did overtake it) at which point start taking rope in again gently, so as not to overshoot and ending up too wide.

If you are getting a gap between you and the person you are following, take in your 1 cm 'nibbles' more frequently until you start to catch them again, at that point stop taking in so much so you don't overtake, as they continue to take in more you should find you stop catching them before you overtake, keep adjusting things almost every blow.

Remember: - If you have to adjust your speed to change your position relative to the bell in front, you have to change it back just before you get to the right place or you will overshoot. even when you get out of place all the other bells continue to lower so their strike speed continually gets quicker.

Keep an eye on the treble in case the bell you are following gets well out of place.

Beware taking a coil doesn't take in any extra rope.... Grab the tail tightly with the upper hand so it doesn't change position on the rope and bring the coil making hand in below it. Keep the coil making hand in a straight line with the rope, don't pull off to the side. Remember to pull in a straight vertical line! This will minimise any flap in the rope.

After the second reasonable sized coil you do not need to touch the sally again till striking near the end.

Continue inching your way up the rope.

As you get near the bottom, the tenor will stop clapping both sides and start to chime. This leaves a space. 12345612345 space. The treble should start to pull into this space, and as you all go down a bit more the next bell will do the same 1234561234 space. The treble keeps pulling in, and quite rapidly all bells end up chiming.

The tenor should bring the bell down to the lowest that it can keep chiming - ie the quickest the bell can chime. The treble will close up to the tenor and all other bells space out in between.

The treble says "3,miss,catch in eg. Rounds". When the catch comes, catch and hold the rope still a little beyond the bottom of the rope's swing, hold it, wait for the clapper to hit the bell and then immediately gently relax the bell back to bottom dead centre (ie still). If you hold the rope down too long the clapper may strike the bell again.

If the chiming was well struck then so will the catch be. Well done.

Martin Spittle April 2022

Summary- can be used in towers prior to ringing up or down

Ringling Up Summary

Stay close

Be prepared for the treble to start off quickly then slow down.

If you start crashing on the bell in front of you - pull harder and longer to raise the bell which slows the strike rate down a bit (Think - Pull away)

After 3 or 4 harder pulls - listen to see if things have improved. Beware overdoing it.

If you get a space from the bell in front - don't pull as hard, stay still for half a dozen blows (don't let any more rope out), until the gap is reducing. Once you can see/hear it reducing, start to pull again because you don't want to overshoot your place and crash into them.

Small bells resist the urge to whang it straight up at the end - the tenor cant keep up. Gently up to the balance.

Perfect!

Ringling Down Summary

Keep close and change to pull less with handstroke (which will disappear) and more with backstroke - better to slightly over pull than under pull. Control descent by edging up the rope.

Taking a coil is a danger point, hold rope firmly in upper hand and take coil below so as not to take in extra rope.

Judge your gap by listening and watching the rope in front.

If you get too close to the bell in front then firm pulls x 2-3 and take less or no rope in and review. Once you start to pull away, resume taking in rope - remember they are still going down.

If too wide a gap then bring in more frequently for few blows and review. May need more as they are still going down. Once you are getting closer again - reduce your correction to avoid overshooting. Review every pull or 2.

Watch out for the treble pulling in quicker once tenor bell loses second strike. Keep quite close.

Once striking, Get closer to bell in front by checking the sally a little earlier.

If too close, pull slightly more firmly and allow bell to rise before checking it again at next striking point.

Martin Spittle April 2022

Some useful things to know about what is happening to the bell and the clapper on ringing up and down.

(For those who like detail!)

The bell is safest when down. Potential for inadvertent pulling it off when up, always check if the bell is up or down..

The bell is swung by pulling the rope which is laid around the wheel and enters through the garter hole part way round the wheel. Not opposite the mouth of the bell but about 40 degrees off to the side. You can only pull a rope down! So it swings back on its own.

The clapper is pivoted within the bell, usually just below (when the bell is down) the bells axis of rotation. This creates a lot of complex physics!

When you start pulling up, the bell moves and the clapper stays fairly still until the bell hits it. If you swing the bell a few times before checking it to strike, the clapper starts to swing with the bell to some extent making it easier to strike when you do check it. The clapper bounces off the bell and is therefore swinging within the bell. When it does you are chiming, the clapper is only hitting the bell on one side at first.

