

Could I be a ringer?

Yes, you probably could. Bell ringing is great fun, and many ringers get the chance to ring in towers all over the world. You don't need to be very strong to ring bells, nor do you need to be an experienced musician. Children as young as ten years old can learn to ring at the Cathedral.

If you can count, then you know all the mathematics you need to be a change ringer. To be a good ringer, you need to be prepared to work in a team, to practise and make a firm commitment to ringing at the Cathedral on Sundays after you've been taught. You also need to be willing to climb the 137 steps up the Cathedral tower to the ringing room.



The Teaching Centre

Worcester Cathedral has a purpose-built Teaching Centre. It was the first to be designed and built in the world. At the Teaching Centre, you will be taught by experienced ringers and will begin to learn on special training bells, linked to computers. These recreate the experience of having highly skilled ringers working with you. It is like a flight simulator, and you can practise before you are ready to ring the Cathedral bells.

It does not take long before trainee ringers are ready to ring the real bells, and be heard by thousands across the city. The Teaching Centre runs training courses for new ringers. People who successfully complete the courses are awarded a Certificate and have the opportunity to join the Cathedral Guild of Bellringers who are committed to ring the bells every week.

I'd like to know more...

You are welcome to come and watch us ring, please get in touch. We look forward to meeting you!

**The bells are rung every Sunday
between 09:15 and 10:30.**

**We teach and practise every
Monday between 18:30 and 21:15.**



Contact us for further information

secretary@worcesterbells.co.uk

or visit our website

www.worcesterbells.co.uk



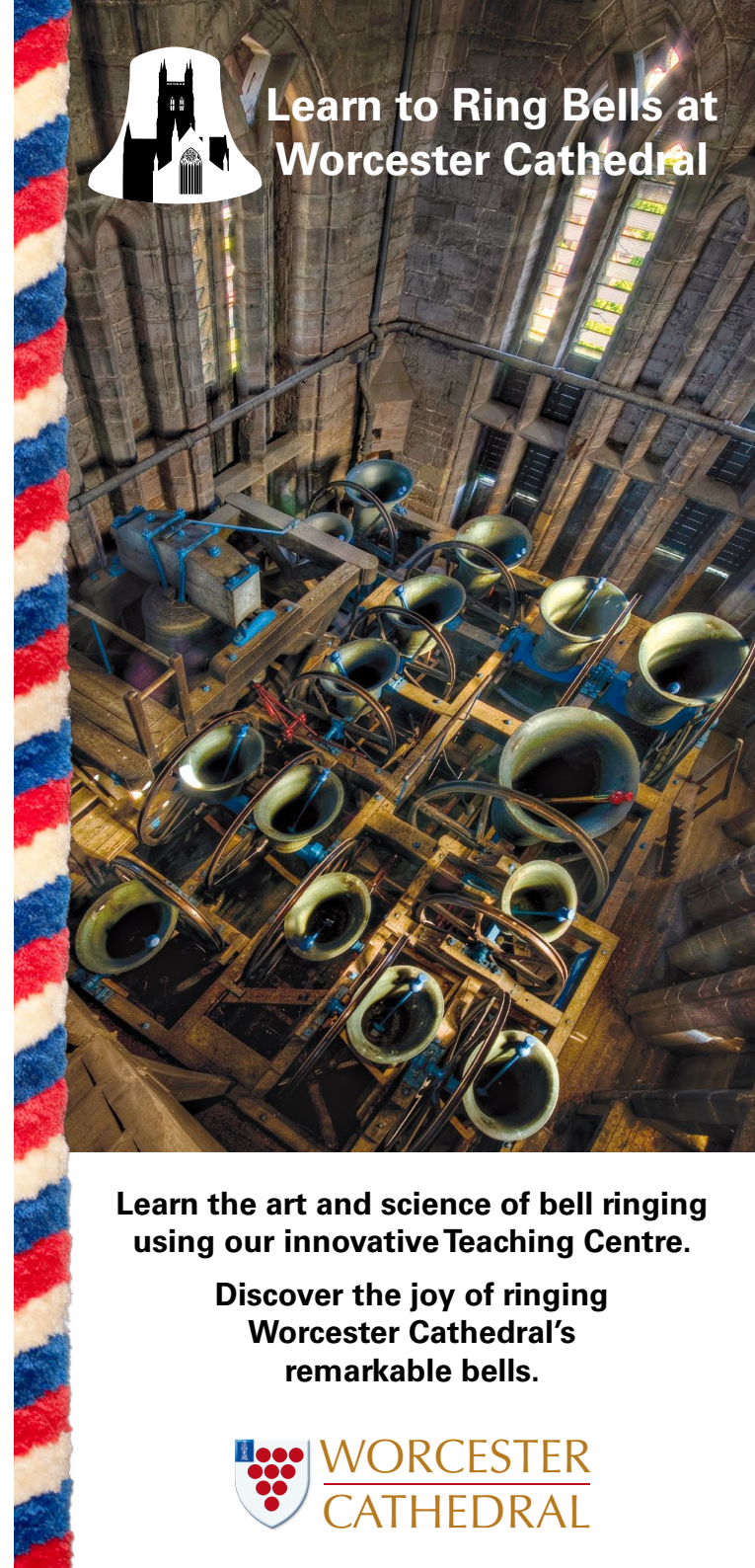
Worcester Cathedral

Guild of Bellringers

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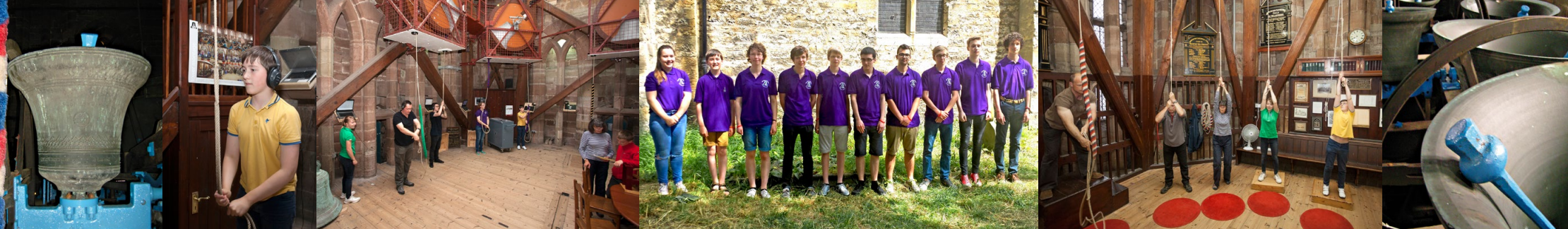
**Learn to Ring Bells at
Worcester Cathedral**



**Learn the art and science of bell ringing
using our innovative Teaching Centre.**

**Discover the joy of ringing
Worcester Cathedral's
remarkable bells.**





Church bells?

If you live in England, whether in a large city or a small village, you have probably heard the sound of church bells. Bells have been a part of life since the Middle Ages.

Church bells are the biggest and loudest musical instruments in the world. Their sound can be heard miles away from their towers. Bells are rung to call people to church, to celebrate happy occasions and commemorate important events. They are also rung simply for the enjoyment of hearing their sound.

Most church towers have bells. A set of bells is called a “ring” or a “peal”. Village churches may have a small ring of bells, comprising six or eight bells. Bigger churches and cathedrals usually have a larger ring.

