

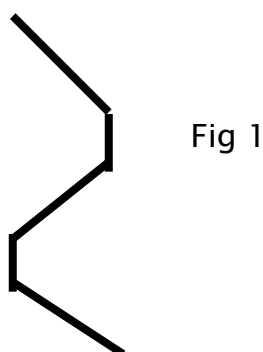
# Blue Lines For Beginners

A 'Blue Line' in ringing can be likened to a child's 'Dot-to-dot' puzzle picture book and it works in much the same way to produce a picture of what we ring. Only now we are joining figures, not dots. If you understand a blue line you can learn a method from it, without need for a lot of words

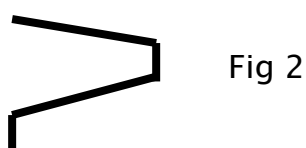
While reading these notes it will help to have pen and squared paper to hand, squared paper to keep the figures (and lines) straight on the page. Also, later on, it can help to have the Standard Methods 'Diagrams' book or the RW Diary handy, though there is no substitute for writing things out for yourself during study. To start, write out a Plain Hunt on four bells

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1 2 3 4
2 1 4 3
2 4 1 3
4 2 3 1
4 3 2 1
3 4 1 2
3 1 4 2
1 3 2 4
1 2 3 4
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
If we now draw a continuous line through all the 1's we get something like this...





Very often, to save space, when working with the line alone, ringers will squeeze it up a bit so that it looks more like this...



To interpret this...

Reading down the page, a line in this direction  indicates hunting up

A line in this direction  indicates hunting down

A line in this direction  indicates staying in the same place, in this case either leading or laying

So the instructions given by Fig 1 (or Fig 2) are that, ringing the treble and starting from lead, you will...

Hunt up

Lay

Hunt down

Lead

(In other words, the instructions for Plain Hunt)

If we repeated the diagram in a continual line we would have continual plain hunting. A better idea is to visualise Fig 2 as an endless loop, the finishing point joined up to the starting point. Now we have continual Plain Hunt, like the treble in Bob doubles – until someone calls ‘That’s All’

In Plain Hunt all the bells follow a similar path, but they start at different points on the line. Line in all the 3’s and you will get:

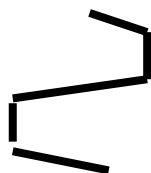


Fig 3

Visualise Fig 2 as an endless loop and you will see that Fig 3 is the same pattern, starting at a different place. It tells us that 3 starts by hunting up. Line in 2 and 4 – you will see they are similar patterns, telling you the start and path of 2 and of 4. Thus, 2 starts by leading, 4 starts by hunting down

In many methods the treble plain hunts throughout and this is shown in the ‘Diagrams’ book as a RED line – look at Plain Bob (on any number of bells) to see this. (In the RW Diary the treble’s path is traced with a thin black line.) We haven’t got to the BLUE line yet, the path of a ‘working’ bell. That comes next. It’s always been known as a blue line from the ‘Diagrams’ book first published by Jasper Whitfield Snowdon in the late 1800’s and which must have simplified change ringing for countless ringers since then. Ringers now always refer to it as a blue line, regardless of what colour pen they use to draw it!