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RINGCRAFT
MALLET & MALLET ROLL

Sandra Eithun

Scored for Handbells (2-3 Octaves)

RingCraft

Building Technique through Music

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† and †

Mallet and Mallet Roll

by Sandra Eithun

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Titles can be learned in any order. They are offered here in the suggested progression.

To accommodate 2- and 3-octave groups, the pieces have been written so that you simply play the bells you have in your ensemble. 2-octave choirs will be playing a satisfying musical piece without the higher or lower notes that 3-octave groups add.

Recommended Bell Assignments

2 Octaves (8 ringers). From low to high, each ringer is assigned 2 consecutive notes; except for the highest ringer, who is assigned only 1 note (G6)

3 Octaves (11 ringers). From low to high, each ringer is assigned 2 consecutive notes.

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General Instructional Guidelines for RingCraft: Mallet and Mallet Roll

Music in this collection is Level 1, indicating no division of the beat. Counting is of paramount importance in bell ringing. Count and clap every piece before playing. Use 1-1-1-1 for four quarter notes, 1-2 for half notes, 1-2-3 for dotted half notes, and 1-2-3-4 for whole notes. Once this is secure, move to 1-2-3-4 counting in each measure. Rests are equally important. Damp bells precisely on the rest. It is highly recommended to begin with slow practice under the marked tempo and to count out loud. If there are areas that need extra rehearsal, isolate and drill those measures separately. An elementary level of pitch recognition is essential for ringing handbells. If needed, spend time teaching musicians note names on the music staff. Good ringing begins with music literacy. This collection employs different voicing: two voices may be placed on the same staff and rung simultaneously. The duration of each voice is determined by stem direction. Durations are not additive, but simultaneous. When specific techniques are indicated above or below a note, the technique impacts only the notes with the same stem direction. Notes with the opposite stem direction are unaffected unless specifically instructed otherwise.

Primary Technique: Mallet Technique

Good mallet technique is essential for creating clear, resonant attacks and controlled dynamics on handbells. Create a fulcrum with the thumb and index finger (near the middle joint) Hold the mallet about one third of the way from the butt end of the mallet with fingers gently wrapped around the mallet so the wrist can move freely. Using primarily the wrist and back fingers, strike the bell on the outside of the casting near the lip, mirroring where the clapper would naturally strike on the inside. This produces the most characteristic tone.

- For piano and softer dynamics, strikes should come from 1–2 inches above the bell.
- For forte and louder passages, mallet height should increase to 3–4 inches.

Always aim for a clean, centered stroke that allows the bell to resonate naturally.

Secondary Technique: Mallet Rolls

Mallet rolls imitate sustained sound on handbells and should be performed with even, consistent single strokes. Evenness of attack is more important than speed—roll speeds may vary between players to achieve a balanced, seamless sound across the ensemble. Maintain a comfortable wrist motion and adjust roll speed only as needed for dynamic and intensity shaping. Crescendos and decrescendos are achieved primarily by mallet height, not speed.

“Allegro”

This cheerful and animated piece requires ringers to demonstrate clear dynamic contrast while using mallets throughout. Success depends on precise mallet height adjustments: small strokes (1–2 inches) for soft dynamics and higher strokes (3–4 inches) for louder passages. Measure 17 includes mallet rolls—focus on evenness of touch, not speed, and allow players to roll at slightly different speeds to create a smooth, unified texture.

“Wildflower”

Every note in this gentle piece is malleted, providing an excellent opportunity to refine consistent mallet sound. New skills include treble bell mallet rolls and shaping long crescendos and decrescendos. Remember: the dynamic is controlled by how high the mallet is lifted, and rolls must remain even and controlled to sustain the musical line.

Theme from “O Mio Babbino Caro”

This expressive arrangement features a ringing melody supported by a malleted accompaniment. Ringers should carefully balance their mallet technique so the melody always projects above the accompaniment line. Aim for a warm, supportive mallet tone that enhances, but never overshadows, the lyrical primary voice.

“I’ve Got Peace Like a River”

This setting gives the upper trebles a great opportunity to showcase clarity and control in mallet technique. Treble ringers should strike near the outside lip of the bell for maximum resonance and choose mallets thoughtfully to maintain consistent attack and tone quality. For the smoothest sound, use one mallet type throughout, or at most two similar mallets, to keep the timbre matched across the top voice.

“Whispers of Rain”

This original work allows every position to alternate between ringing and malleting, creating a varied and evocative soundscape. Mallet selection is crucial in this piece so that different voices complement rather than contrast each other. The piece paints a delicate picture of falling raindrops—some gentle, some more insistent—through sensitive malleting and well matched tone color.

**You can listen to “Allegro’ K3” and “I’ve Got Peace Like a River”
by following the QR codes or URL.**



“Allegro” K3
bit.ly/ringcraft-allegro



“I’ve Got Peace Like a River”
bit.ly/ringcraft-peace

“Allegro” K3

for Handbells (2 or 3 Octaves)

Focus: Malleting cleanly and accurately as a group incorporating the dynamic variations.

2 or 3 octaves
Handbells used: 20, (30)

optional

optional

2 octave choirs omit notes in ().

