

# What is ART and why should I go on a course?

**First and foremost, there are some really terrific ringing teachers who have never been on an ART course and whose ringers handle their bells very well. There always have been exceptional teachers, but the trouble is there aren't nearly enough of them. The aim of the Association of Ringing Teachers is to teach more ringers how to teach well, and to improve the experience of both teachers and their learners.**

The ART Training Scheme incorporates a lot of what the best ringing teachers already do, and expands this with ideas taken from other sports and activities across the world. It is relevant to teachers irrespective of their level of experience; most people leave the day course *"buzzing ... even the sceptics."* The results are evident - as one returning ringer said, "I learnt more in my first lesson on Saturday (with an ART teacher) than in the last 15 years of on and off ringing."

If an aspiring teacher has never taught anyone to handle a bell before then this course is ideal. However, to really consolidate the course material and become competent, teachers need to put it into practice as soon as possible afterwards, teaching someone to handle a bell, working alongside an experienced mentor who can support and offer help as needed. In the words of a nervous new teacher:

*"I found the course enjoyable and un-threatening, with lots of opportunity to try out techniques on easy bells with friendly colleagues. There were lots of ideas for improving learners' handling and to sort out bad habits that inevitably crop up."*

Experienced teachers can also get a lot from attending the course. From learning new ideas and tips to use in the tower straight away, sharing knowledge with those who are new to teaching and accessing the Learning the Ropes Scheme for their own ringers. Some experienced teachers who are happy to help might also be asked to mentor a less-experienced local teacher as they begin to teach. A Tower Captain who had been ringing for 48 years came away saying:

*"Was I surprised?! The course was terrific - all very logical, well laid out, well planned and terrifically delivered. Loads of little nuggets and tips, everything straightforward with easy to understand notes and booklets. Can't wait to get going now."*

ART aims to pair up new and experienced teachers who can work together after the course or organise group teaching sessions so that skills are shared and newer teachers can develop confidence with someone there to support them and help out if needed.

Any course delegate who teaches one or more people to ring whilst filling out the short lesson plans in the Teacher's Log book may wish to invite an ART Assessor along to observe their teaching. If all goes well, they will be offered accreditation and membership of ART. At this point, a delegate is considered to have completed the module. This doesn't need to be

done immediately, skill building takes time and delegates have up to 2 years from the date of their day course to complete the process.

Of course, teaching development doesn't stop with accreditation and ART members are supported by plenty of online resources, ongoing access to using the Learning the Ropes Scheme and a community of ringing teachers who all want to improve the experience of new ringers.