

2023 HMA Area 2  
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**PPADDLE Your Way to a Musical Performance**  
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As a director of a ringing ensemble, there is an easy acronym for you to remember as you strive to achieve the most musical results with your handchime choir of any level. Most of the letters of this acronym are attributed to Don Allured, who was one of the early leaders of the ringing movement and taught us these points to remember as we educate and direct our choirs.

Precision is on the mark in an ensemble! Getting your ensemble to play together precisely on the beat separates excellence from mediocrity. Work with your ringers in preparing for the beat so that their chords sound together and do not imitate an arpeggio. It is important to have your ensemble work as one rather than a group of individuals. Ringing together on the beat requires physical practice for coordination and muscle memory, anticipation of the beat through breath and unified motion throughout the choir. Unified motion can be defined as ringers moving their arms in the same height or plane and all at the same tempo.

Pulse brings your music to life.

Accuracy in ringing the correct notes and rhythms is what it is the most significant part of a great performance. Allow enough rehearsal time so that your ringers can learn the notes accurately and with confidence so that there are none missing.

Duration of the note increases musicality. Musical ringing is about giving each note it's full duration so that there are legato lines in the melody, counter-melody and harmony throughout. Cheating the beat just because or to get to another handchime does not create a beautiful, rich sound. When preparing the score, the director should review any handchime changes to make sure that they can be accomplished as musically as possible.

Dynamic contrast is key to your music becoming a master work. So often, the range of dynamics that we use is restricted. Since we have limited sonorities within our handchime set, we should use dynamics and their effects such as crescendo and diminuendo to create a larger landscape of sound. Encourage your ringers to expand their sound limits in high and low directions.

Legato Ringing - Arm motion is the breath support for the handchime. So many of us come to ringing from singing and we recognize that a good singer uses

breath to form and support their sound. In ringing, the snap of our wrist initiates the sound of the handchime but it is how we move the handchime through the air once it is ringing that determines the musicality of the tonal response. How we decide to move the instrument through the air decides how it will sound.

Emotion is key to music. Encourage your ringers to put themselves into the music. With their hearts and spirits revealed, their music will be like none other.

Remembering to *ppaddle* your way through the music is one way to ensure that your music will ebb and flow to the best possible performance!