

This series of eight articles suggests ways in which teachers and ringing masters can help learners who have achieved bell control to make the transition to simple method ringing. The articles present various ideas and practice methods, not intended to be in sequence of increasing difficulty. The 'Jargon Box' explains terms to learners and reminds teachers not to assume that their learners will understand these terms.

This second article deals with Bastow. It has many uses, just one of which is to introduce the learner to changing places in a regular and continuing manner after the 'Go!' call, but with these changes being kept as simple as possible - thus easy for the learner to understand, to hear, to see and to execute.

- 1. Introductory rumblings
- 2. Bastow
- 3. Stedman Quick Sixes
- 4. Little Bob and Penultimate
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There are lots of really useful 'practice methods', which can be used to assist the learner to progress instead of (or, in some cases, as well as) being rung in quarter peals or for service ringing. Sadly though, in many towers they are seldom rung. A particularly effective practice method is Bastow.

## What is Bastow?

The treble makes seconds, then leads again, and just keeps on repeating this. In Bastow Minor (shown in Diagram 2.1) the other bells start with a dodge, and always dodge in 3-4 and in 5-6 (the same dodges that are made in Plain Bob Minor; note that in Bastow there is no dodging in 1-2 and no making seconds). So in Bastow Minor, each working bell2 dodges in 3-4 and in 5-6, both up and down.1 The equivalent exercise on an odd number of bells involves four blows at the back;2 so on five bells (shown in Diagram 2.2) the working bells dodge 3-4 up and down, and make long fifths (four blows). This, though, leads us on to an unfortunate uncertainty about this method, which is ...

## What is the method called?

Everyone calls it Bastow for an even number of bells. Pragmatists call the five-bell version **Bastow Doubles**, just as Plain Bob Minor and Plain Bob Doubles are both called 'Plain Bob' (with four blows at the back in Doubles). Purists prefer to use a different name (as most methods, if changed from minor to doubles in this way, get a different name - such as St Clement's Minor becoming St Simon's Doubles). So they call the five-bell version **Bistow Doubles** 

Of course (think of Shakespeare, roses, and 'by any other name') this exercise is just as effective whatever you call it. So, whether or not you understand the niggles about the name, let's move right along to considering why it is so useful.

## 6 5 6 2 6 3 2 3 6 2 3 5 3 2 3 2 5 6 3 6 3 5 3 6 3 5 2 2 5 5 2 2 3 5

**Bastow Minor** 

Diagram 2.1

## What does it achieve?

There are any number of stages in ringing where a particular step forwards can appear to the learner as a gigantic and perhaps unachievable leap. One such leap is from call changes to Plain Hunt. Let's assume our student has got the hang of controlling the bell, and can ring rounds. He or she is able to lead with the correct rhythm, and can cope quite well with call changes and with the physical skill of moving the bell one place earlier or later (but perhaps needing a decent pause for recovery before the next change is called). Often the next step is to Plain Hunt, and for many