

CALL CHANGES

Introduction

Welcome to this series of notes on Call Changes.

First some good news – Call Changes are not easy! Why is this good news? Well, firstly, you are not the odd one out! Many ringers, including esteemed change ringers, get confused in call changes. Secondly, call changes are not some rite of passage to even more complex acts of mental gymnastics, so even if you continue to struggle, you can still move on to try change ringing.

What call changes provide though, is a framework to practice bell control, listening & rhythm. They also allow a band to produce good quality sounds on a Sunday morning – so they are worth persevering with!

The basics

Calls are made at the handstroke of the leading bell. You don't have to change until your next handstroke. This means you have a whole pull to work out what to do. Keep that intermediate backstroke where it should be, but then aim to accurately change at the handstroke. Think digital clocks clicking neatly from number to number, rather than the hands of an analogue clock sliding around.

The golden rule is – don't panic! If you are affected by the change, you'll only be moving one place. So dramatically speeding up or slowing down is worse than staying where you are.

There are two basic methods used for call changes. Unfortunately, you will find conductors using both around Suffolk & sometimes you'll find both methods used in the same tower! That's not fair now, is it?

Some callers call UP

To change 123456 to 123546, they call 'four to five'.

Some callers call DOWN

To change 123456 to 123546, they call 'five to three'.

Some callers call BOTH

Often this is because they are trying to be helpful; sometimes it is because they get muddled up themselves. However most callers call either UP or DOWN.

How can you work out which method a conductor is using? Listen to their first change – if they call a smaller bell to follow a larger bell (e.g. “2 to 3”), then they are calling up. If they call a larger bell to follow a smaller bell (e.g. “4 to 2”) they are calling down. If they call, “Go Bristol”, you are in trouble.

Change Ringing Rules

Below are copies of two sets of rules from different sources. Have a look at both & decide which makes the most sense for you. Use the rules to help you gain an understanding of how the bells move in relation to each other (paper & pencil homework will help here).

Taken from the Ringing World Diary:

If the caller calls up;
1. if your bell is called to follow another bell, hold up and follow it.
2. if another bell is called to follow the bell you are following, follow that other bell.
3. if the bell you are following is called to follow you, cut in and follow the bell they were following when the call was made.
If the caller calls down;
1. If your bell is called to follow another bell, cut in and follow it.
2. If another bell is called to follow the bell you are following, follow that other bell.
3. If the bell you are following is called to follow another bell, follow the bell they were following when the call was made.

Taken with permission from: The Bellringer’s Bedside Companion, Steve Coleman,
<http://ringingbooks.co.uk/>

Calling Up		
Instruction Given: “X to Y”		
If you are	Change to Follow	Physical Action
X	Y	Hold up
Y	The bell X was following	Pull in
The bell following Y	X	None – stay where you are
Any other bell	No change	Stay where you are – but recalculate which bell the bell in-front of you is following

Calling Down		
Instruction Given: "X to Y"		
If you are	Change to Follow	Physical Action
X	Y	Pull in
Y	No change	None – stay where you are
The bell following X	The bell X was following	None – stay where you are
The bell following Y	X	Hold up
Any other bell	No change	Stay where you are – but recalculate which bell the bell in-front of you is following

What to do if something goes wrong?

We all have best intentions – concentrate 100% of the time on practice night; always know who the bell in-front of us is following. However, somehow, we end up wondering what is for tea just when a change affecting us is called (or when a bob, or change of method is called for that matter – we're all human, even Ruth).

So – don't panic! Try applying some logic:

- Look at the conductor – he or she may give you a hint
- Are you close to the front? Is there a chance you should be leading?
- Are people trying to follow you? Then you probably shouldn't be following them.
- Who does that leave that you could be following? Who looks the most likely?
- Make a decision & stick with it! Then it will be easier for the conductor to sort things out.

What happens if the conductor makes a mistake? Try & reach a happy medium with the other bells using the techniques above.

What happens if there is clashing & other people are going wrong? Think about the last change – did you execute your change correctly? Can you see what is wrong? Can you help?

Set changes

There are many 'set changes', or standard sequences that get used in call changes. These tend to be musical and good to include in our ringing. However, you will find that different people name the same changes differently!

Name	Change
Queens	(24135), 135246 , 13572468 , 1357924680, 13579E24680T
Tittums	(31425), 142536 , 15263748 , 1627384950, 172839405E6T
Kings	(31245), 531246 , 75312468 , 9753124680, E9753124680T
Whittingtons	12753468 , 1297534680
Roller Coaster	14327658 , 3216549870 , or on 16: 321654987TE0CBAD
Weasels	14235
The Archers	5713468 [no 2nd]

Tim Hart