



# Can I go ringing safely?

## Guidance for individual ringers

You can consider going ringing provided you are not in quarantine, under instruction to self-isolate, or showing any symptoms. Ringers over 70 years of age and / or those with underlying health problems should consider the potential risks of ringing in groups; those who are in either category should be aware of the significant risks that ringing may pose to their health during the pandemic. The BAME community is also at a higher risk of infection, experiencing more severe symptoms, and a higher mortality rate.

Ringers who have previously had confirmed COVID-19 should remember that they should not ring until after they have self-isolated for the correct time. The disease can also be spread by people who are asymptomatic – no one can ever be sure whether he or she has it or not. Therefore, all of this guidance applies equally to all ringers irrespective of their personal immune status or apparent health.

Your church authorities and tower captain should have done a risk assessment together of your tower to ensure it is as safe as practical to ring while maintaining social distancing and good hygiene. Given that, you can do the following things to reduce your risk while ringing:

- Your tower captain will brief you before your ring
- Try not to touch your face as this increases the likelihood of transmission.
- Take your own hand sanitiser to the tower and use it before and after each ring, before and after touching anything
- Don't spit on or lick your hands during ringing
- Limit what you handle that others may then touch
- Stick to your own rope for the duration of a ringing session
- If you are following someone up a tight staircase, leave plenty of time and space after them
- Do not cross other people on a staircase
- Maintain safe distance from others (current government guidance is 2 metres or 1 metre with mitigations)
- Social distance is not just about you – it is about others – so respect your fellow ringers' personal space, and that of other church users
- Move away from the door so others can come in behind you
- Wear a face covering (this is mandatory in churches in England and Wales). You may want to practice raising your arms up and down in advance to make sure you are happy that you will be able to handle safely with your face covering and that it will not come off.
- Avoid raising your voice as this increases the risk of transmitting infection
- Arrive at the time you are going to ring and avoid congregating before or after outside of your household group or social support bubble

If you are not comfortable going ringing because you are in a high-risk group or more risk averse than other members of your band, you do not have to and shouldn't feel guilty about not ringing. It is a matter of personal choice. Likewise, we must try not to pressure others into anything they feel uncomfortable about.

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### Hand sanitiser

Only the makes with alcohol in (60-70%) actually work, and you should let it dry before touching a rope.

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