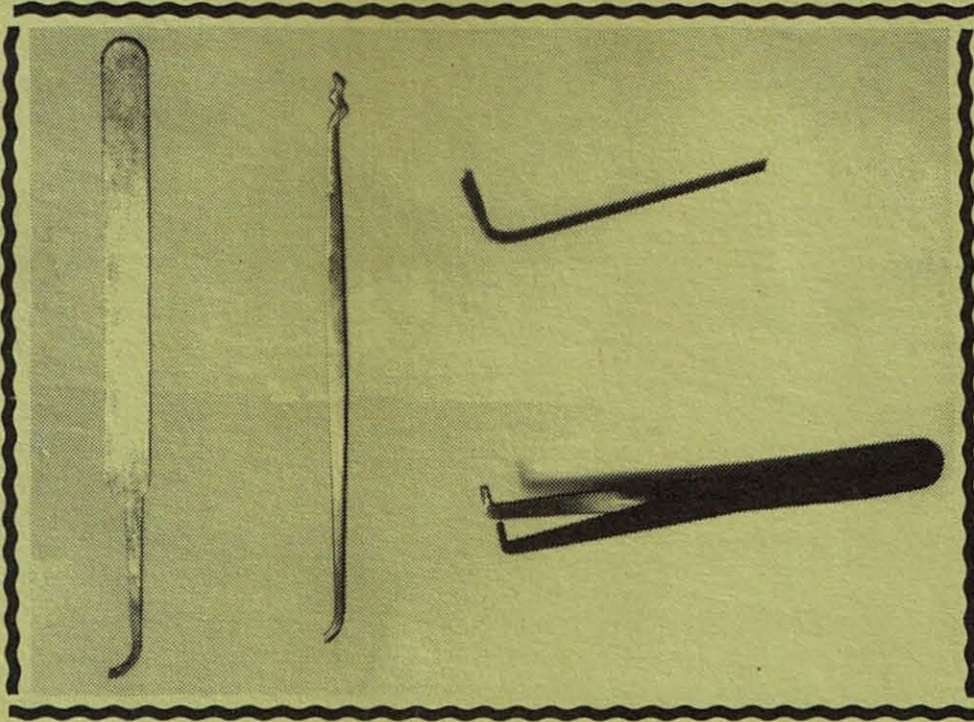
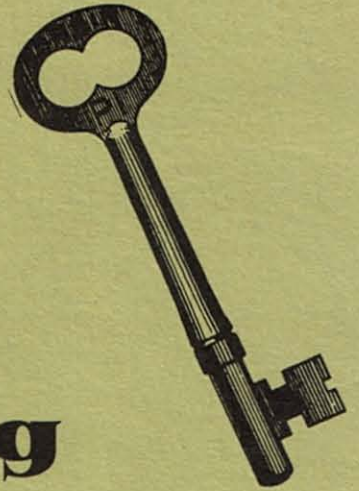




THE ILLUSTRATED
art
OF
Lock-Picking



an educational trade manual

BY

MENTOR PUBLICATIONS

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THE ILLUSTRATED ART OF LOCK-PICKING

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- Foreword -

WITHIN THE PAST FEW YEARS, SEVERAL LOCK CYLINDERS HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED WHICH APPEAR TO ALL BUT THE EDUCATED EYE AS BEING NO DIFFERENT THAN ANY OTHER CYLINDER. EVERY EXTERNAL CHARACTERISTIC OF THESE NEW CYLINDERS IS CLOSELY SIMILAR TO THOSE OF THE CONVENTIONAL PIN-TUMBLER CYLINDER. RESEMBLANCE, HOWEVER, IS WHERE THE SIMILARITY ENDS.

THE NEW CYLINDERS HAVE BEEN CREATED SPECIFICALLY TO RESIST ALL OF THE KNOWN, (AND PRESENTLY CONCEIVABLE), METHODS OF LOCK-PICKING. THEY EMPLOY VARIOUS REFINEMENTS, IMPROVEMENTS, AND MODIFICATIONS WHICH EXTEND APPRECIABLY BEYOND THE BASIC, ORIGINAL DESIGN OF THE CONVENTIONAL PIN-TUMBLER CYLINDER.

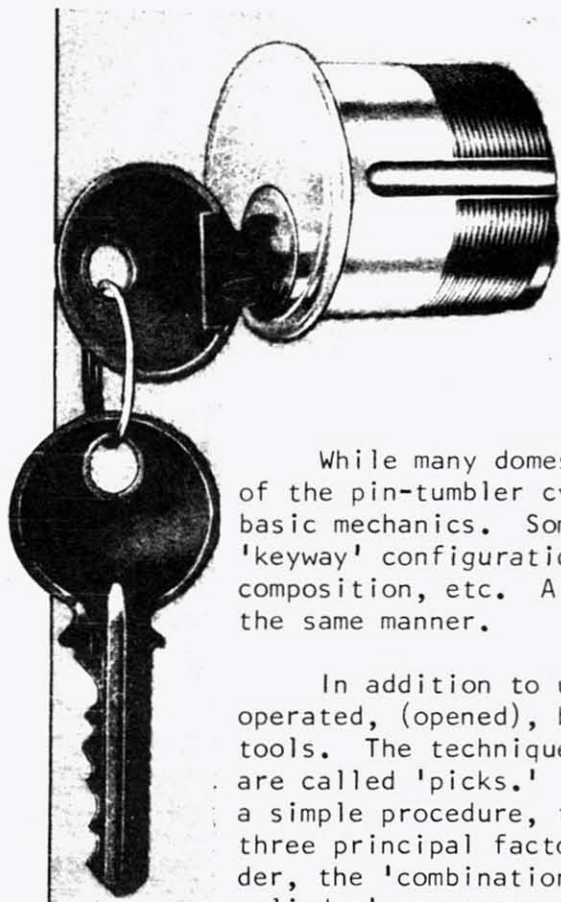
NO QUALIFIED LOCK EXPERT WOULD SAY THAT THESE NEW 'MAXIMUM SECURITY' CYLINDERS CAN NOT BE PICKED. BUT BEFORE ONE SHOULD EVEN CONSIDER APPROACHING THEIR SOPHISTICATED MECHANISMS, IT IS NECESSARY THAT A THOROUGH UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONVENTIONAL PIN-TUMBLER CYLINDER, AND COMPLETE MASTERY OF ALL KNOWN PICKING TECHNIQUES, BE DEVELOPED.

