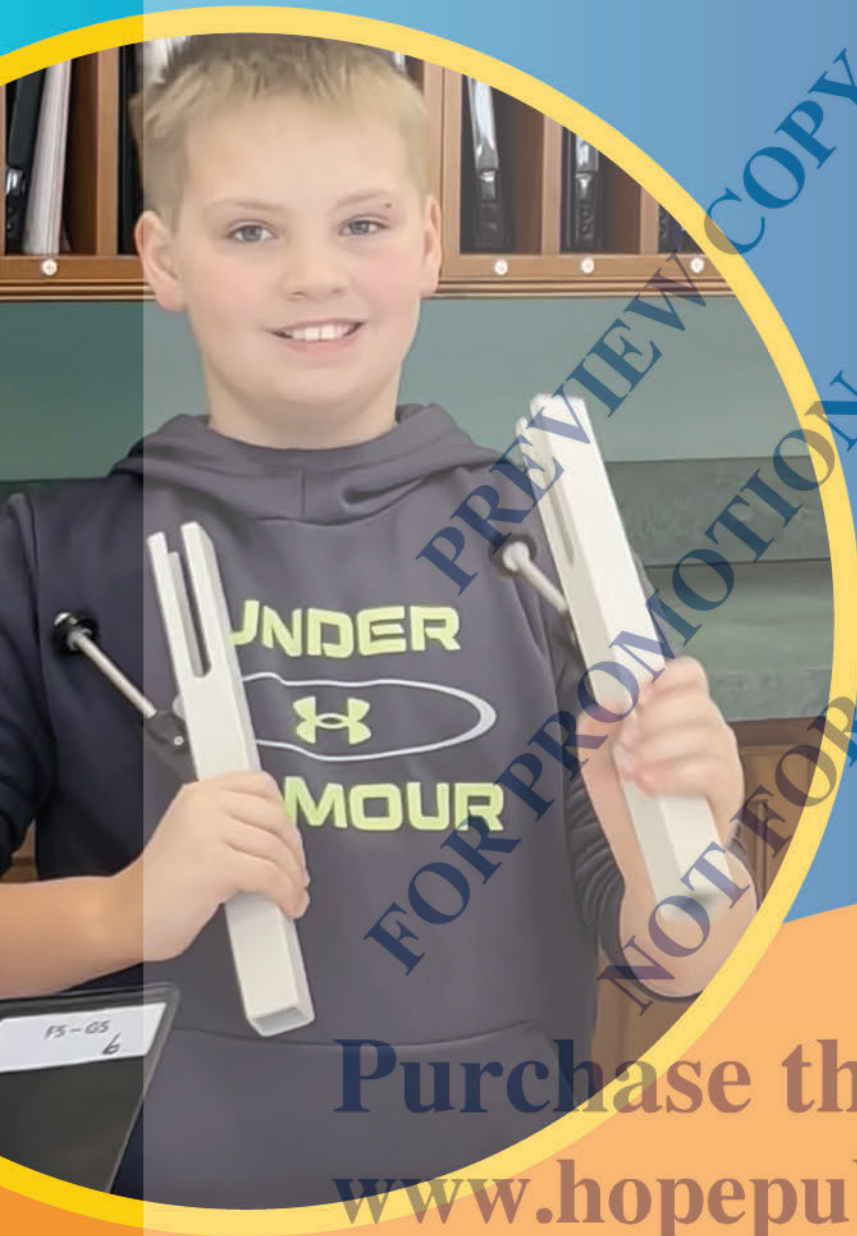


RINGING 101

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A Teacher's
Guide to
Using
Handchimes
and
Handbells

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RINGING 101

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A Teacher's Guide to Using
Handchimes and Handbells

by Brenda E. Austin

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HOPE Publishing Company
Carol Stream, IL 60188
Since 1892

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A Teacher's Guide to Using Handchimes and Handbells

If you have found a set of handchimes/handbells in your closet and don't know what to do with them, this resource is for you! Even experienced directors/teachers will find the contents useful to bring new ringers up to speed or review basics at the beginning of the new year. This resource includes exercises that are followed by short songs to reinforce the concept taught in the exercise. You have my permission to change any titles of songs as needed.

