

Ship's Clock Bells

The watch officer struck the ship's bell every half-hour to apprise the crew of the time. A single bell denoted the end of the first half-hour, and one bell was added each half-hour. Eight bells, therefore, signaled the end of each four-hour watch.

8 bells: 12:00, 4:00, 8:00

1 bell: 12:30, 4:30, 8:30

2 bells: 1:00, 5:00, 9:00

3 bells: 1:30, 5:30, 9:30

4 bells: 2:00, 6:00, 10:00

5 bells: 2:30, 6:30, 10:30

6 bells: 3:00, 7:00, 11:00

7 bells: 3:30, 7:30, 11:30

In the "Age of Sailing", time was kept using a 30-minute hourglass that was turned with each bell striking. Modern timepieces are now used, but the chime sequence remains the same to this day.