W. A. Mozart, 1756-1791
arr. Sandra Eithun

Cheerful, animated, ♩ = 124-136

1 2 3 4 5

f

(mallet all staccato notes on padded table)

6 7 8 9 10

mf *mp* *f*

11 12 13 14 15

mp

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16 17 18 19 20

f *mf*

This system contains measures 16 through 20. Measure 16 starts with a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a common time signature. It features a melody of quarter notes in the treble and a bass line of quarter notes in the bass. A dynamic marking of *f* (forte) is placed below the bass line. A repeat sign is at the end of measure 16. Measure 17 begins with a double bar line and a key signature change to one sharp (F#). The melody continues with quarter notes, and the bass line has a more complex rhythmic pattern with eighth notes. A dynamic marking of *mf* (mezzo-forte) is placed below the bass line. Measures 18, 19, and 20 continue with similar melodic and harmonic structures.

21 22 23 24 25

This system contains measures 21 through 25. The notation continues from the previous system, with the treble clef and key signature of one sharp. The melody consists of quarter notes, and the bass line provides harmonic support with various rhythmic patterns.

26 27 28 29 30

mf *mp*

This system contains measures 26 through 30. A dynamic marking of *mf* (mezzo-forte) is placed below the bass line in measure 26. In measure 29, there is a circled note in the treble clef. A dynamic marking of *mp* (mezzo-piano) is placed below the bass line in measure 29. The notation continues with quarter notes in both staves.

31 32 33 34 35

p

This system contains measures 31 through 35. A dynamic marking of *p* (piano) is placed below the bass line in measure 35. A hairpin crescendo symbol is shown above the bass line, starting in measure 34 and ending in measure 35. The notation concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 35.

Wildwood Flower

for Handbells (2 or 3 Octaves)

Focus: Entire ensemble malleting lightly and cleanly within the *mp* and *mf* range.

2 or 3 octaves
Handbells used: 15, (22)

optional

optional

2 octave choirs omit notes in ().

TRADITIONAL
arr. Sandra Eithun

Light and steady, ♩ = ca. 108

mp

(mallet all staccato notes on padded table)

mf

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Musical notation for measures 15-19. The score is in treble and bass clefs with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). Measure numbers 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19 are indicated above the treble staff. The music consists of chords and melodic lines in both hands.

Musical notation for measures 20-24. The score is in treble and bass clefs with a key signature of two sharps. Measure numbers 20, 21, 22, 23, and 24 are indicated above the treble staff. Dynamics include *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *mf* (mezzo-forte). A large watermark "Preview Only" is overlaid on the page.

Musical notation for measures 25-29. The score is in treble and bass clefs with a key signature of two sharps. Measure numbers 25, 26, 27, 28, and 29 are indicated above the treble staff. The music continues with chords and melodic lines in both hands.

Musical notation for measures 30-34. The score is in treble and bass clefs with a key signature of two sharps. Measure numbers 30, 31, 32, 33, and 34 are indicated above the treble staff. Dynamics include *mp*. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 34.

Theme from "O Mio Babbino Caro"

(From the opera "Gianni Schicchi")

for Handbells (2 or 3 Octaves)

Focus: Malleted handbells in the lower range as an accompaniment to the rung melody above.

2 or 3 octaves

Handbells used: 16, (23)

optional

optional

2 octave choirs omit notes in ().

Giacomo Puccini, 1858-1924

arr. Sandra Eithun

Soft and gentle, $\text{♩} = 100-104$

1 2 R 3 4 5

mp

(mallet all staccato notes on padded table)

6 7 8 9 10

mf

11 12 13 14 15 LV

mp

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16 R 17 18 19 LV 20 R

21 22 23 24 25

26 27 28 * 29 30

mf

(1st time) *mp*
(2nd time) *mf*

31 32 33 34 35 36 TD

rit. e dim. (second time)

p

* The cue-sized G6 is rung only on the repeat.

I've Got Peace Like a River

for Handbells (2 or 3 Octaves)

Focus: Melody on malleted handbells in upper treble.

2 or 3 octaves
Handbells used: 17, (25)

optional

optional

2 octave choirs omit notes in ().

PEACE LIKE A RIVER

Traditional

arr. Sandra Eithun

Calm, tranquil, ♩ = ca. 100

1 LV

2

3

4

mp

(mallet all staccato notes on padded table)

5

6

7

8

9

R

R

LV

10

11

12

13

LV

LV

R

R

mf

LV

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14 15 16 17 18

LV R

19 20 21 22

LV *mp* R (*cresc. 2nd time*) (2nd time) *mf* (optional repeat)

23 24 25 26

27 28 29 30 31

rit. *mp*

Whispers of Rain

for Handbells (2 or 3 Octaves)

Focus: A study in stem direction with mallets in alternating registers in a soft dynamic.

2 or 3 octaves

Handbells used: 15, (22)

2 octave choirs omit notes in ().

Sandra Eithun

Soft and light, ♩ = ca. 104

(mallet all staccato notes on padded table)

* mm. 5-14 mallet all notes G5 and lower

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15 16 17 18 19 *

R
mp (in mm. 15-18, all pitches are rung)
LV

20 21 22 23 24

LV LV LV

25 26 27 28 29

mf R *mp* LV

(the rain is slowly and quietly ending)

30 31 32 33 34

rit. poco a poco
R *p*

* From m. 19 to the end, mallet all notes A5 and above.



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