

Stedman

When learning any new method, it is a good idea to ask people who already know the method for any special terminology or tips. In the case of Stedman, this is very important. Stedman is a fun method to ring and one whose construction is interesting to study and pull apart. However, because it is a principle, many of the standard aids to memorization (and to ringing) do not apply. As a matter of fact, trying to use them may actually make the method more difficult to learn.

“Place bells” do not really exist in Stedman, and trying to learn the method in terms of place bells is more difficult than learning it “by the work.”

The treble is just another working bell, so there are no “leads,” and the treble cannot be used as a common reference point.

Coursing order (and course and after bells) is also not a constant, common reference point.

Points to note about Stedman are:

It is divided into six-change blocks called **sixes**.

There are 2 varieties of sixes, **quick** and **slow**, which alternate throughout the method.

The work of each bell is divided into **front work** (in the 1st 3 places) and **dodging**, or **back work** (in the odd dodging pairs above 3rds, i.e., in 4-5, 6-7, 8-9, 10-11, etc., depending on the number of bells being rung).

There are 2 varieties of front work: the **quick work** (which is 1 six long), and the **slow work** (which is 5 sixe long). In the plain course, each bell performs one type of front work, then does the up dodging work in each dodging position, the down dodging work, and the other type of front work, which is followed by another set of the up dodging work and the down dodging work. Some bells do their quick work first, others their slow work first.

One six is spent in each dodging position before moving on to the next dodging position (or to the front work if the last dodging position was 4-5 down). The dodging in each dodging position is **double-dodging**. For example, when you come out of the front, you hunt up to 5ths place, dodge back to 4, hunt again to 5, dodge back a second time to 4, hunt to 5, then on to 6 and 7.

The method starts in the **middle** of a **quick** six, actually, rounds is the 4th row of a six, so the first handstroke when you start the method is the 5th row of the six. The plain course

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ends, as you'd expect, on the 4th row of a quick six. [Note that because Stedman is a principle, with the treble being equal to the other bells, and with no "leads" as there are in Plain Bob and other methods, touches can end on **any** row of **either** a quick of a slow six.]

Some additional information, that may contribute to an understanding of Stedman though it may not help in initial learning.

The front work is made up of plain hunting by the 3 bells in the 1st 3 positions. This hunting alternates between the "right hunting" (i.e., hunting that produces hand-and-back leads) which produces the quick sixes, and the "wrong hunting" (i.e., hunting that produces back-and-hand leads) which produces the slow sixes.

Because the slow work is 5 sixes long, and because slow and quick sixes alternate, it's clear that although a bell is "doing its slow work" or is "in the slow," some of this slow work is made up of quick sixes.

The nature of sixes never changes, and quick and slow sixes always alternate. Thus, because all dodging **in the plain course** keeps you out of the front for an even number of sixes, you will always go into the front the **opposite** way from how you came out. This alternation of the sixes also means that if a call or series of calls keeps you out of the front for an odd number of sixes, you will go into the front the **same** way you came out.

To learn Stedman, you should start by basic memorizing:

- Learn the quick work. This is easy – it's simply plain hunting from 3rds place to 1st place. Remember that this is **right** hunting, so you lead hand-and-back.
- Learn the slow work by first understanding the verbal description of the work and then memorizing this verbal description so that it becomes almost a chant **that you can rattle off without thinking**.

3rds, a whole pull wrong, blow in 2nds, and a whole pull right;
3rds, snap right; 3rds, snap wrong; 3rds, a whole pull right,
blow in 2nds, and a whole pull wrong; 3rds and out.

It is **critical** that you know which blows at lead are right and which are wrong, as well as which are full leads and which are point leads. While you may want to note whether 3rds is made hand-and-back or back-and-hand, it is not necessary and should **not** be thrown into your chant. If you keep the blows in 1st place correct, those in the other positions will fall into place naturally.

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- Don't worry about memorizing where the sixes break up the slow work at this point. You will eventually want to learn this, but usually it's too confusing at first.
- Decide on a way to keep yourself dodging for the right number of blows in each dodging position. Some people think of the dodging simply as the double-dodging which it is. However, to decrease the likelihood of miscounting the number of dodges when you start ringing touches, it's better to think of the dodging in each position as 3 pairs of 2 blows each (e.g., 6-7, 6-7, 6-7), or as 3 whole pulls (hand-back, hand-back, hand-back).

