

Ringing Plain Hunt Doubles by Ropesight

The complete course of Plain Hunt Doubles is as follows:

1	2	3	4	5
2	1	4	3	5
2	4	1	5	3
4	2	5	1	3
4	5	2	3	1
5	4	3	2	1
5	3	4	1	2
3	5	1	4	2
3	1	5	2	4
1	3	2	5	4
1	2	3	4	5

So, you have been ringing Plain Hunt Doubles for a few weeks now. The chances are that you have either been taught the numerical sequence of bells to follow from the outset or, if not, you have picked that sequence up through constant repetition. We call this “ringing by numbers.” It is the way we all start and we learn a lot from doing it, such as holding our bell up as we hunt slowly out to the back and pulling our bell in as we hunt more quickly back to the front. However, ringing Plain Hunt in this way is a little bit like learning to ride a bike with stabilisers: you are learning a lot about balance and you can get across the playground, but you’re not really riding a bike until those stabilisers are removed.

Whilst you can ring the ten changes of Plain Hunt Doubles by numbers it would be impossible to memorise the sequence required to ring more complicated methods by the same means. You need a different skill to do this, and it is called *Ropesight*. Ropesight is the ability to place your bell in the correct position by using *visual* clues gained by watching the other ropes. It is this ability, combined with the discipline of *Counting your Place*, that enables ringers to ring complex methods and touches - the equivalent of riding your bike properly with no stabilisers to help.

To simplify the learning of this skill the description below is divided into five parts: Counting your place, Hunting up, Hunting down, Leading and Listening. These five parts correspond to the stages through which most learners pass whilst acquiring Ropesight.

Counting your place

It is very important that you should know what place you are in every time you pull your rope. Begin by ringing the bell you feel most happy on but, in addition to remembering the order of the bells to follow, say to yourself the place that you are in at each stroke. Thus, using the treble as an example, as you leave rounds say to yourself: “seconds over the second” meaning that you are in seconds place (the second bell to ring) following bell number two. By careful examination of the diagram above you can work out what to say to yourself for each stroke in turn. The complete list for the course is shown below:

Seconds over the second
Thirds over the fourth
Fourths over the fifth
Fifths over the third
Fifths over the second
Fourths over the fourth
Thirds over the fifth
Seconds over the third
Lead
Lead

A similar examination will reveal the list for any other bell.

After you have rung a number of courses of Plain Hunt Doubles counting your place at every stroke you will begin to remember which bell to follow at each stroke, not so much by its number but by its position in the tower. This is the time to stop saying to yourself the number of the bell that you follow and to say only the place that you are in. Thus, you will say to yourself:

SECONDS, THIRDS, FOURTHS, FIFTHS, FIFTHS, FOURTHS, THIRDS, SECONDS, LEAD, LEAD.

Hunting up

By examining the diagram for Plain Hunt Doubles you will notice that, whilst hunting up, the bell that you follow in any one row is the bell that followed you in the row before. Thus, if you can see which bell follows you in any one row you know *from that moment* which bell to follow in the next row. How then do you pick out this bell?

First, make sure that you are standing in such a way that you can see all the other ropes. Assuming that you are ringing the treble, you start by moving into seconds place over the second as this is the only bell that can move into lead from rounds. The moment that you have pulled your rope to put you into seconds place over the second **take your eyes off the second and look at the other three ropes**. The one that is to follow you will be the first of these three to pull. If you compare the height of the ringers' hands on these three ropes, the lowest hands will be those ringing the bell that is to follow you. It matters not what number bell it is; to you it is just the one with the lowest hands. This then is the bell to follow on the next stroke. As soon as you pull over that bell in thirds place, immediately cast your eyes onto the remaining two ropes and again pick out the one with the lowest hands. This is the bell that you will follow in fourths place. When ringing in fourths place there will only be one bell left above you and this you follow when you ring in fifths place.

WHEN HUNTING UP, FOLLOW THE LOWEST OF THE ROPES THAT FOLLOWED YOU THE PREVIOUS STROKE

Hunting Down

When you first start learning to hunt up by Ropesight it will be easier if you continue to hunt down by numbers. However, once you can see the ropes whilst hunting out you can learn how to hunt down in a similar way.

From your first blow in fifths place you now have to strike for a second time in this position. The bell to follow will be the last of the four to ring in front of you. If you compare the height of the ringers' hands on these four ropes, the one with the highest hands will be the one ringing the last of the four. It matters not what number bell it is; to you it is just the one with the highest hands.

This then is the bell to follow. As soon as you have pulled your rope in this position **take your eyes off the bell you followed and look at the other three ropes**. Your blow in fourths place will be over the bell with the highest hands of these three. As you pull your rope in this position, take your eyes off the rope you followed and watch the remaining two. Your blow in thirds place will be over the bell with the highest hands of these two. Your blow in seconds place will be over the remaining bell.

WHEN HUNTING DOWN, FOLLOW THE HIGHEST OF THE ROPES BELOW YOU

Leading

When you lead at hand stroke you must take your lead from the **last** bell to ring in the previous row. This bell will still be pulling at back stroke. Thus, the bell to lead from will be the one with the **highest** hands of those still pulling at back stroke. Watch the hands of the ringer of this bell carefully and pull just after the point when their hands are at their lowest and have started to rise again to catch the sally at hand stroke. This ensures an open hand stroke lead.

To lead at back stroke, look for the **highest** hands of those still pulling at hand stroke. Pull your rope when these hands have dropped about a foot - the same sort of distance that you leave to follow a bell on the same stroke when you are ringing rounds.

LEAD FROM THE HIGHEST ROPE ON THE OPPOSITE STROKE

Listening

Timing your strokes by watching the other ropes is called *Ropesight* though it can be helpful to think of it as *ropes' height*. Looking at the other ropes and the ringers' hands helps you to work out when to pull but it does not tell you whether you got it right or not. That you can only do by listening. Get into the habit of listening to the sound of your bell and judging whether the gap between the previous bell and your bell is too short (you pulled too soon), too long (you pulled too late) or just right. Use this information to correct the timing of your pull on the next stroke.

Once Ropesight has been acquired it is relatively easy to extend your ringing to hunting the treble to any plain doubles method or to hunting on a greater number of bells. To help you extend your ringing to Plain Hunt Minor (six bells) here is the complete course including the path of the treble.

<u>1</u>	2	3	4	5	6
2	1	4	3	6	5
2	4	1	6	3	5
4	2	6	1	5	3
4	6	2	5	1	3
6	4	5	2	3	1
6	5	4	3	2	1
5	6	3	4	1	2
5	3	6	1	4	2
3	5	1	6	2	4
3	1	5	2	6	4
1	3	2	5	4	6
<u>1</u>	2	3	4	5	6