Before you Begin: You can either ring with 2 octaves (G4 to G6) or 3 octaves (C4 to C7) of handchimes or handbells. Each manufacturer of chimes has a different name for their instrument, we will use handchime or chime. The A6 is included in many of the 2 octave examples as many have the chime/bell available, and it gives that ringer more opportunities to play.

Traditional "Bell or Chime Choir" assignments assign 2 natural notes and their accidentals to each ringer. If ringing with 3 octaves; use all positions, if ringing with 2 octaves, utilize positions 3-10. The Left hand would play the note that is in the space and the Right hand play the note that is on the line. Handbells are a transposing instrument sounding 1 octave higher than written.

Classroom Adaptation: In a traditional "Bell/Chime Choir" each student would ring two bells. Each position could be divided in a classroom setting. You could have teams of three; assigning one note to each finger with the third person watching for missed notes or ways to help. Rotate the three teams so that everyone has a turn.

For a more in depth look at how to ring, please see the accompanying YouTube Videos. QR codes are on the next page.

Musically,
Brenda E. Austin

2 Octave Bell Assignments

Pos 5: D5, E5
Pos 6: F5, G5
Pos 7: A5, B5
Pos 8: C6, D6
Pos 9: E6, F6
Pos 10: G6, A6
Pos 3: G4, A4
Pos 4: B4, C5

3 Octaves Bell Assignments

Pos 5: D5, E5
Pos 6: F5, G5
Pos 7: A5, B5
Pos 8: C6, D6
Pos 9: E6, F6
Pos 10: G6, A6
Pos 11: B6, C7
Pos 1: C4, D4
Pos 2: E4, F4
Pos 3: G4, A4
Pos 4: B4, C5

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A Word About Chimes

If your choir is using chimes, some technique substitutions need to be made. Not all handbell techniques can be performed on the chime without risk of damaging the chime. The following chart is a list of substitutions that may be safely used on chimes.

Additionally, some techniques are performed differently on a chimes.

Echo: To achieve the Echo on a handchime, hold the chime close to the tine (tuning slot), ring the handchime, and then touch the index finger or fingers lightly to the base of the slot on the beats indicated.

Vibrato or *vib.*: hold it close to the tine (tuning slot), ring the handchime, and rapidly and repeatedly touch the index finger or fingers lightly to the base of the slot.

Finger Damp: The Finger Damp is an acceptable technique in creating a stopped sound on the chime. Slide the forefinger to the top area of the handchime and place the finger pad in the center of the tine slot and ring the chime.

Technique	Symbol	Replace With:	Symbol
Echo	J	Vibrato	<i>vib.</i>
Mallet on Table	‡	Finger Damp	.
Mallet Lift	‡†	Finger Damp	.
Martellato	▼	Finger Damp	.
Martellato Lift	▼†	Finger Damp	.
Pluck	.	Finger Damp	.
Pluck Lift	.†	Finger Damp	.
Shake	Sk	Vibrato	<i>vib.</i>
Singing Bell	SB	Ring	R
Thumb Damp	.	Finger Damp	.

Handchime Techniques



Handbell Techniques



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Learning Rhythm

Dominant Hand; Quarter, and Half Notes

Teaching Tips

- Clap or sing rhythm first
- Everyone ring, reading in unison, using their dominant hand
- Everyone ring, reading in unison, using their non-dominant hand

Time Signature: This song is in 4/4 time, meaning there are 4 beats in each measure and a quarter note receives one count.

 = Quarter note, 1 Beat

 = Half note, 2 Beats

A



B



C



D



E



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Learning Rhythm

Left Hand; Quarter, Half and Whole notes

The exercise below is written on a staff. Staff is the name given to the five horizontal lines on which we write music. All the notes in this exercise are in SPACES. When a note is in a space, the finger rings with their LEFT hand. Ring the exercise below in unison, everyone ringing all the notes.

Teaching Tips

- Clap or sing the rhythm first
- Everyone ring, reading in unison. Left hand play the note in the space

 = Quarter note, 1 Beat
  = Half note, 2 Beats
  = Whole note, 4 Beats

A

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

B

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

C

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

D

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

E

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

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Learning Rhythm

Right hand

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The exercise below is written on a staff. All the notes are on LINES. When a note is on a line, the ringer rings with their RIGHT hand. Ring the exercise below in unison, everyone ringing all the notes.

