

Call changes – understanding the calls and how they affect the order of the bells

In general, call changes are called "down" in Ireland, Cornwall and Devon. In much of the rest of the ringing community the changes are called up. Calling down means that a bell is called to the place below which it is in when the call is made.

For example if the bell concerned is 3 in the row 1 2 **3** 4, this becomes 1 **3** 2 4 (i.e. the 3 moves from 3rds place to 2nds place (down a place). The call which brings the change about is "3 treble". In long hand this means 3 follows treble on the next hand stroke (sally stroke). This change is very easy for the 3 in that it is told exactly what to do.

It is important then, that if you are the first bell in the call, you "Cut in" on the next sally to get "down a place". Remember though to pull slightly harder on the sally when you "Cut in" so that you get the bell back at the right speed at the backstroke.

What happens to the other bells at the change "3 treble"?

It is easy for the 2 as it is "effectively" told what to do. 3 is told to follow the bell 2 was following (i.e. 1, the treble) and if, therefore, 3 will be following treble at the next sally stroke then 2 can either ring at the same time as 3, making an awful racket, or follow 3.

If 2 follows 3, then 2 and 3 have made a change, in that they have changed places. So, from 1 **2 3** 4 the call "three treble" gives 1 **3 2** 4 and the changing bells are 2 and 3, with 3 being told what to do and 2 realising that it has to follow 3. In order to follow 3 and get into 3rds place, 2 has to slow down / hold up on the hand stroke (sally stroke) after the call.

The two other bells involved in the example are 1 and 4 and the question is therefore what do they do? The answer is NOTHING!

Neither bell changes its place, nor its speed. For 1, this is easy as it just continues leading. However, 4 has to work out who it is following knowing that "something has happened to 3".

The easiest way to work out what happens when ringing in the order 1 **2 3** 4, is that 3 will be looking at 2 and 2 will be looking at treble.

When the change to 1 **3 2** 4 is made, then 3 will be looking at treble and 2 will be looking at 3. Bell number 4 should then be looking at 2: i.e. the bell that 3 was looking at before the change.

The most important thing to do when you have been following a bell which is mentioned first in the change (e.g. **three** to treble) is to ring at the same speed and try to find a rope going up and down just in front of yours. This will help you get into place if you "get a little lost".

If you are lost:

A) DO NOT STOP! Ring at the speed of the rest, until you are put back into place by the conductor.

B) "DO NOT START SHOUTING WHERE AM I?" as it puts others off.

Indeed, no ringer other than the conductor should be heard during a ring!

Table I shows the calls made, rows, quick, slow and even paced bells when bells are called from rounds to Queens (13572468) and back to rounds.

It would be a useful exercise to look carefully at this and perhaps write it out so that you, yourself, have a very good idea of the how the calls affect the order of the bells and which go slow, quick or do not change pace.

N.B. The bells not mentioned (e.g. 1, 5 6 7 8 in the first change) all ring at an even pace on the beat.

Table I Calls made, rows, quick, slow and even paced bells when bells are called from rounds (12345678) to Queens (13572468) and back to rounds														
Call made	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	bell going down a place	bell going up a place	bell staying in same place but following another			
3 treble	1	3	2	4	5	6	7	8	3	quick	2	slow	4	even pace
5 2	1	3	2	5	4	6	7	8	5	quick	4	slow	6	even pace
7 4	1	3	2	5	4	7	6	8	7	quick	6	slow	8	even pace
5 3	1	3	5	2	4	7	6	8	5	quick	2	slow	4	even pace
7 2	1	3	5	2	7	4	6	8	7	quick	4	slow	6	even pace
7 5	1	3	5	7	2	4	6	8	7	quick	2	slow	4	even pace
2 5	1	3	5	2	7	4	6	8	2	quick	7	slow	4	even pace
4 2	1	3	5	2	4	7	6	8	4	quick	7	slow	6	even pace
2 3	1	3	2	5	4	7	6	8	2	quick	5	slow	4	even pace
6 4	1	3	5	2	4	6	7	8	6	quick	7	slow	8	even pace
2 3	1	3	2	5	4	6	7	8	2	quick	5	slow	4	even pace
2 treble	1	2	3	5	4	6	7	8	2	quick	3	slow	5	even pace
4 3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	4	quick	5	slow	6	even pace