



RAISING BELLS IN PEAL GUIDANCE

PRODUCED BY DCA TRAINING OFFICER



1. You must be competent in ringing a bell up on your own.
2. Do not attempt to lead up on the Treble until you can do it perfectly on an inside bell.
3. RINGING UP IS HARDER THAN RINGING DOWN! Start as a band by learning to chime satisfactorily. Striking MUST be close together. The treble gives the order to “Raise/look two” or a word of command specific to that ringer and tower and then strikes. (Most towers then on the second strike allow two to strike, then three and so on or if ringing in Devon style all the bells swing and strike at the first point). If ringing up in the former style then all the bells should begin to swing slightly with the tenor swinging in a small arc to begin with. This skill can be worked on more than once in an evening if desired. It is no point raising all the bells if they are out of order at this stage. Stop and start again.
4. Each bell should aim to stay in the middle gap between the bell in front and the bell following it, rather than maintaining a standard spacing, so listen to the bell in front and the one following! The treble will initially leave a wide gap in the striking so that its second strike will sound correctly AFTER the tenor. This means that the treble and other front bells must pull up rapidly for the first few pulls; on eight bells this may be as much as halfway up in the first few pulls!
5. For much of the raise the treble is guided by listening, to keep striking after the tenor. Until the tenor rope has ‘sally bounce’ watching rope movement doesn’t make much sense. At this point it is still important for every bell to listen to its place in relation to the bell following as much as the bell in front.
6. The midway point of the raise is often the hardest either because inexperienced ringers tend to ‘get stuck’ half way up and not pull through on the tail end to the floor. The other thing to remember is that however hard you pull the bell can only go up as fast as it is allowed by LETTING OUT THE ROPE. Letting out the rope needs to be focussed on. The coil should get tight around the hand before it is released but not so tight it is impossible to release it. The novice ringer will often let out a coil, correctly keeping their right hand in the correct place on the tail but finding their left hand leaves a gap between the left and right hand. This can be rectified by just nibbling the left hand up the tail to sit with the right hand, thus pulling the tail end with both hands together rather than apart. (In other words pulling up with both hands rather than one!)
7. As each bell reaches the balance it should take care not to strike wide by overbalancing. This may mean stopping the sally slightly short of where it wants to rise to each time. Until a bell reaches the balance the only control of its timing is the height of its swing, which in turn is controlled by the strength of the pull. To strike wider, raise the bell more by pulling harder, but take care not to ‘overshoot’. If striking is too wide, pull less just once or twice to resume your normal pull and place in the row.
8. As the tenor is the last bell to reach the balance it seems sensible for the tenor ringer to call “Stand” although in some towers the tenor has to grunt or wink or call across the tower to the treble to let them know their bell is ‘up’ and they are ready.

N.B. As with ringing down it is not expected that novices should be immediately perfect. Try following an inexperienced ringer raising at a steady rate. Or if you are all learners start with 4 bells to begin with.

As with ringing up, ringing down in peal can be beautiful but it doesn’t just happen! As the skills to ringing down are different it might be better to focus on ringing up in peal first so as not to confuse the novice. It is very much a team effort and everyone can benefit on working at it whatever their ability. It is very satisfying to be in a team raising the bells in peal.

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