However if the bell is swung slowly a few times the clapper will tend to start to swing with the bell, So the bell has to be checked near the end of its swing, the clapper continues to swing within the bell and hits the sound bow. This may take 2 or 3 attempts depending on the size of the clapper, its weight, and its pivot point within the bell.

As you continue pulling the bell up, especially if pulling up gently, the clapper may want to start to swing with the bell and not strike so you have to continue to check the bell just before the top of its swing, though not enough to stop it going up. Eventually the clapper will hit both sides of the bell. It is still (hopefully) hitting the leading edge of the bell.

As you continue ringing to about half way up, the garter hole starts to pass the shortest distance to the ground pulley. Once it does this it starts to pull the rope back up again at the end of your pull stroke. This is why the rope starts bobbing and the handstroke starts to develop. The further the garter hole and therefore the attachment position of the rope on the wheel, go past the ground pulley - the more of a handstroke is produced.

Once the clapper is striking both sides of the bell, and if it is still hitting the leading edge then it usually continues to do this until the bell is up - and it is up 'right'. ie when it stands, the clapper rests against the edge that has gone the furthest beyond top dead centre.

If you do not check the bell until it is hitting the bell on both sides, then it is more likely to stop hitting the leading edge, and may start hitting the trailing edge, and go up 'wrong'. Once the bell is stood, the clapper is not quite over top dead centre.

The differences for ringing between the up right and up wrong positions is that the bell will strike earlier in the swing if up wrong. So will be striking at a different time in its swing relative to the other bells making it more difficult to strike well, especially if relying on rope sight. This

is because when up wrong, the clapper hits the bell while 'falling' so before half way through the bell's cycle. When stood, the clapper is more upright so as the bell sets onto the stay the clapper is more likely to bounce on the bell's sound bow. When the bell is stood, as the clapper is heavy and is now resting against what will be the leading side of the bell once pulled off, it is much easier to pull off, and the bell is also much lighter set.

When the bell is up 'right' the clapper accelerates off the trailing edge of the sound bow and swings across the bell while it is swinging in the same direction. The clapper swings faster than the bell, and hits the leading edge of the bell towards the end of it's swing (called a flying clapper).

I did say the physics was tricky!

Coming down is more straightforward.

The clapper continues to hit the leading edge all the way down, unless it was up wrong. If it was up wrong then from around half way down the clapper can cease to hit either side of the bell and so all goes quiet as the clapper tends to swing in time with the bell.

Near the bottom the clapper stops hitting one side of the bell, and at this point, as on the way up, to keep it chiming, the bell needs to be checked, quite deliberately, just before the top of it's swing. This is the transition point when the treble pulls in and all the other bells do so too.

This checking bounces the clapper off the sound bow giving it enough energy to swing back to hit the sound bow on the following swing. If you do not check it enough and it does not chime it may well not chime on the next swing either. It can be very difficult to keep a heavy bell chiming as the clapper will tend to want to swing at the same speed as the bell.

Eventually the tenor bell should be swinging very little and the checking of the bell may be almost the only bell movement but it continues to bounce the clapper away enough that it swings back for the next chime. The smaller bells have to remain part way up so their swing is the same rate as that of the tenor. The catch (and hold) happens when at the rope is past its lowest point, just before the bell gets half way through it's swing, before bottom dead centre, which results in the clapper hitting the bell earlier in it's swing, so it loses some of its momentum, it may be almost stationary depending on the bell. So it swings back less the next time, by which time the ringer should have let the rope rise so the bell stops at bottom dead centre and the clapper does not reach it again so the chiming ceases.

If a ringer waits too long in the bell's swing before catching, both the bell & especially the clapper can still be moving quite a lot after the ineffective catch, so although the bell has been checked somewhat, the clapper may strike the bell again after all the others have stopped, very embarrassing!

Also if you hold the rope down for too long after the catch, this holds the bell with the striking edge nearer to the arc of the swing of the clapper, so the clapper may strike it again.

Martin Spittle April 2022