[For Triples and above, if you're dodging in the highest dodging position (6-7 in Triples), a touch can cause you to keep dodging for several consecutive sixes, and while each six may be made up of double-dodging, the combination of say 3 such sixes of double-dodging totals 8 dodges. Rather than worrying about the total number of dodges, if dodging up in this situation, you'd think (6-7, 6-7, 6-7), (6-7, 6-7, 6-7), (6-7, 6-7, 6-7).]

- Remember that in the plain course, after each type of work in the front, you double-dodge in each dodging position up, then in each dodging position down, and then go back into the front **the opposite way from how you came out** (i.e., the opposite way from how you were last in the front).
- Decide on which bell you will first learn the start for. Probably the easiest two to start with are the 1 and the 4. The 2 and the 3 start in the middle of the slow work, so that it is harder to get a sense of the whole flow of the slow work if you start with one of them. In theory you should know the starts for all bells, but in Stedman this is difficult at first.

Here are some rules that help when ringing Stedman. You may be able to use or notice some of these fairly early on, but don't worry if they don't leap out at you. As you ring more of the method, it will become easier to see what is happening around you. Again, when first learning the method, concentrate on the points above. If you can also learn these rules, fine, but they're not essential at first.

When dodging in 4-5 (either up or down), each blow in 4ths is over a different bell. Each blow in 5ths is over the same bell. If you are dodging 4-5 up, someone else is dodging 4-5 down with you. You will strike that bell each time **you're** in 5ths, and it will strike you each time **it** is in 5ths.

When dodging in positions above 4-5, each blow in the lower position is over the same bell, and each blow in the higher position is over a different "same bell." For example, if you're dodging 6-7 up, each blow in 6ths is over the bell who is dodging 4-5 down, and

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each blow in 7ths is over the bell who is dodging 6-7 down, the bell with whom you're said to be dodging.

When dodging in 4-5 down, notice the bell that you strike in your first blow in 4ths. If you strike this bell your 1st blow in thirds on your way in, you will go in slow. If you strike a different bell, you will go in quick. Note that if you're unsure which of the 3 front bells you struck on your first blow in 4ths, you can still figure it out if you can see which 2 you strike in the remaining blow in 4ths. Since each blow in 4ths is over a different bell, and you know which 3 bells are below you, elimination tells you which was the first one struck.

Point for the bell who pointed for you. That is, if you notice the bell who points wrong for you (in first place) when you are making your 1st point blow in 2nds (in your first whole turn), you'll know who to turn from lead when you make your handstroke point. The converse is also true. If you notice the bell for whom you point wrong, you'll know who will point right for you during your last whole turn.

To figure out in a plain course whether a bell is to go in quick or slow its first time in, starting with the 3-4 pair, alternate slow, quick, slow, quick, . . . till each pair is covered. Start with the 3-4 because it's easy to remember that the 4 goes in slow, since it's the 1st bell to go into the front. Thus counting off the pairs for cinquies produces the following:

1 2	3 4	5 6	7 8	9 0	E T	
\\	\\	\\	\\	\\		
S	Q	S	Q	S		(obviously, bells 3 and 12 can be disregarded)

A mnemonic (from Ann Martin from an Englishman) for helping to remember the nature of the sixes in the slow: think of the 5 sixes that make up the slow work as the five days of the week (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday). Monday, Wednesday, Friday are slow sixes; Tuesday and Thursday are quick sixes.

After the initial memorizing that gets you started on Stedman, you should move on to learning the points at which the slow work is broken into sixes. This helps when the conductor is putting you right. If you listen when Stedman is being rung, you will sometimes hear the conductor say "new six starts **here**," or "slow six," or quick six." If you know where the six breaks are in the slow work, and the nature of each six, these instructions can help you right yourself when you get lost.

<u>Slow Work Sixes</u>	<u>Nature</u>	<u>Work</u>
1	slow	3rds, lead wrong, blow in 2nds

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2	quick	lead right, 3rds (hunt down to)
3	slow	point right, 3rds, point wrong
4	quick	(hunt up to) 3rds, lead right,
5	slow	blow in 2nds, lead wrong, 3rds and out

I think that most people are happy with the 1st six, key the 2nd one off of its starting right lead, clearly delimit the 3rd one with its starting handstroke point and ending backstroke point, key the 4th one as starting immediately after the backstroke point and ending with the whole pull right, and know that the 5th one starts with the point in 2nds and the wrong lead.