Teaching Tips

- Clap and sing rhythm first
- Everyone ring, reading in unison. Right hand plays the note on the line

A

B

C

D

E

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Learning Rhythm

Right and Left hands

You stop the sound of a bell or chime by bringing the instrument to your shirt. When the same note is played consecutively, it is not dampened in-between. When switching from one note to a different note the first note is dampened on the shirt after playing its full value.

Teaching Tips

- Clap or sing the rhythm first
- Everyone ring, reading in unison. Left hand play the notes in the space and Right hand play the notes on the line. Everyone plays all the notes.

A

B

C

D

E

Ringling Quarter Notes

Incorporating quarter and half notes for 2 octaves

2 Octaves Handbells Used, plus opt A6:

**A6 is outside the 2 octave range. But if the A6 bell is available, the Pos 10 ringer could ring G6 and A6.*

By Brenda E. Austin

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Ringling Quarter Notes

Incorporating quarter and half notes for 3 octaves

3 Octaves Handbells Used

Pos 5 Pos 6 Pos 7 Pos 8 Pos 9 Pos 10 Pos 11
Pos 1 Pos 2 Pos 3 Pos 4

By Brenda E. Austin

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8

9 10 11 12

13 14 15 16

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Ringling Half Notes

Incorporating half and whole notes for 2 octaves

2 Octaves Handbells Used, plus opt A6

**A6 is outside the 2 octave range. But if the A6 bell is available, the Pos 10 ringer could ring G6 and A6.*

By Brenda E. Austin

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Ringling Half Notes

Incorporating half and whole notes for 3 octaves

3 Octaves Handbells Used: 22

Musical notation showing handbell positions 5 through 11 on a treble clef staff and positions 1 through 4 on a bass clef staff. The notes are arranged in a sequence across three octaves.

By Brenda E. Austin

Piano accompaniment for handbell positions 1 through 16, numbered 1 to 16. The notation is in 4/4 time and consists of chords in both the treble and bass clefs.

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Learning Concepts

Dynamics & Fermata

Dynamics are the variation in loudness between notes or phrases

P is short for *piano* and means soft

F is short for *forte* and means loud

Crescendo: gradual increase in loudness



Decrescendo: gradual decrease in loudness



Fermata is a mark over a note or rest that is to be lengthened for an unspecified amount of time

A

B

C

D

E

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Mixing It Up

For 2 octaves of handbells or handchimes

2 Octaves Handbells Used, plus opt A6

*A6 is outside the 2 octave range. But if the A6 bell is available, the Pos 10 ringer could ring G6 and A6.

by Brenda E. Austin

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Mixing It Up

For 3 octaves of handbells or handchimes

3 Octaves Handbells Used

Musical notation for 3 Octaves Handbells Used. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff contains notes labeled Pos 5, Pos 6, Pos 7, Pos 8, Pos 9, Pos 10, and Pos 11. The bass staff contains notes labeled Pos 1, Pos 2, Pos 3, and Pos 4. A large watermark 'HOPE Publishing Company Since 1892' is overlaid on the notation.

By Brenda E. Austin

Piano accompaniment for 'Mixing It Up'. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of 16 measures. It is written for a grand piano with a treble and bass clef. The first measure is marked with a forte 'f' dynamic. The last measure of the piece is marked with a forte 'f' dynamic. The piece is divided into four systems of four measures each, numbered 1 through 16. A large watermark 'PREVIEW COPY NOT FOR PROMOTIONAL USE ONLY' is overlaid diagonally across the score.

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Learning Rhythm

Quarter, Half and Whole Rests

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Since 1892
 = Quarter rest, 1 beat of silence

 = Half rest, 2 beats of silence

 = Whole rest, 4 beats of silence

A

B

C

D

E

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Learning Concepts

Ringing In Two Parts

Teaching Tips

- Identify the notes with the stems up and stems down
- Everyone ring, reading in unison, all of the up-stemmed notes
- Everyone ring, reading in unison, the down-stemmed notes
- Split the group in half, with half of the group ringing up-stemmed notes and the other half reading the down-stemmed notes

A

B

C

D

E

F

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Learning Rhythm

Dotted Half Note

Teaching Tips

- Clap rhythm first
- Everyone ring reading in unison. Left hand play the note in the space and Right hand play the note on the line.