WHILE MAXIMUM SECURITY CYLINDERS ARE READILY AVAILABLE, WIDELY ADVERTISED, AND VIGOROUSLY PROMOTED BY EVERY SECTOR OF THE LOCK INDUSTRY, THEY ARE, (COMPARATIVELY), QUITE EXPENSIVE. THE COST OF A MAXIMUM SECURITY CYLINDER IS OFTEN FIVE TO EIGHT TIMES GREATER THAN THAT OF A CONVENTIONAL CYLINDER. THIS IS A SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE IN PRICE FOR SOMETHING THAT *appears* TO BE THE *same thing* TO THE AVERAGE, UNAWARE CONSUMER.

FOR THE FOREGOING REASON, THERE PRESENTLY ARE VERY FEW MAXIMUM SECURITY CYLINDERS IN GENERAL USE. BASED ON MY PERSONAL OBSERVATION, I WOULD SAY THAT ONLY 1 OUT OF APPROXIMATELY EVERY 200 CYLINDERS IS A MAXIMUM SECURITY TYPE. THE 99% MAJORITY OF THE REST ARE CONVENTIONAL PIN-TUMBLER CYLINDERS.

WHILE THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THIS MATERIAL IS TO EDUCATE THE BEGINNER LOCKSMITH IN THE TECHNIQUE OF OPENING THE PIN-TUMBLER CYLINDER, IT WILL BECOME OBVIOUS THAT THE WORKING LOCKSMITH SHOULD ENCOURAGE EACH OF HIS CUSTOMERS TO CHANGE TO A MAXIMUM SECURITY CYLINDER IN EVERY CASE WHERE VALUABLE PROPERTY, OR PERSONAL SAFETY, IS TO BE PROTECTED.

Introduction:



The conventional pin-tumbler cylinder is by far the most common and widely used key-operated locking device in existence. Although the original mechanical idea is based upon a principle used by the Ancient Egyptians, the modern version was conceived and developed by Linus Yale in the late Eighteenth Century. It is considered to be one of the most ingenious accomplishments in the entire history of locksmithing.

While many domestic and foreign manufacturers produce different brands of the pin-tumbler cylinder, there are no significant differences in the basic mechanics. Some minor differences will be found such as varying 'keyway' configurations, minute variations in component dimensions, metallic composition, etc. All pin-tumbler cylinders, however, operate in precisely the same manner.

In addition to using the proper key, this type of cylinder can be operated, (opened), by manipulating its mechanism with specially fabricated tools. The technique is popularly referred to as 'picking,' and the tools are called 'picks.' While picking the pin-tumbler cylinder is by no means a simple procedure, the given degree of difficulty will be influenced by three principal factors: The number, (amount), of pins used in the cylinder, the 'combination' of these pins, and the overall quality of the cylinder's construction.

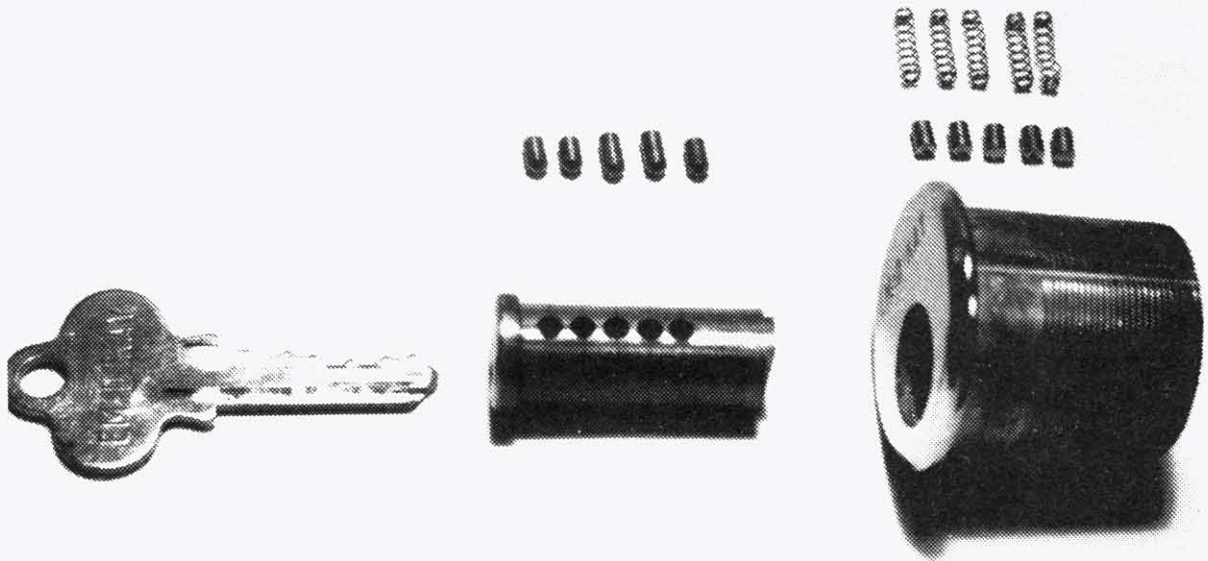
The majority of all cylinders produced contain five pins. Some have six. A few have seven. It is logical to assume that the more pins there are in a cylinder, the more difficult it will be to pick it open. This is very true. But the combination of the pins, (the staggered arrangement of pins of varying lengths), is much more significant than the number of pins. And although the factors of amount and combination of pins do affect a cylinder's ability to resist picking, the effect of these factors is seriously limited in the case of a severely worn cylinder, or a cylinder which has been poorly, or carelessly manufactured.