In addition, you should become more aware of how the bells in the front work together. When you go into the slow, the bell you turn from lead is in its last six of the slow work. The other bell is in the slow with you is in its 3rd six of the slow work. This bell, who points for you at the end of the six, will be in the front with you for 2 more sixes, so you only need to find one new bell to work with in these 2 sixes. From this, you can also see that the bell who is the “new” bell when **you** are in **your** 3rd six will work with you for the last 2 sixes as well.

Sometimes when ringing Stedman Triples or above, you will hear the conductor say “your course bell is 5” (or whatever it may be) when you are dodging down in 6-7 or above. What good is this? In the down dodging, the bell who is dodging parallel to you one dodging position below you is considered your course bell. This may give you someone besides the person with whom you are dodging to key off. In addition, because this bell is one six ahead of you when it gets to the front, it will go into the front the opposite way from you, so if this bell is right, it may give you a clue as to how to go into the front.

Touches

This will address touches in Stedman Triples and above, which follow the same rules. Touches in Stedman Doubles are different and will be talked about separately.

Both bobs and singles are used in Stedman Triples and above. They take place in the highest 3 dodging positions, thus in triples the bells dodging 4-5 up, 6-7 up, and 6-7 down are affected, and in caters the bells dodging in 6-7 up, 8-9 up, and 8-9 down are affected.

Calls are made at the handstroke that is the 5th row of a six, and they take effect at the handstroke that is the 1st row of the next six.

<u>Call</u>	<u>Dodging</u>	<u>Effect</u>
Bob	4-5 up	Make 5ths, double-dodge 4-5 down, and go in as you normally would, i.e., the opposite of how you came out.

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Thus, you complete your six dodging 4-5 up, and then, instead of going on to dodge 6-7 up, you stay in 5ths at the beginning of the new six, which places you in the 4-5 down dodging position for that six. Because you have been dodging for an even number of dodges, you go in **as you normally would**, the **opposite** of how you came out.

6-7 up Continue dodging 6-7 up for another six, then lie behind and do your 6-7 down dodging. This call has the effect of adding a six worth of dodging to your dodging work. You are therefore dodging for an **odd** number of sixes, and so when you get to the front, you will go in **differently** from how you normally would, that is, you will go in **the same way you came out**.

6-7 down Continue dodging 6-7 down for another six, then move on down to 4-5 down. Like the bell in 6-7 up, this call adds a six worth of dodging to your work, so you will go in **differently** from how you normally would, that is, you will go in the **same way you came out**.

Single 4-5 up Same as at a bob.

6-7 up Unaffected! Make 7ths and begin dodging 6-7 down as you normally would. Go in as you normally would, the opposite of how you came out.

6-7 down At the start of the new six, **make 6ths**, and start your 6-7 up dodging again. The effect of this is to restart you dodging at the back, and so to add 2 sixes of dodging. You will therefore have dodged for an even number of sixes and so go in as you normally would, the opposite of how you came out.

Remember, in triples, you are unaffected at a call if you are in the front or dodging 4-5 down when the call is made. Although the bell dodging in 6-7 up is also unaffected at a Single, it is a good idea to think of your lying in 7ths as part of the pattern of a single since it rather forces the bell dodging 6-7 down to place 6ths.

The above rules appear fairly straightforward. However, since calls can be made in any six. It is possible (and common) to have calls made in consecutive sixes, sometime 2, sometimes 3, sometimes more sixes in a row. In this situation, although only bobs are called, **if you are in 6-7**

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when the call is made, you may end up being kept at the back an even number of sixes (rather than the odd number of sixes when only one bob is called). If so, you go into the front the opposite of how you came out. And what if an **odd** number of bobs is called? An odd number of singles? An even number of singles? Both bobs and singles?

The rule for singles is: no matter how many singles you are affected by, you go in the opposite of how you came out.

The rule for bobs is: if you are dodging in 6-7 and are affected by an **even** number of bobs, go in the normal way, the opposite of how you came out. If you are affected by an **odd** number of bobs, go in the same as you came out.

[Note that these bobs affecting you need not be consecutive – one bob might be called when you are dodging 6-7 up, another, when you are dodging 6-7 down, and a third when you are again dodging 6-7 down because of the second bob.]

The rule for combinations of bobs and singles is: The number of bobs determines how you go in. Thus, if affected by both bobs and singles, count the bobs in order to determine how to go in.

Because it can be easy to forget how you are to go in, especially in Caters or Cinques where there is lots of dodging in between front work, there are various ways of remembering how to go in.