 = Dotted half note - 3 Beats

More Dynamics:

mp = mezzo piano or medium quiet

mf = mezzo forte or medium loud

A



mf

B



mp

C



f *p*

D



f

E



mf *mp*

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Learning Technique

Echo and Vibrato

Vibrato or *vib.* To achieve the vib effect on a chime, hold it close to the tine (tuning slot), ring the chime, and rapidly and repeatedly touch the index finger or fingers lightly to the base of the slot. To achieve the vib effect with a handbell, ring the handbell normally and gently move it from side to side using the wrist, not the arm, to produce the wavering sound. Move the Bell about 15% in each direction.

Echo ↑ To perform the Echo technique, hold the chime close to the tine (tuning slot), ring the chime, and then touch the index finger or fingers lightly to the base of the slot of the beats indicated. On handbells, the bells are rung normally and then lightly, but precisely, touched to the padded table on the beats or subdivisions of the beat, as indicated by the echo signs.

1 *vib.* 2 *vib.* 3 *vib.* 4 *vib.* 5 *vib.*

6 *vib.* *vib.* 7 *vib.* *vib.* 8 *vib.* 9 *vib.*

10 11 12 13

14 15 *vib.* 16 17 *vib.*

18 19 20 21

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Echos of Love

Learning the Echo and Vibrato Techniques for 2 octaves

2 Octaves Handbells Used, with opt A6

Gently ♩ = 85

By Brenda E. Austin

Echos of Love

Learning the Echo and Vibrato Techniques for 3 octaves

3 Octaves Handbells Used:

HOPE Publishing Company
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Gently ♩ = 85

By Brenda E. Austin

1 2 3 4
mp *Quarter notes do not perform the echo.

5 6 7 8
mf vib.

9 10 11 12
mp *mf*

13 14 15 16
mp *rit.* *p* vib.

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Learning Technique

Tower Swing

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Tower swing, Swing or Sw↓↑ indicates a full-arm swing after ringing the handbells. Arrows will be synchronized with the beats on which the swings occur. Numbers may be used to specify the beats on which the swings are made.

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A *mf* 2 3 4

B *mp* 6 7 8

C *f* 10 11 12

D *p* 14 15 16

E *f* 18 19 20 *mp*

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Learning Technique

Shake

Teaching Tips

- Clap rhythm first
- Everyone ring reading in unison. Left hand play the note in the space and Right hand play the note on the line.

Shake: Sk or  indicates the rapid shaking of a handbell with the clapper striking both sides of the handbell. Duration is shown by note value. Chimes should substitute a vibrato or *vib.* for a shake.

A

B

C

D

E

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It's Swing Time

for 2 octaves of handbells or handchimes

2 Octaves Handbells Used, with opt A6

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1 2 3 4

f

↓ ↑
2 3

9 10 11 12

p *f*

↓ ↑
2 3

13 14 15 16

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It's Swing Time

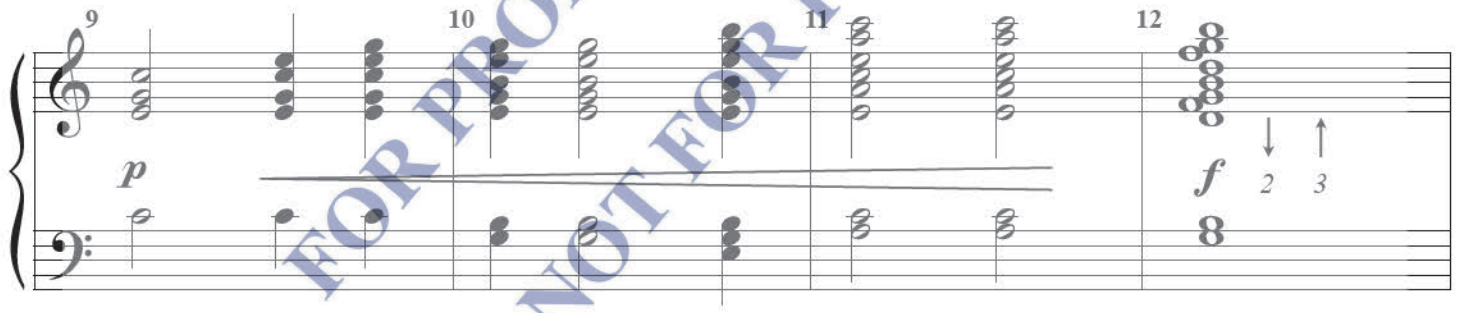
for 3 octaves of handbells or handchimes

