

Introduction

Basic Training 2: Rhythm Training for Ringers addresses the needs of handbell choirs who have completed the beginning stages of ringing and are familiar with the techniques and rhythms presented in *Basic Training for Bells* (CGB323.) In order to proceed to more advanced repertoire, the entire group must be able to count and perform more complex rhythm patterns. They must learn meters other than those encountered in beginning music and even learn to count and play mixed meters. In this method book, each new rhythmic challenge is presented in three ways to all of the ringers, so that the entire bell choir learns and performs each new element presented.

Non-pitched Exercise

An exercise containing a series of non-pitched rhythm patterns is given. The director may choose to present these first by rote, ringing (and having the ringers echo) selected measures. Next, we recommend that the director write the rhythms on a board or on flash cards so that all of the ringers are looking at music in the same location. This makes it possible for the director to point out notes or beats if needed. The non-pitched exercise always begins with a rhythm pattern with which the ringers are already familiar. Ask an individual or the entire group to play the familiar rhythm. Next, describe the new rhythm in terms of the familiar one. For example, “a dotted quarter note sounds the same as three eighth notes tied together.” **Be sure that each individual is able to count and play the non-pitched exercise before the group proceeds to the pitched exercises.**

Pitched Exercises

In this portion of the lesson, the rhythm patterns are notated on a five-line staff with no clef. All ringers will assume that their left hand will ring the notes in a space, and their right hand will ring the notes on a line. Now they are all reading pitches and rhythms at the same time.

Musical Example

When the rhythm exercises are mastered, the bell choir proceeds to the short piece (written in standard handbell notation) in which every ringer has the opportunity to play the rhythm pattern being learned. Before ringing the piece in its entirety, have each ringer locate the measure or measures in which he/she plays the new rhythm pattern. Practice these measures, and then play through the entire piece. As the group proceeds through the book, rhythms learned in earlier lessons are added to those learned in later lessons and the musical examples become more complex.

By using this “step by step” method, we ensure that every ringer learns all of the new rhythms presented. Repetition is important! As the group progresses through the book, be sure to review previous lessons. Advanced groups will also find the exercises useful for warm ups. In our work with all ages and stages of handbell choirs, from beginners through advanced adults, we have discovered that rhythm drills are valuable at every level.

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List of Songs by Lesson

<i>Lesson 1:</i>	<i>Dotted Quarter and Eighth Notes</i>	9
	<i>This Train Is Bound for Glory (2-3 octaves)</i>	10
	<i>Going Home (3, 4 or 5 octaves)</i>	12
<i>Lesson 2:</i>	<i>Sixteenth Notes and Rests</i>	15
	<i>Ezekiel Saw the Wheel (2-3 octaves)</i>	16
	<i>The Mill Wheel (3, 4 or 5 octaves)</i>	18
<i>Lesson 3:</i>	<i>Dotted Eighth and Sixteenth Notes</i>	21
	<i>Battle Hymn of the Republic (2-3 octaves)</i>	22
	<i>Shall We Gather at the River (3, 4 or 5 octaves)</i>	24
<i>Lesson 4:</i>	<i>Sixteenth and Dotted Eighth Notes</i>	27
	<i>Wasn't That a Mighty Day (2-3 octaves)</i>	28
	<i>Great Day Coming! (3, 4 or 5 octaves)</i>	30
<i>Lesson 5:</i>	<i>Syncopation</i>	33
	<i>Cindy (2-3 octaves)</i>	34
	<i>I'm Goin' Home on a Cloud/ Peace Like a River (3, 4 or 5 octaves)</i>	36
<i>Lesson 6:</i>	<i>Eighth Note Triplets</i>	39
	<i>Un Canto Nuevo (A New Song) (2-3 octaves)</i>	40
	<i>Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring (3, 4 or 5 octaves)</i>	42
<i>Lesson 7:</i>	<i>Quarter Note Triplets</i>	45
	<i>Steal Away (2-3 octaves)</i>	46
	<i>Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley (3, 4 or 5 octaves)</i>	48
<i>Lesson 8:</i>	<i>Dotted Eighths and Sixteenths Compared to Triplets</i>	51
	<i>'Round the Sun (2-3 octaves)</i>	52
	<i>Ebenezer (3, 4 or 5 octaves)</i>	54
<i>Lesson 9:</i>	<i>Two Two or "Cut" Time</i>	57
	<i>Chatter With the Angels (2-3 octaves)</i>	58
	<i>Blow, Ye Winds (3, 4 or 5 octaves)</i>	61
<i>Lesson 10:</i>	<i>Six Eight Time</i>	65
	<i>Skye Boat Song (2-3 octaves)</i>	66
	<i>Hashivenu (Turn Us Around, Lord)(3, 4 or 5 octaves)</i>	68
<i>Lesson 11:</i>	<i>Three Two Time</i>	71
	<i>When Jesus Wept (2-3 octaves)</i>	72
	<i>Easter Carol (In Thee Is Gladness) (3, 4 or 5 octaves)</i>	74
<i>Lesson 12:</i>	<i>Mixed Meter</i>	77
	<i>Shenandoah (2-3 octaves)</i>	78
	<i>Promenade (3, 4 or 5 octaves)</i>	80
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Handchime Adaptations