The quality of a cylinder, in terms of its pick-resisting potential, is determined mainly by the 'tolerances' of its component parts. That is, the degree of preciseness to which the parts fit together within the cylinder. While some cylinders are more precisely constructed than others, even the very best is not PERFECT. Every pin-tumbler cylinder, as well as any other mass-produced mechanical apparatus, possesses some degree of tolerance variation, or IMPERFECTION. As a practical demonstration of this fact, wedge the tip of a knife blade, or fingernail file, into the keyway, (keyhole), of an available pin-tumbler cylinder and firmly rotate it from side to side. Notice that the plug, (core of the cylinder), will rotate slightly off center in both directions. In cylinders of exceptionally good quality the actual degree of rotational motion will be very slight-- but it will be noticeable. In most cylinders, the distance will be about 1/32" in each direction. In cylinders of poor quality, or severely worn cylinders, there will occur movement of as much as 1/16" in each direction, and the 'feel' of this movement, or 'play,' will be comparatively loose and sloppy.

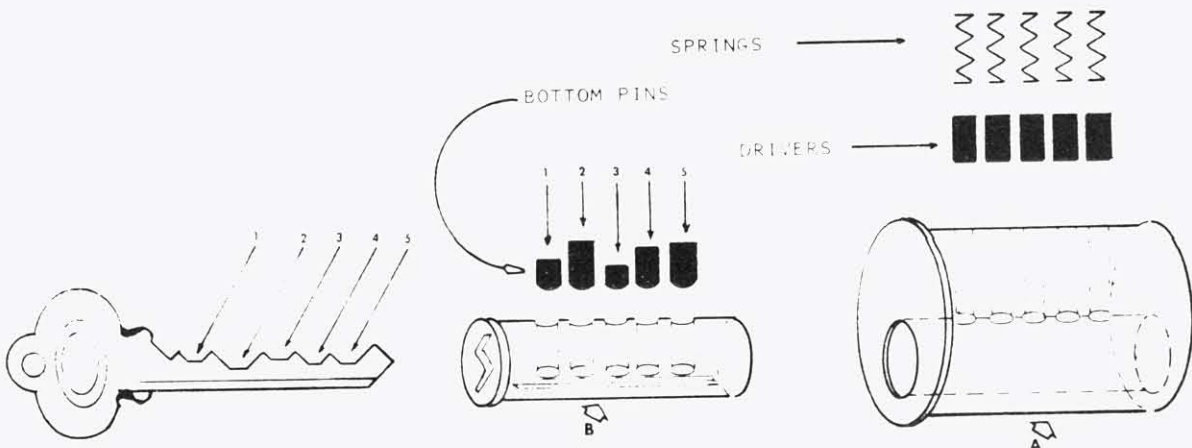
By 'testing' a cylinder in the foregoing manner, its potential to resist picking can

be anticipated. While the number of pins, and their combination, are the elements which resist the picking procedure, the tolerances of the cylinder enable you to overcome them. The greater the tolerances, the more 'play' there will be. Thus, the easier it is to 'feel' for certain activity with the cylinder's mechanism.

Operation of the Pin-Tumbler Cylinder:



Shown in the above photograph is a dis-assembled pin-tumbler cylinder. All of the component parts are visible, and are arranged to compare with the illustration seen below.



Shown are the 'Housing,' (A); the 'Plug,' (B); the 'Bottom Pins;' the 'Drivers;' and the 'Springs.' This is the parts nomenclature of the pin-tumbler cylinder which is recognized throughout the locksmithing industry, and as it will be used in this material.

Observe that the drivers are very similar to the pins. (The drivers are sometimes called 'top pins.')

In the majority of cylinders, the drivers are of uniform length. The most visible difference between the drivers and the pins is that the drivers are flat on both ends. Notice that the PINS are of varying lengths. The specific variation of pin lengths constitutes the combination of the cylinder. The diameters of both pins and drivers will always be the same. Notice also that the length of each pin conforms inversely with the depth of its corresponding 'bitting,' (cut), on the key: (Observe 1,2,3,4,5) The shorter the pin, the more shallow will be the bitting on the key. The longer the pin, the deeper the bitting. When each of the pins are fitted into their corresponding bittings on the proper key, their upper, (flat), ends will align horizontally.

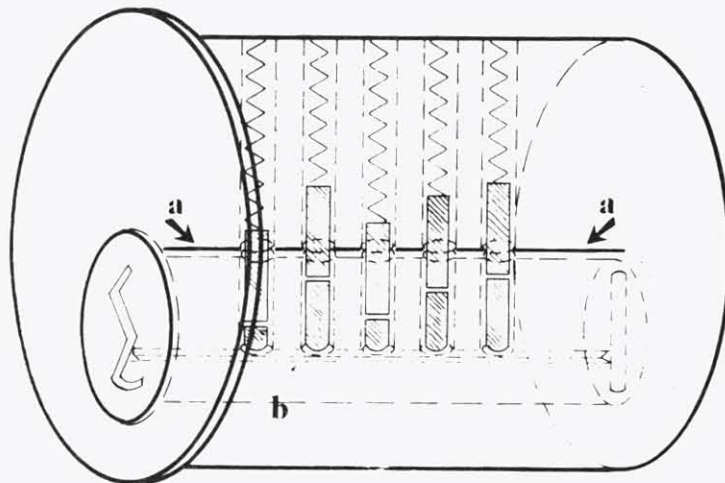
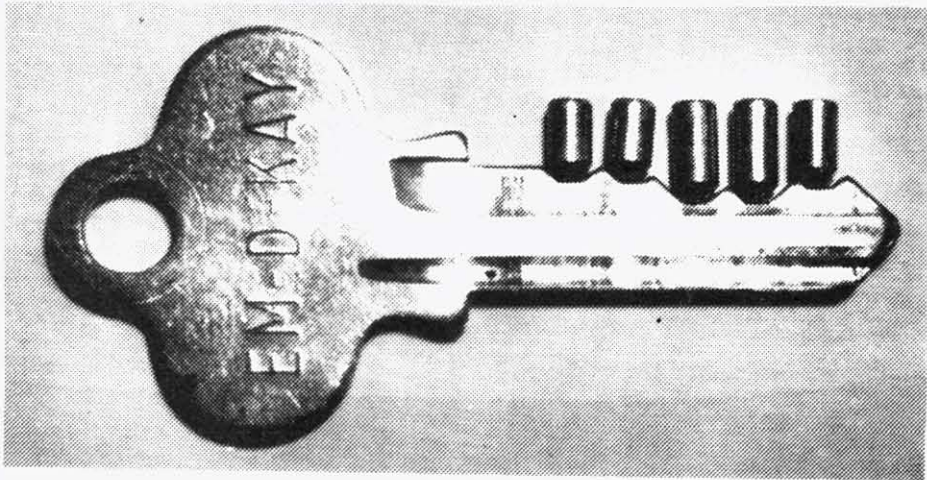


