

bell

S2 W3

/bel/

noun [countable]

- 1** a piece of electrical equipment that makes a ringing sound, used as a signal or to get someone's attention:

ring/press the bell

He rang the bell and waited for someone to answer the door.

*She walked up the path and **rang** the **door bell**.*

a bell rings/goes

The bell went and everyone rushed out of the classroom.

- 2** a hollow metal object like a cup with a piece of metal hanging inside it, that makes a ringing noise when it moves or you shake it:

church bells

- 3 give somebody a bell (BrE)(spoken)**

to telephone someone:

I must give Vicky a bell later.

- 4** something that is shaped like a bell:

the bell of a flower

→ **alarm bells ring** AT ALARM¹ (5),

→ **as clear as a bell** AT CLEAR¹ (10),

→ DIVING BELL,

→ **ring a bell** AT RING² (4)

COLLOCATIONS – Meaning 2

verbs

a bell rings *I could hear the church bells ringing in the distance.*

ring a bell *He was ringing a big brass bell.*

a bell rings out (= it rings loudly) *The bells rang out to celebrate the end of the war.*

a bell sounds *Somewhere across the valley a bell sounded.*

a bell chimes (= it rings a certain number of times, in order to tell you the time of day) *The bells began to chime, calling people to church.*

a bell tolls (= it slowly rings with a long low sound, when someone has died) *The church bell was tolling mournfully as the carriage entered the cemetery gate.*

a bell tinkles (= a small bell rings with a gentle high sound) *We were sleeping under the stars, camel bells tinkling in a cool breeze.*

NOUN + bell

a church bell *She woke on Sunday morning to the sound of church bells.*

wedding bells (= rung when people marry in a church) *Mark and Bridget seem very happy and we expect to hear wedding bells soon.*

phrases

a peal of bells (= the sound of bells being rung several times) *From the temple he could hear the peal of bells.*

Word origin

Language: Old English

Origin: *belle*