

Handbell Conference

October 1-2, 2022

Schedule

SATURDAY	Start Time	End Time
Registration / Check-in	8:00 AM	9:00 AM
Welcome / Technique Review	9:00 AM	10:15 AM
Break	10:15 AM	10:30 AM
Breakout (Skill Building: Bass OR Battery OR Treble)	10:30 AM	11:45 AM
Lunch (catered)	11:45 AM	1:00 PM
Musicianship and Practice Techniques	1:00 PM	2:15 PM
Break	2:15 PM	2:30 PM
Breakout (Skill Building: Bass OR Battery OR Treble)	2:30 PM	3:45 PM
Break	3:45 PM	4:00 PM
Weaving	4:00 PM	5:15 PM
Dinner on your own	5:15 PM	7:00 PM
Panel Discussion	7:00 PM	8:30 PM
SUNDAY	Start Time	End Time
Welcome Back / Review of Saturday / Warm-Up	1:00 PM	2:15 PM
Break	2:15 PM	2:30 PM
Breakout (Ensemble Basics OR Bell Tree Basics)	2:30 PM	3:45 PM
Break	3:45 PM	4:00 PM
Visual Presentation	4:00 PM	5:15 PM
Dinner (catered)	5:15 PM	7:00 PM
Forté Concert	7:00 PM	8:00 PM

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Classes

Plenary Sessions

These classes are on every participant's schedule.

Technique Review

Handbells are a surprisingly intricate instrument, and it seems there is always something new to learn! Hone your knowledge of the basics and the many techniques used in handbell music as we explore the marks on the page and how to truly master them. Directors are encouraged to attend as well; proficiency in foundational skills like basic ringing techniques will enable you to help your ringers succeed.

Musicianship and Practice Techniques

Aggravating page-turns, complicated transitions, convoluted rhythms - there's never a dull moment as you learn new music! Don't fear: there are ways to overcome challenges like these in your rehearsals. This class will provide straightforward tricks and methods for tackling trouble spots in your music, so that you can minimize frustration and enjoy practice (and eventually performance)!

Weaving

Your accidentals are fast approaching, and you still haven't grown a third arm/hand. What hope is there? Weaving! Come join Forté as we teach you the not-so-mystical art of weaving. This technique is one which any ringer can conquer and allows you greater mastery of multiple bells. Directors are encouraged to attend as well; proficiency in foundational skills like this one will enable you to help your ringers succeed.

Panel Discussion (optional)

This casual panel discussion with the Forté Handbell Quartet is your opportunity to ask us anything! Ask about bell techniques, studying scores, group dynamics, or anything else, and we'll do our best to come up with good answers... or at least entertain you!

Review of Saturday/Warm-up/Coordination Games

To kick off our second day together, we will review many of the concepts we covered on Saturday and try some fun coordination games to help get our minds and bodies ready for another afternoon of ringing and learning!

Visual Presentation

Handbells are a distinctly visual instrument, enthralling audiences through both sound *and* sight. Directors and ringers are encouraged to come learn how to broaden the appeal of their performances through applying a new lens of visual unity to their ringing. Whether you've been in bells for one year or fifty, you will hear new, straightforward ideas on how to help your audience connect with your music on a new level as you turn your songs into works of art.

Breakout Sessions

Participants choose two of the three skill-building breakouts for Saturday and EITHER Ensemble Basics OR Bell Tree Basics for Sunday.

Bell Tree Basics

In this hands-on class, we will go over the basics of how to set up a bell tree, what equipment will help you be successful, and how you can integrate bell trees into your music. This is a great way to start on your bell tree journey whether you are a ringer or a director!

Ensemble Basics

Passing, weaving, displacing bells, teamwork, and creativity are important concepts for success in ensemble ringing (and they can be quite useful in full-choir ringing as well). In this class, we will explain the reasoning behind various techniques and demonstrate their usage, and then it's your turn to apply these ideas to your ringing! This class will be full of opportunities for hands-on practice.

Skill Building: Treble

Treble ringing provides some of the most exciting ringing you'll experience in any group! Fun melody lines and thrilling rhythms await anyone who loves the instrument! Come learn to navigate the treble table with confidence as we take you through the ins and outs of ringing and swapping bells cleanly and easily, the versatile world of 4-in-hand (yes, you can do it!), and many other techniques!

Skill Building: Battery

The bells in the middle of the table don't always get as much attention as the smaller bells played 4-in-hand or the larger, flashy bass bells, but playing in this region demands rhythm, attention, problem-solving, and endurance! In this class we'll look at some of the difficult situations that can crop up and how to approach them, and we will also look at how the techniques common to all positions apply to this range.

Skill Building: Bass

A confident, competent and knowledgeable bass bell ringer is of high value in any group! As a critical foundation to strong bell choirs, being assigned to the bass is not a responsibility to be taken... 'lightly!' Whether you're familiar with most spots on the table or you're venturing into the big bells for the first time, we'll show you what you need to enjoy it to the fullest! You'll learn key components for making the bells work for you, from proper ringing and malleting methods to simplifying your part before ever playing a note