ILLUSTRATION 2

Illustration 3, on the foregoing page, depicts an assembled cylinder. Examine this drawing until you can identify the individual segments and parts. The assembled cylinder is constructed as follows: The springs are inserted into the individual 'Driver Chambers,' (bored holes), of the housing, and the drivers are loaded in behind them. The 'Pin Chambers' of the plug is then loaded with the pins, (in the sequence which corresponds with the key bittings for proper combination), and the plug is then slipped into the housing. When the chambers of both housing and plug become vertically aligned, the driver springs impel the drivers downward, projecting them into the plug chambers by transmitting spring-loaded pressure onto the pins.

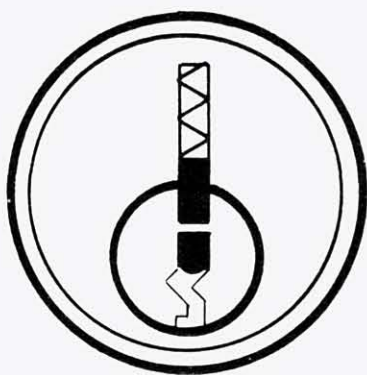
In illustration 3, the pins are shown resting on a ledge, (B), which is formed by one of the grooves, (keyway grooves), in the plug. This prevents them from being completely depressed toward the bottom of the plug-- in which case they would thoroughly obstruct the introduction of the key.

In this locked condition, the assembled cylinder is somewhat of a Chinese Puzzle. Because the drivers are held vertically suspended between the housing and the plug, the plug can neither be removed from-- or rotated within the housing. Take a few minutes to go over the foregoing until you are sure that you understand what everything is doing, and why.

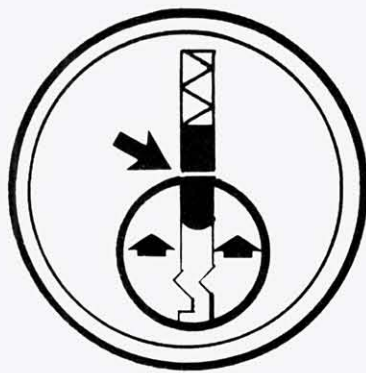
Indicated by the arrows, (A), in illustration 3 is the separation level, or 'shear line,' of the assembled cylinder. This is an imaginary line, and it bisects the point at which the inner surface of the housing contacts the outer surface of the plug in the immediate area of the upper and lower chamber apertures.

When the pins are raised, they in turn propel the drivers forcing them upward into the housing-- in opposition to the pressure of the driver springs. At exactly the point when the lower surface of the individual driver in each separate chamber rises above the level of the shear line, the plug will be free to rotate within the housing.

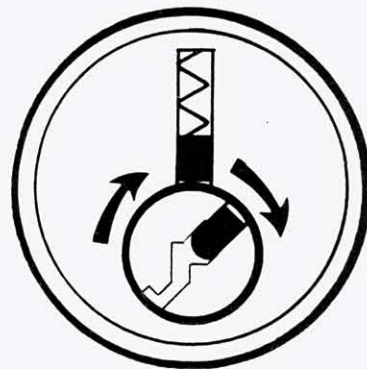
Illustrations 4, 5, & 6 depict the operation of a single pin & driver transaction as it occurs within a cylinder which is viewed from the front: 4 indicates a locked cylinder. 5 shows the driver as it is elevated to the shear line, having been pushed upward by the pin. 6 depicts the resulting free rotation of the plug.



4



5



6

These drawings show a frontal view of the action of just one set of chambers. If a cylinder had only one set of pins and drivers, occupying only one pair of chambers, it would be a relatively easy matter to 'pick' it open. However, there will usually be more than four sets of pins and drivers in any cylinder-- and the activity shown above must

occur simultaneously.

Illustration 7 is a 'phantom' side view showing the situation of the pins and drivers within a locked cylinder. The horizontal line represents the shear line.

Illustration 8 shows what happens when the proper key is introduced into the plug: The pins are raised and become uniformly aligned-- thus elevating the drivers to their proper level above the shear line. In this condition, the drivers are no longer obstructing movement and the plug is free to rotate. This is the un-locked position.

