

Even so, many students will find this difficult at first, and it is helpful for the teacher to stand in front of the pair of bells that are being asked to swap, and indicate verbally or with gestures exactly who should be where at each stroke.

Is this useful? More useful than call changes?

Yes, it certainly is useful. It introduces the student to the idea of continuing to change their position after an initial instruction, which is what method ringing is all about. For the first time they must keep track of where they are and what they need to do next. Also, like call changes, it is a very useful exercise for improving striking. Well-struck call changes involve moving at one stroke accurately from seconds to thirds, for example, and staying there (rather than inaccurate striking such as 2.0, 2.0, 2.8, 3.2, 3.1, 3.0), and equally once the whole band has got used to a particular Kaleidoscope exercise, you can ask everyone (not just the student!) to listen and concentrate on the accurate placing of their bell. It is much better to develop the technique of accurate dodging or place-making in your student now (when this is pretty much all they have to concentrate on) rather than leaving it until they ring something like Plain Bob Doubles. (*When do I dodge? Is the treble leading now? Who do I dodge with? Who am I ringing after? Do I need to look left or right? What do I do after the dodge? What's my next work? And you expect me to concentrate on making the dodge accurately as well as all that?*)

Note that there are many pair-swapping patterns other than making places or dodging – for example, long places or continuous **Cambridge places**,² and you may wish to explain to everyone in advance what to do and just call ‘Go’ to set it all happening (see Diagram 6.2). You should choose the particular exercise based on the needs of the band. The long 2-3 places in Diagram 6.2 may suit a student whose striking is inaccurate and who takes several blows to position their bell exactly after a change; the Cambridge places are particularly suitable if you are aiming to get your band to achieve really accurate striking when making places and dodging. Remember always to first make sure your band understands the exercise, and only then ask them to concentrate on the striking.

There are many other uses for Kaleidoscope exercises, and we’ll look at another one in the next article.

As for ‘*Are they more useful than call changes?*’, this is not the right question to ask! The good teacher has an array of exercises and will use whichever is most appropriate to the immediate needs of a given student or band. Both Kaleidoscope and call changes are useful as students move from rounds to Plain Hunt. In each case, if the band is coping with the mechanics of the exercise, the teacher can sensibly concentrate on accurate striking. In call changes the student receives a specific instruction every time they need to move their bell, but they need quite a bit of brain-power to interpret the call and decide how, if at all, they are affected; they also need to keep track of several bells (*who am I following, and who is that bell following?*) and may be moved quite a long way from their rounds position. In Kaleidoscope the movement is much more limited and the patterns are simpler, but the initial instruction sets in place an ongoing sequence of changes that the student needs to comprehend and track.

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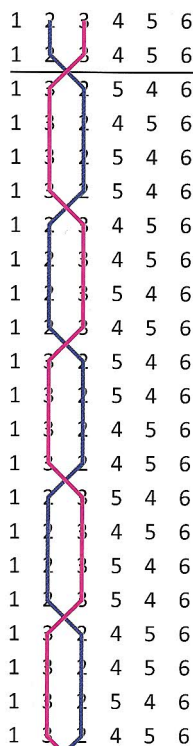


Diagram 6.2

Jargon Box

1. Call changes: calling up or down?

To change the order of the bells from 1234 to 1324, some conductors say “2 to 3”. 2 is being told to move UP one position; 2 and 3 are the bells that change position; 3 needs to realize that it must move down one position and (the tricky bit) that it is now ringing after the 1. We refer to this way of conducting call changes as **calling up** (because the conductor is telling a bell to move up).

Other conductors say “3 to 1”. 3 is being told to move DOWN one position, and that they will then be ringing after the 1; the tricky bit is that 2 must realise that it is affected, and that it must move up one position to ring after the 3. This is referred to as **calling down** (because the conductor is telling a bell to move down).

2. Cambridge places

Certain patterns of work crop up in many different places in method ringing, and we give names to these patterns. We’ve already met ‘long places’ for example, meaning four blows in the same position. In Diagram 6.2, bell number 5 rings in these positions: 4 5 4 4 5 5 4 5 4 4 5 5 4 5... We could describe this as “dodge, places, places, dodge, places, places, dodge”, but this is a bit lengthy! It is a pattern that occurs a lot in a method called Cambridge (though it happens in 3-4 in Cambridge Minor, not 4-5). We call this pattern **Cambridge places**. In the exercise shown in Diagram 6.2, bells 4 and 5 keep on ringing this pattern.