3 Octaves Handbells Used:



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By Brenda E. Austin



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Joy in Ringing

for 2 octaves of handbells or handchimes

2 Octaves Handbells Used, with opt A6:

$\text{♩} = 110$

By Brenda E. Austin

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Joy in Ringing

for 3 octaves of handbells or handchimes

3 Octaves Handbells Used:



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By Brenda E. Austin

$\text{♩} = 110$

Musical notation for measures 1 through 4. The piece is in 4/4 time. Measure 1 starts with a dynamic marking of *mf*. The notation consists of chords in both the treble and bass staves.

Musical notation for measures 5 through 8. Measure 7 includes a 'Sk' marking with a wavy line above it. Measure 8 includes fingerings '2' and '3' with arrows pointing up and down respectively.

Musical notation for measures 9 through 12. Measure 9 starts with a dynamic marking of *p*. Measure 11 has a dynamic marking of *mp*.

Musical notation for measures 13 through 16. Measure 14 has a dynamic marking of *f*. Measure 16 has a dynamic marking of *ff*. Measure 15 includes a 'Sk' marking with a wavy line above it.

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Learning Concepts

Tied Notes

Tie: a tie is a curved line that connects two notes of the same pitch. A tie means to hold the note for the combined rhythmic value. For example, in measure 2, you strike the "space" note on beat 3 and hold it through beat 1 of measure 3, then strike the "space" note again on beat 2 of measure 3.

Tempo: the speed of a song

Ritard or rit.: is the gradual slowing of the tempo

a tempo: to resume the original tempo

A

B

C

D

E

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Learning Techniques

Thumb Damp and Pluck

Staccato: The staccato dot applies to all notes on a common stem and only to those notes. A staccato can mean any stopped technique. The composer should specify which technique. Chimes, use a finger damp for all stopped sounds on this page.

Thumb Damp: TD indicates that the thumb of the hand holding the handbell is placed on the outside of the handbell casting, producing a stopped sound when the clapper strikes the handbell. The addition of one or more fingers on the casting for all but the smallest handbells may be necessary to achieve a completely stopped sound.

Pluck: PI indicates the "plucking" technique. Handbells are placed on a padded table and sounded by moving the clapper manually.

Teaching Tips

- Practice these exercises using a pluck or a thumb damp. In music, the Thumb damp is most often used for treble clef and the pluck for bass clef. However, there are always exceptions.

A TD
PI

B TD
PI

C TD
PI

D TD
PI

E TD
PI


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Learning Rhythm

8th Notes

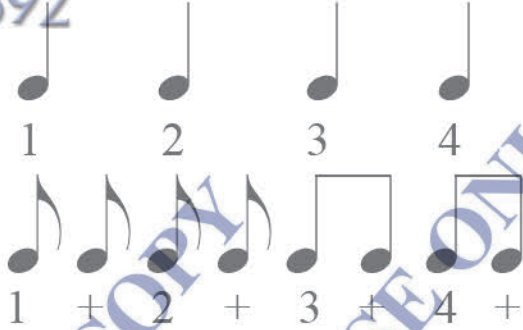
Teaching Tips

- Clap or sing rhythm first
- Everyone ring, reading in unison, using their dominant hand, then non-dominant hand, and finally Left and Right hands
- Eighth notes may appear as single or beamed together