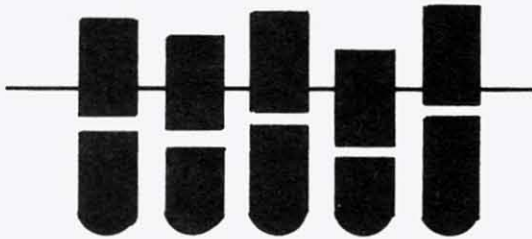


ILLUSTRATION 7

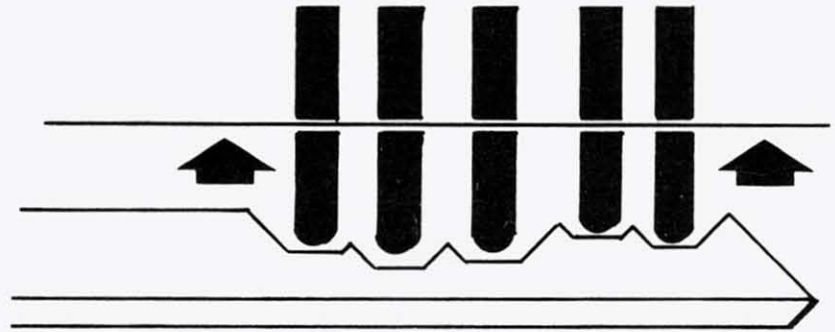


ILLUSTRATION 8

Figure 9 shows what happens when the wrong key is introduced into a cylinder: By sheer coincidence, (in many cases, one or two pins will align by the 'chance' of numbers when a wrong key is introduced), drivers 1 & 4 are elevated to the shear line. Drivers 2 & 3 remain lowered in the locked position. It is important to note that pin #5 has been raised too far above the shear line, by a high bitting on the improper key, and is now projecting up into the housing chamber. Thus you can see that three pins continue to maintain the locked condition. As well as bringing the drivers above the shear line, it is equally important that the pins are raised no higher than the shear line.

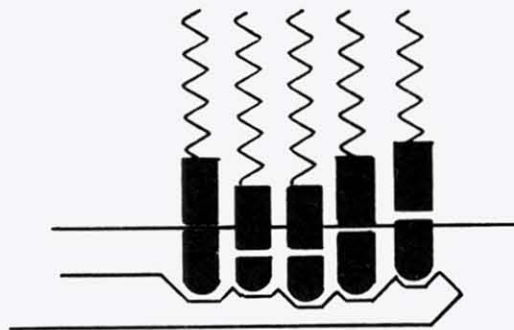


FIGURE 9

If all of the pins in a cylinder were of the same length, (Figure 10), it would be a relatively simple matter to open it by introducing any sort of slender, straight-edged instrument and thus elevate all of the drivers simultaneously to the proper level. Likewise, if there were but one pin and one driver in a cylinder, the same simple method could be used to open it. However, we are assuming that a cylinder will be loaded with at least five pairs of pins and drivers... And that they will be arranged in a staggered combination. Except for forcible methods, such as 'drilling,' prying, etc., such a cylinder can be opened only by using the proper key, or by picking. And picking is the process of raising each pin to the proper level, one at a time, with instruments which are made specifically for this purpose-- picks.

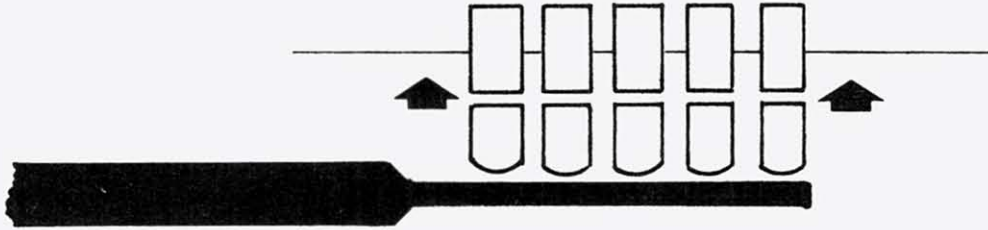


FIGURE 10

A properly 'bitted' key is normally used to both align the pins and drivers, and to rotate the plug-- which in turn effects opening of the related lock. Actually, once the pins and drivers have been separated at the shear line, and the plug rotates even slightly off center, the key is no longer necessary to further operate the cylinder. Once the initial freeing of the plug, (Figure 6, Page 4), has been accomplished by picking, a screw-driver, knife-blade, etc., can be used to continue the rotation and open the lock.

Picking the Pin-Tumbler Cylinder:

THE BASIC METHOD:

Figure 11 is a silhouette, (approximately 2/3 actual size), of a typical lock pick. These instruments are usually constructed of tempered spring steel, and are generally from .025" to .050" thick. The pick is used to probe inside the keyway, locating each pin, and elevating it to the shear line.

Unfortunately, it's not quite so simple. First of all, a cylinder is not transparent. How do you know when the shear line is reached? Second, assuming that you have successfully raised one of the pins to its proper level-- thus delivering the driver's lower surface



FIGURE 11

to the shear line, how do you prevent the spring from causing the driver and the pin to descend again at the instant that you remove the pick to go to the next pin? IT IS HERE THAT THE TOLERANCES, OR IMPERFECTIONS OF THE CYLINDER WILL BE TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF:

A second tool, called a 'tension wrench,' (Figure 12), is used to apply a regulated amount of inertial tension to the mechanism of the cylinder. Without this tension, it is not possible to pick the pin-tumbler cylinder. (This is the part they don't show in the movies!)



FIGURE 12

This tool is inserted into the lower section of the keyway, (as shown in Figure 13 & Photo 3), and is used to take up the slack, or the loose, side-to-side movement of the plug which was described on Page 1.