Worcester Cathedral’s amazing bells

Worcester Cathedral has a ring of twelve bells. These bells are special. They are the fifth heaviest ringing peal, and they are considered one of the finest rings of bells in the world. It is a great privilege to be able to ring them.

How do bells work?

The bells are hung in a frame high in the Cathedral tower. Each bronze bell has a clapper inside, which swings with the bell. The bells are each attached to a wooden wheel, which has a rope running round it. The rope drops down into the ringing room below. The coloured part of the rope is called the “sally”.

How do you make them ring?

Each bell is rung by a different person. When the ringer pulls on the sally the wheel and the bell rotate by 360°, and the clapper then hits the rim of the bell, making it ring once. When the ringer pulls the rope for a second time, the wheel rotates by 360° and the clapper hits the opposite side of the bell. This action of “handstroke” and “backstroke” is repeated until the ringing stops.

What do the bells play?

Although a group of bell ringers is called a “band”, English church bells do not play recognisable tunes.

The music that they make is created by ringing the bells one at a time in ever-changing sequences.

Each bell is numbered. In a ring the highest bell is number 1 and called the “Treble” and the lowest bell is called the “Tenor”. The simplest pattern is to ring the bells in order, highest to lowest (or smallest to biggest). Like this:



Ringling the bells in numerical order is called “rounds”.

Ringers practise hard to ensure that a regular pulse is maintained throughout the round. To make the pattern more interesting, the next time the bells are rung, the order is varied, for example:



This is called “change ringing” and it developed in the seventeenth century.

Ringling the Changes

There are many different ways of varying the ringing order (or “ringling the changes”).

Each piece of change ringing is called a “method” and each of method is given a name (such as Plain Bob, Stedman, and London Surprise). New methods are being composed by ringers all the time.

A method always begins and ends with rounds, and then changes are introduced, using the mathematical sequence or “method”. This enables the ringers to know when they should ring their bells. No two combinations of bells (or “changes”) are the same.

Ringling every possible combination on twelve bells without a break would take over 37 years! However ringers usually ring set pieces called a “touch” which comprises 100 to 300 changes. You can progress to quarter peals which comprise over 1250 changes and last about 45 minutes. Some ringers specialise in full peals which last three to four hours!

Ringers enjoy the physical exercise, teamwork and intellectual challenges that are involved in making their unique form of music.