Note to Handchime Choirs:

All of the exercises in *Basic Training 2: Rhythm Training for Ringers* are playable by handchime choirs. The musical examples, however, make use of techniques which are not used on handchimes because they present a danger to the instrument. These include the martellato, the martellato lift and the use of mallets. Replace all “stopped” techniques with the “finger damp” used on handchimes: one or two fingers are placed firmly over the “U” opening while the chime is rung.

Some passages may be too difficult to execute in this manner with handchimes G3 and below. In this case, we suggest that the ringers play a non-pitched percussion instrument for these passages. (Do not simply eliminate the part; the object of the musical example is for all of the ringers to experience playing the rhythm within the context of a piece.)

The shake technique is less effective on handchimes than on handbells. On handchimes use a light, soft shake or consider substituting a straight ring.

The echo technique can be simulated by lightly touching the forefinger to the tine of the chime at the “U” opening and then releasing it.

Review Exercises

All of the techniques and rhythms used in the review exercises were presented in *Basic Training for Bells*. Ringers should be familiar with them before beginning *Basic Training 2: Rhythm Training for Ringers*.

All ringers play notes in a space with their left bell and notes on a line with their right bell.

Review Exercise #1

1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8

Review Exercise #2

Stopped sounds: TD, pluck or mallet

TD (Thumb Damp): Place the thumb firmly against the casing of the bell, then ring it normally.

Pluck: The bells are played on the table. Grasp the clapper between the thumb and first two fingers.

Throw the clapper down against the casting turning the wrist and first two fingers outward so the hand does not interfere with the clapper movement. This is a quick, fluid motion.

Mallet (as a stopped sound): With bells resting on the table, hold the mallets parallel to the table and 2-3 inches above the bells. Mallets strike the bells just under the rim and bounce back into place.

1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8

Review Exercise #3

1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8

Review Exercise #4

To execute the martellato (▼), begin with the bell held parallel to the table and about two inches above it. Press the bell into the foam so that the sound completely stops.

To execute the martellato lift (▼↑), begin as for the martellato, but press the bell quickly into the foam so that the sound does not completely stop. Immediately bring the bell back to the preparatory position if it is to be followed by another martellato, or to the “ready to ring” position if the next note is to be rung.

Review Exercise #5

The echo technique (↵) is played by ringing the bell normally on the first beat, then touching the rim lightly to the foam on the beats indicated by the arrows.

Review Exercise #6

To execute the swing (SW↓↑), ring the bell on beat one, hold on two, extend the arm back on three and bring forward on four, circling back toward the shoulder to damp. The swing always takes place on the beats indicated in the music.

Review Exercise #7