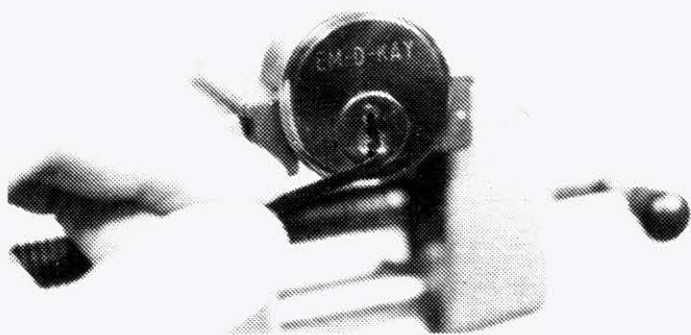


PHOTO 3

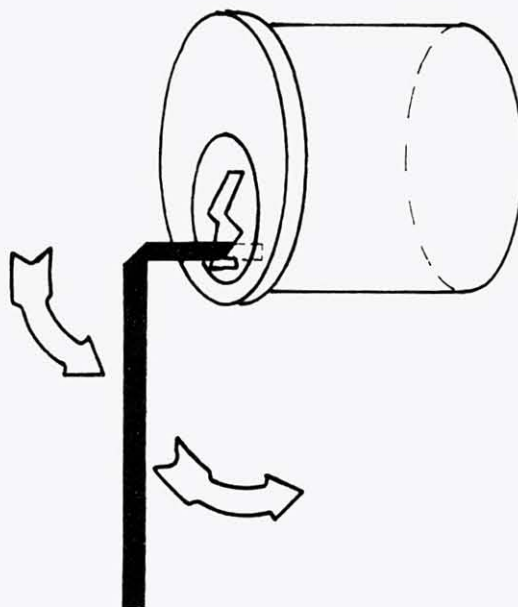


FIGURE 13

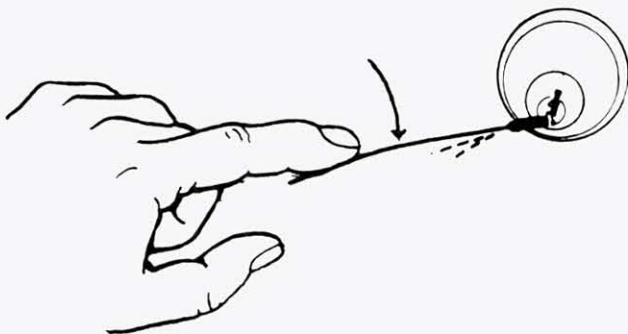


FIGURE 14

Figure 14 will provide a little more graphic idea of how the tension wrench is used.

The action of a pick being used to raise a pin is shown in Figure 15. What you see is the tip of the pick contacting the bottom of the pin. The pin is raised, elevating its driver upward and over the shear line. Photo 4 shows a pick being used to actually raise a pin out of the plug and over the shear line. (The spring and driver are not visible in the photo.)

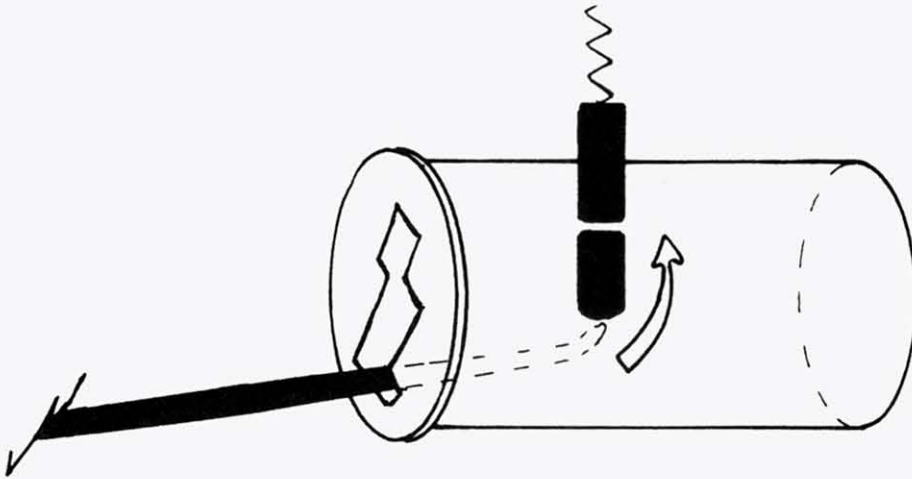


FIGURE 15

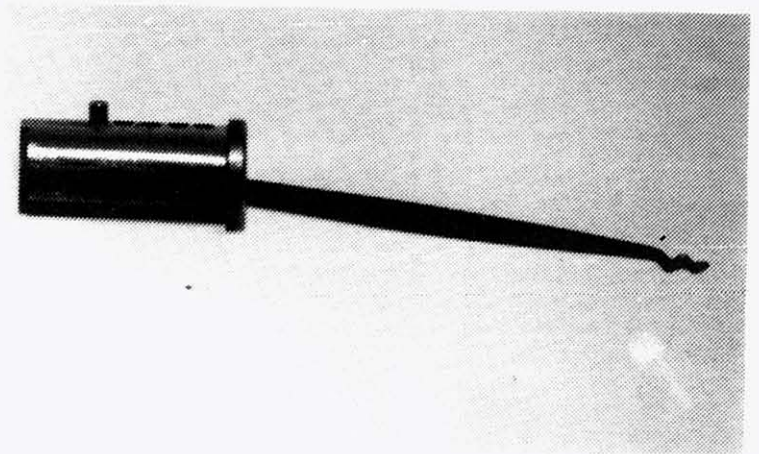


PHOTO 4

By applying tension to the plug, (as described on Page 7), the effect shown in Figure 16 is produced.

Notice that the upper and lower chambers, (Figure 17), become vertically mis-aligned. The bold arrows indicate the direction in which the plug is being turned by the action of the wrench. The driver is shown tilted, and trapped, from the tension which is being transmitted by the turning action. The stress asserted on the driver, (at the points indicated by the fine arrows), is sufficient to hold it suspended against the downward force of the spring. By maintaining tension, and carefully raising each pin with the tip of a pick, the driver can be raised above the shear line-- and held there when the pick is moved away.