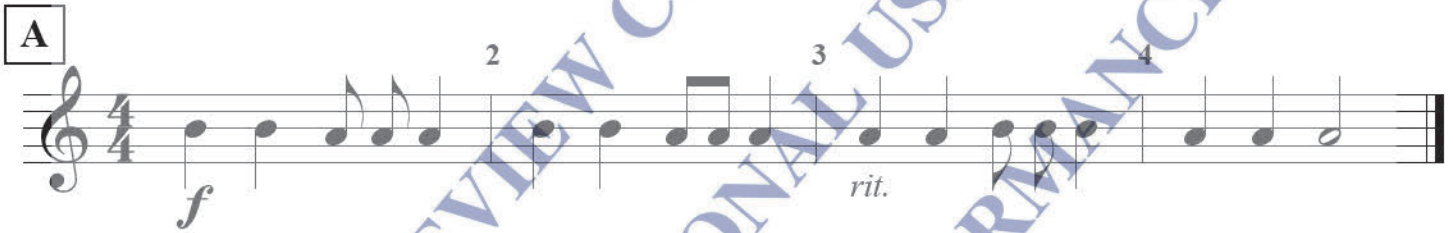
 = eighth note, 1/2 Beat

1 2 3 4

1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +



A



B




C



D



E



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Eighth Note Fun

Incorporating eighth notes and ties for 2 octaves

2 Octaves Handbells Used, with opt A6

**A6 is outside the 2 octave range. But if the A6 bell is available, the Pos 10 ringer could ring G6 and A6.*

By Brenda E. Austin

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Eighth Note Fun

Incorporating eighth notes and ties for 3 octaves

3 Octaves Handbells Used

Musical notation for handbells. The top staff (treble clef) shows positions Pos 5, Pos 6, Pos 7, Pos 8, Pos 9, Pos 10, and Pos 11. The bottom staff (bass clef) shows positions Pos 1, Pos 2, Pos 3, and Pos 4. The notes are eighth notes with ties between them.

By Brenda E. Austin

Musical notation for piano, measures 1-4. The key signature is one flat (Bb) and the time signature is 4/4. Measure 1 starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic. Measures 2 and 3 contain eighth notes with ties. Measure 4 starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. Fingerings 1, 2, 3, 4 are indicated for the right hand.

Musical notation for piano, measures 5-8. Measures 5 and 6 contain eighth notes with ties. Measure 7 contains eighth notes with ties. Measure 8 ends with a piano (*p*) dynamic. Fingerings 1, 2, 3, 4 are indicated for the right hand.

Musical notation for piano, measures 9-12. Measures 9 and 10 contain eighth notes with ties. Measure 11 contains eighth notes with ties. Measure 12 starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. Fingerings 1, 2, 3, 4 are indicated for the right hand.

Musical notation for piano, measures 13-16. Measures 13 and 14 contain eighth notes with ties. Measure 15 contains eighth notes with ties. Measure 16 ends with a piano (*p*) dynamic. Fingerings 1, 2, 3, 4 are indicated for the right hand.

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Stop for a While

For 2 octaves of handbells or handchimes

2 Octaves Handbells Used, with Opt A6

Light ♩ = 98

R = Return to ring and damp, normally

By Brenda E. Austin

*The melody notes need to be louder than the stopped sounds

Stop for a While

For 3 octaves of handbells or handchimes

3 Octaves Handbells Used

HOPE Publishing Company

Light $\text{♩} = 98$

Since 1892

R = Return to ring and damp, normally

By Brenda E. Austin

1 2 3 4

mf *pl* TD R R

5 6 7 8

mp TD *f* R

*The melody notes need to be louder than the stopped sounds

9 10 11 12

f R *pl*

13 14 15 16

mp TD *f* R R

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Learning Techniques

Martellato and Martellato Lift

Martellato: ▼ Indicates that the handbell is sounded by holding it by the handle and gently striking the full body of the handbell horizontally on a properly padded table. Chimes use finger damp for all Martellatos.

Martellato Lift: ▼↑ Indicates a Martellato followed by immediately lifting the handbell to allow the sound to continue. Chimes use finger damp for all Martellato lifts.

Teaching tip: practice martellato and martellato lift independently before playing them in the exercises.

