
Plain Bob Doubles – Teacher’s Notes

This is a workshop or course toolbox for ringers who are ready to learn touches of Plain Bob Doubles. It includes theory and practical activities, teaching tips, and ideas of how to help with common problems.

This is the second toolbox in the series. The first one is aimed at those wishing to learn to ring plain courses.

Target students

Ringers who have completed Learning the Ropes Level 3 – who have rung a quarter peal on the treble and one on the tenor (or two on the treble) and who are now ready to move on to learning methods. Students will need to be familiar with the circle of work, know how the blue line is written out, be aware of where the treble is passed and understand the concept of place bells. They should be able to ring plain courses of Plain Bob Doubles competently and confidently

Helpers

- A minimum of six helpers are required. The more competent the helpers the better the ringing will be.
- They should be able to reliably ring touches of Plain Bob Doubles on any bell.
- You will also need at least one helper who can call touches of Plain Bob Doubles.
- They should also be able adapt to ringing other related preparatory methods:

Download crib sheets for unfamiliar methods from the Plain Bob Doubles Toolbox and circulate to helpers beforehand:

- [Bistow](#)
- [Penultimus](#)
- [Funny Bob Doubles](#)
- [Bayles](#)

Practical targets

- To ring touches of Plain Bob Doubles from at least two different inside bells

Theory targets

- To understand what to do at a bob and what their next piece of work is.
- To be aware of where the treble is passed.

Teaching Resources

- White board or equivalent
- Marker pens
- PowerPoint – Workshop Presentation (*Plain Bob Doubles Toolbox*)
- Notes for theory sessions (*Plain Bob Doubles Toolbox*)
- Laptop and projector

Print out and laminate some of the theory games such as the [Plain Bob Doubles Happy Families](#), and the [Bob Doubles Domino cards](#). These can be used by ringers who are sitting out or played as part of a theory session. There is also a [Quiz](#) and a [Wordsearch](#) which can keep ringers using their brains over lunch.

Learning Resources

- Crib sheet – The Plain Course Explained (*Plain Bob Doubles Toolbox*)
- Crib sheet – Bobs and Singles Explained (*Plain Bob Doubles Toolbox*)
- Paper and pencil (Students to provide)

Circulate the two crib sheets to the students beforehand. Reassure students that they do not need to memorise all or any of these before the workshop, it's just for information.

Introduction

Each course should start with a short introductory session of 10 minutes or so when the teacher introduces themselves, explains the outline of the course and the course objectives. During this session the teacher should allow time for the students to introduce themselves and state what they hope to get out of the course.

Practical sessions

Placing the band

Place your band to give the student the best learning experience. If possible, assign someone to stand behind the student, who will also debrief them after the touch.

- Students should be put into touches individually.
- They should be the only ringer who is not proficient at the method.
- If there is more than one ringer not striking correctly or not ringing the method correctly the student will not be able to hear where he or she is accurate or inaccurate and will not be able to learn from the practice session.
- Another student may be able to ring the treble or tenor.

Where to start

To start with, invite the course participants to ring a plain course of Plain Bob Doubles together as a refresher and to help gain confidence. If any of the participants have any difficulties, you should be able to spot it at this stage so you can offer help if needed.

Change the order of the bells

This is a good activity to reinforce the skill of ringing by place and the concept of place bells. The order of the bells looking different is something that ringers will need to become familiar with once calls are introduced.

- **Activity.** Using call changes, swap some bells over before ringing a plain course of Plain Bob Doubles.
- Rounds may come up in unusual places and it's easy to miss 'that's all' because things look quite different,

Call a touch with the student unaffected (observation bell)

- **Activity.** Call a touch in which the student is unaffected. After the third bob, the conductor might like to say something like 'we're back in the plain course now' so the student can relax.

Call a bob course

A short touch to practise running in and running out.

- **Activity:** Call a bob course (Bob, Bob, Bob)
- If the student is ringing bell 3, they will run in at each call.
- If the student is on bell 2, they will run out at each call.
- Effectively both bells only ring plain hunt, but it will feel harder than that. .

Call a 60 – running in and out

A slightly longer touch to practise running in and running out.

- **Activity.** Call BPBPBP or PBPBPB.
- Students on bells 2 and 3 will either be running in, running out, or unaffected in long fifths.
- When teaching this, do mention ‘becoming third place bell’ or ‘becoming second place bell’ so that these ideas become a regular concept.

Call a 60 – making the bob

The same touches can be used to practise making the bob.

- **Activity.** Call PBPBPB.
- The student on bell 4 will make the bob three times.
- Watch out for ringers still trying to dodge in 3-4 before making the bob.
- If you call BPBPBP then bell 5 makes the bob three times.

Call a 100 – a different touch

- **Activity.** Call PBPPB PBPPB.
- The student on bell 2 only ever runs in or is unaffected.

Call an extent (120 changes)

If you feel your ringers are now all very solid with ringing the calls, you can include most people in this touch. If you feel they are not quite ready to ring in a touch all together, utilise helpers and place your band with the best chance of success, giving everyone their turn to ring inside with a reliable band.

- **Activity.** Repeat and practise until the band can ring together.
- The whole band ringing a touch together is a great way to end a workshop.

Introducing calling

Student starts by calling whilst not ringing.

- **Activity.** Stand behind any ringer and call a bob as they are about to make long fifths.
- **Activity.** Call the same touch whilst ringing (call themselves unaffected), not forgetting to call ‘that’s all’.
- **Activity.** Call another bell unaffected: either standing out and calling the bell they are watching to run in, run out, and make the bob, or ringing themselves whilst calling.
- Common mistakes are putting the call in slightly too early or late, or missing a call and needing to wait another course to put the call in the right place.

Not all ringers enjoy conducting, but fostering a positive, relaxed environment where ringers can have a go at calling along with learning other ringing skills is very good practice.

Optional extras

Once workshop participants can confidently ring touches of Plain Bob Doubles, and even tried calling some touches, there are plenty of related activities and games that they might enjoy, all of which will help progress with method ringing.

Original Doubles

Original is Plain Hunt rung with bobs. It is good fun, the calls come quickly and it does not take much learning..

Variable Hunt Bob Doubles

If your ringers would like a challenge, ask them to grab hold for a plain course, but designate a bell other than the treble as the hunt bell. The band will need to pay close attention to the hunt bell passing points to know which piece of work to do next. The actual treble will be a working bell. Be prepared for everything to look very different, and rounds may come up in surprising places. Some ringers find this quite disorientating, but it's a good game for developing concentration and hunt bell awareness. If the plain course goes well, you could even try a touch.

Old Bob

Old Bob is Plain Bob Doubles, rung with singles. Introducing singles in Plain Bob Doubles enables ringers to become confident with this skill before they even start ringing Plain Bob Minor. Ringers will need to pay attention to the treble passing points to pick up the method again after the new type of call.

Any other variation on Plain Bob Doubles

Ringing doubles variations is good fun and can add variety to a practice night. If your band are confident Plain Bob but would like to try something new, have a look at variations. A good starting point is April Day, which introduces Grandsire Singles, but there are hundreds of other variations on Plain Bob using different calls.

Ringing variations develops quick, agile thinking and treble awareness, but if you are using Plain Bob Doubles as the base method, the variations will not require a great deal of extra learning. An extra bonus is that ringers will learn other useful calls such as Grandsire singles and Reverse Canterbury bobs.

After the course

- The student will benefit from follow up sessions after the course.
- If the student is sufficiently advanced a goal of ringing a quarter peal can be set.
- If the student has not yet completed their Learning the Ropes Level 4, this course can be used as an aid to progression of the student towards the completion of this level.