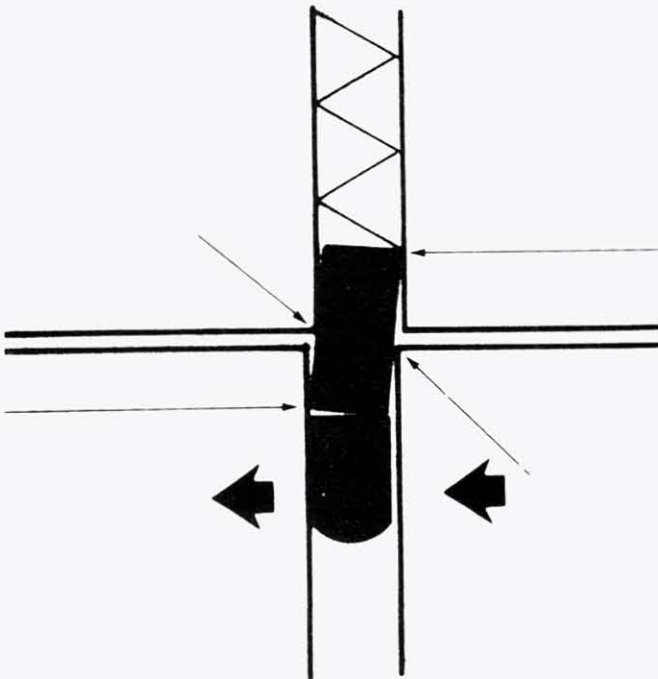


FIGURE 17

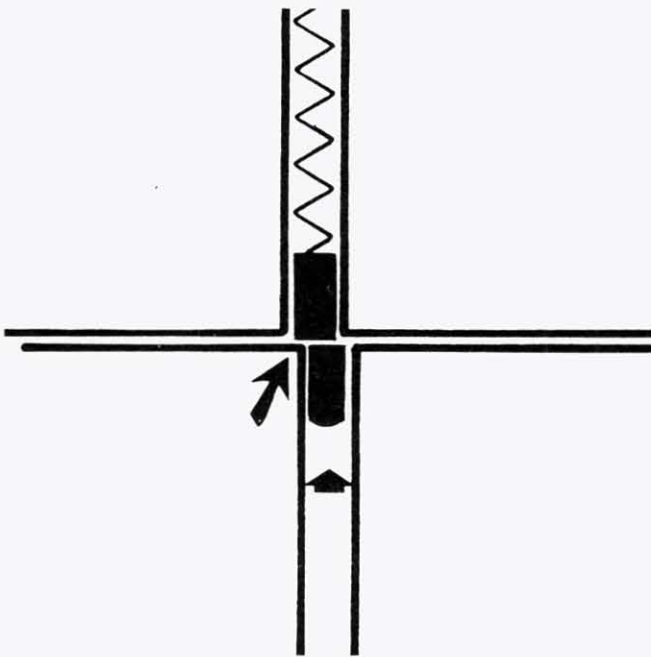


FIGURE 18

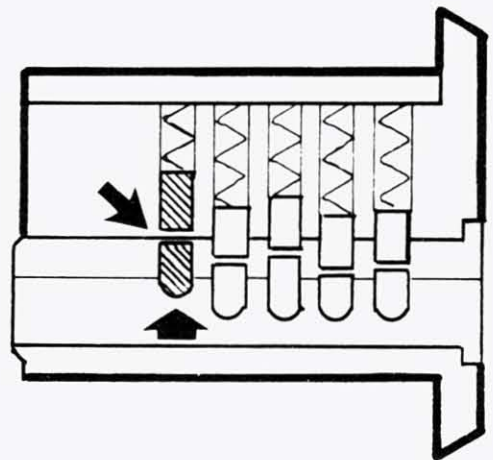


FIGURE 19

Figure 18 is an exaggerated illustration of a driver which has been successfully trapped above the shear line. Figure 19 is the cut-away view of of a cylinder showing one of its chambers in the 'picked' position. (When observing Figure 19, assume that tension is being applied to maintain this condition.)

While maintaining tension, the next pin will be approached in the same manner, and another, and the next, and so on, until all of the drivers have been elevated above the shear line and the plug rotates free. This is the basic method in which the pin-tumbler cylinder is picked.

Because you can't see what is taking place within a cylinder, your skill in picking must depend upon your ability to feel it. Some cylinders are much easier to pick than others because their tolerances are greater. Some cylinders are easier to pick than others because they are severely worn. (Many are!) An easily picked cylinder is one in which the pins and drivers fit very loosely in their chambers, and the plug is also loosely fitted to the bore of the housing. (I would estimate that at this time eight out of every ten conventional pin-tumbler cylinders in use are either 'cheap,' therefore poorly constructed, or worn from extensive use.) Under such circumstances, the effect of every action within the mechanism is amplified, and much more distinctly recognizable. Consequently, it follows that the majority of pin-tumbler cylinders in current use can be picked rather easily.

As previously stated, no cylinder is perfect. Every pin-tumbler cylinder has some degree of tolerance between its parts. (Or the mechanisms wouldn't operate.) Therefore, every standard, operationally normal pin-tumbler cylinder can be picked-- regardless of how closely fitted the parts are, or seem to be. Some may take a bit longer than others, and require the touch of a more experienced hand, but with sufficient practice and a bit of determination any conventional pin-tumbler cylinder which can be opened with its key can be picked!

Tolerances vary not only from cylinder to cylinder, but within each individual cylinder. Minute variations exist between the outer diameters of the individual pins and drivers, and the inner diameters of their chambers. Thus, when turning tension is applied, one of the drivers will react to the applied stress sooner than the others, and will be held most firmly-- this will be the 'widest' one. Regardless of how few thousandths of an inch is the degree of tolerance, that one driver will present a perceptibly greater resistance to the upward movement of the pin as it is raised by the pick.

The Picking Procedure:

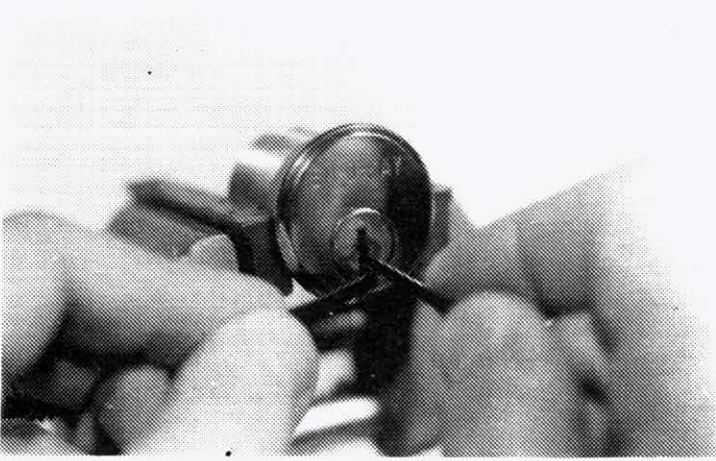


PHOTO 5



PHOTO 6

While no two people do anything exactly alike, for the sake of illustration and familiarization, Photos 5 & 6 show the position of the hands as the tension wrench and pick are applied to the cylinder. (Any comfortable, functional variation may be used.)