A

B

C

D

E

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Marting Along

for 2 octaves of handbells or handchimes

2 Octaves Handbells Used, with opt A6



By Brenda E. Austin

1 Sk *mf* 2 3 Sk 4

5 *mp* 6 Sk 7 8 *mf*

9 10 11 12

13 *f* 14 15 16 Sk

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Marting Along

for 3 octaves of handbells or handchimes

3 Octaves Handbells Used:

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Learning Rhythm

HOPE Publishing Company
 Since 1892
 Right and Left hand
 $\frac{3}{4}$ Time

3/4 time: 3 beats per measure and the quarter note gets the beat

Teaching Tips

- Clap rhythm first
- Everyone ring reading in unison. Left hand play the note in the space and Right hand play the note on the line
- Practice without the techniques, then add techniques

 = Dotted Half note, 3 Beats

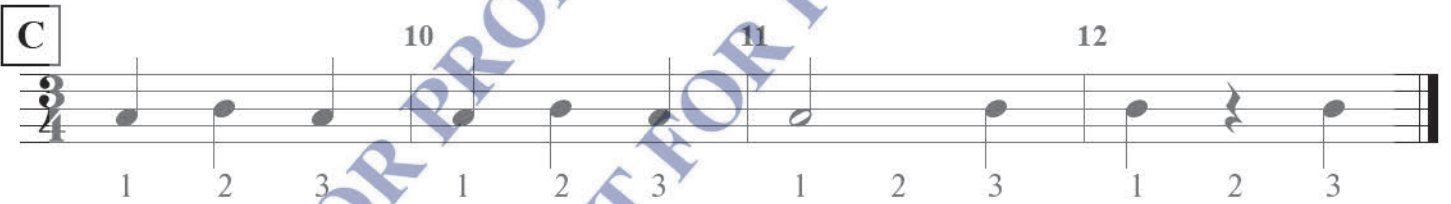
A



B



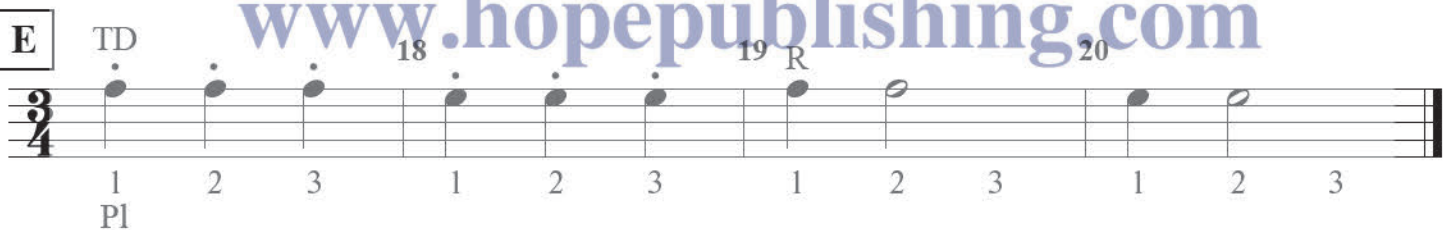
C



D



E



Celebration in Three

For 2 octaves of handbells or handchimes

2 Octaves Handbells Used, with Opt A6

HOPE Publishing Company
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Moderato (♩ = c. 108)

By Brenda E. Austin

1 2 3 4

mf

5 6 7 8

f *mp*

9 10 11 12

f

13 14 15 16

mp

Celebration in Three

For 3 octaves of handbells or handchimes

3 Octaves Handbells Used: with opt D7

optional

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Moderato (♩ = c. 108)

By Brenda E. Austin

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Learning Techniques

Let Vibrate or LV

LV is a term meaning "Let Vibrate" allowing chimes or handbells to resonate, regardless of note values, measure lines or rests, until damping is indicated. Successive LV marks signify that all previously sustained notes damp where the new LV begins. The LV effect is terminated by one of the following: An R, another LV, the damp sign, \oplus or any stopped sound.

A

B

C

D

E

Shimmering Reflections

For 2 or 3 octaves of handbells or handchimes

2-3 Octaves Handbells Used: 15, (22)

HOPE Publishing Company
Since 1892

optional

By Brenda E. Austin

Gently ♩ = 85

1 2 3 4

p
vib.

5 6 7 8

**vib.* *vib.* *vib.* *vib.*

LV LV LV LV

9 10 11 12

mp

LV LV LV LV

* Vib only applies to whole notes

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Shimmering Reflection

13 14 15 16

mf

17 18 19 20

vib. LV

21 22 23 24

mf LV R

25 26 27 28 29

p *vib.* *vib.* *vib.* *rit.* *vib.* *pp* *vib.*

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