The best way is to consciously think of the six breaks and to alternate between quick and slow in your mind. This is impossible at first, but after ringing Stedman for a while, it can be done.

When you are in 4-5 down, pay attention to whether bells in the front are leading right or wrong. This will tell you whether this six is a quick or a slow six. The next six, when you go in, will be the opposite of this six. [You might even start checking how people are leading when you're in 6-7 down].

See the rule at the bottom of page 3 about checking who you strike your 1st blow in 4ths over when you're in 4-5 down.

[Transcribed from a 1970s/80s document
And PDF merged w/Stedman diagram (p8)]

Stedman Triples

		Nature of six (quick or slow)						Sixes	Where each bell starts	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	7	
		2	1	3	5	4	6	7	1	
	Q	2	3	1	4	5	6	7		
		3	2	4	1	6	5	7		
	S	2	3	4	6	1	7	5		
		2	4	3	1	6	5	7		
	S	4	2	3	6	1	7	5		
		4	3	2	1	6	5	7	2	
	Q	3	4	2	6	1	7	5		
		4	3	6	2	7	1	5		
	Q	4	6	3	2	5	1	7		
		6	4	3	2	7	1	5		
	Q	6	3	4	7	2	5	1	4	
		3	6	4	2	7	1	5		
	Q	3	4	6	7	2	5	1	3	
		4	3	7	6	5	2	1		
	S	3	4	7	5	6	1	2		
		3	7	4	6	5	2	1		
	S	7	3	4	5	6	1	2		
		7	4	3	6	5	2	1	4	
	Q	4	7	3	5	6	1	2		
		7	4	5	3	1	6	2		
	Q	7	5	4	1	3	2	6		
		5	7	4	3	1	6	2		
	Q	5	4	7	1	3	2	6	3	
		4	5	7	3	1	6	2		
	Q	4	7	5	1	3	2	6	5	
		7	4	1	5	2	3	6		
	S	4	7	1	2	5	6	3		
		4	1	7	5	2	3	6		
	S	1	4	7	2	5	6	3		
		1	7	4	5	2	3	6	6	
	Q	7	1	4	2	5	6	3		
		1	7	2	4	6	5	3		
	Q	1	2	7	6	4	3	5		
		2	1	7	4	6	5	3		
	Q	2	7	1	6	4	3	5	2	
		7	2	1	4	6	5	3		
	S	7	1	2	6	4	3	5	7	
		1	7	6	2	3	4	5		
	S	7	1	6	3	2	5	4		
		6	7	1	3	2	5	4		
	S	6	1	7	2	3	4	5	8	
		1	6	7	3	2	5	4		
	Q	6	1	3	7	5	2	4		
		6	3	1	5	7	4	2		
	Q	3	6	1	5	2	4			
		3	1	6	5	7	4	2	5	
	Q	1	3	6	7	5	2	4	9	
		1	6	3	5	7	4	2		
	S	6	1	5	3	4	7	2		
		1	6	5	4	3	2	7		
	S	1	5	6	3	4	7	2		
		5	1	6	4	3	2	7		
	Q	5	6	1	3	4	7	2	10	
		5	6	4	1	2	3	7		
	Q	5	4	6	2	1	7	3		
		4	5	6	1	2	3	7		
	Q	4	6	5	2	1	7	3	6	
		6	4	5	1	2	3	7		
	Q	6	5	4	2	1	7	3	11	
		5	6	2	4	7	1	3		
	S	6	5	2	7	4	3	1		
		6	2	5	4	7	1	3		
	S	2	6	5	7	4	3	1		
		2	5	6	4	7	1	3	12	
	Q	5	2	6	7	4	3	1		
		2	5	7	6	3	4	1		
	Q	2	7	5	3	6	1	4		
		7	2	5	6	3	4	1		
	Q	7	5	2	3	6	1	4	1	
		5	7	2	6	3	4	1	13	
	S	5	2	7	3	6	1	4		
		2	5	3	7	1	6	4		
	S	5	2	3	1	7	4	6		
		5	3	2	7	1	6	4		
	Q	3	5	2	1	7	4	6		
		3	2	5	1	7	4	6	14	
	Q	2	3	5	1	7	4	6		
		3	2	1	5	4	7	6		
	Q	3	1	2	4	5	6	7		
		1	3	2	5	4	7	6		
	Q	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
		2	1	3	5	4	6	7	1	
	Q	2	3	1	4	5	6	7		