The pick is inserted into the keyway. One at a time, slowly and carefully, each pin is located with the tip of the pick and gently elevated. At this time, you are applying a very slight degree of tension and are testing for an indicating degree of resistance to the upward pressure. Some of the pins will respond very freely as you apply this vertical pressure to them. As the pressure of the pick is relaxed, you will feel the reciprocal pressure of the spring forcing the pin, (via the driver), back downward to its original position. The 'loose,' *un-controlled* response will occur until the widest, most 'tension-bound' driver is located.

By gradually increasing and relaxing tension, and probing each pin one at a time, you will quickly discover that one will present a significantly greater degree of resistance to your pick. When you finally feel the 'inertia' of the tension-bound driver as it is being smoothly pushed up into its chamber in the housing-- thus over the shear line. This will be the widest driver. (Indicated by its smooth, though pronounced resistance to being elevated.)

Slow, even, and gentle pressure should be applied while raising this pin. If you push it too hard, or too fast, you will force the pin, itself, over the shear line where the effect of tension will hold it suspended between the housing and the plug. (See Figure 20.) Just raise the pin carefully until you sense a solid, distinct resistance to the applied lifting motion. This will indicate that the driver has been raised above the shear line, and into its chamber in the housing. This solid resistance is caused by the top edge of the pin contacting the mis-aligned bottom surface of the housing as shown in figure 18.

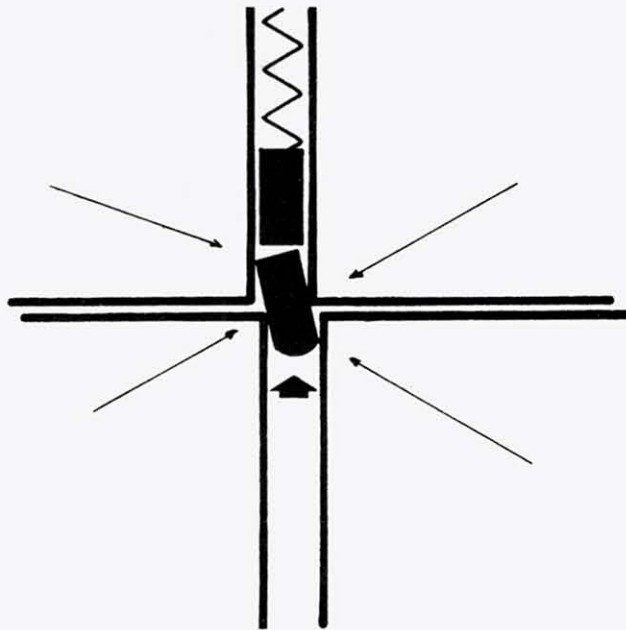


FIGURE 20

When you release pressure at this time, the pin will descend freely into its chamber in the plug leaving the driver trapped up in its chamber where it can no longer impede rotation of the plug. That pin & driver have been separated at their shear line. It is now important that an even and sensitive degree of tension be maintained. If you significantly relax tension at this time, the misalignment of the plug and housing as shown in Figure 18 will decrease. The driver-- responding to the compression of the spring-- will 'escape' and drop back down into the plug. (When this occurs, it is normally detectable by a very soft 'clicking' which you will grow to recognize.) You will then have to begin again.

NOTE: IN CASES WHERE TOLERANCES ARE EXCEPTIONALLY GREAT, THERE WILL OCCUR A SLIGHT, BUT DISTINCT ROTATIONAL MOTION OF THE PLUG AS EACH DRIVER, PARTICULARLY THE FIRST ONE, SLIPS ABOVE ITS SHEAR LINE. YOUR ABILITY TO PERCEIVE THIS MOVEMENT WILL INCREASE AS YOUR SKILL DEVELOPS.

When you have successfully elevated the first driver above the shear line, that one has been 'eliminated.' Proceed now, while maintaining even tension, to locate the next driver which presents the greatest degree of resistance to lifting pressure. This will be the next widest, and so on. When you elevate the final driver above the shear line, the plug will suddenly rotate free... The cylinder has been picked open.

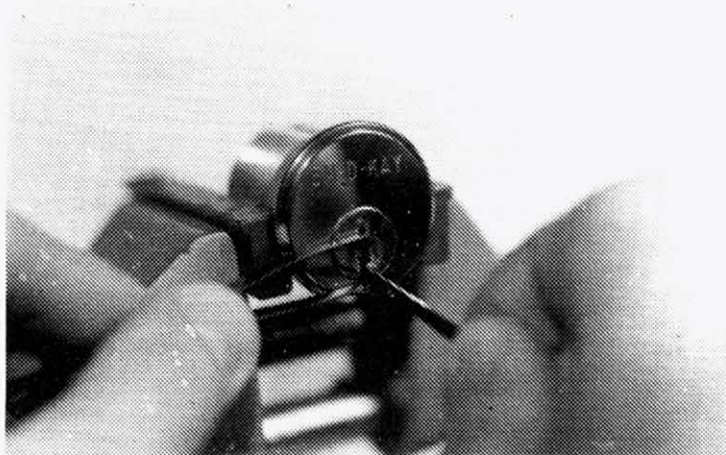
Until now I have referred to the tension wrench, and the turning torsion it is used to create, as if they were elements of secondary importance to the picking procedure. Actually, tension is the most important element of the entire operation. Without it, the cylinder's parts could not be manipulated in the foregoing manner. It is important that you understand one vital factor: TENSION DOES NOT MEAN FORCE! The internal components of a cylinder are manipulated into the opening position. They can not be forced. In no stage of the picking operation is force employed.

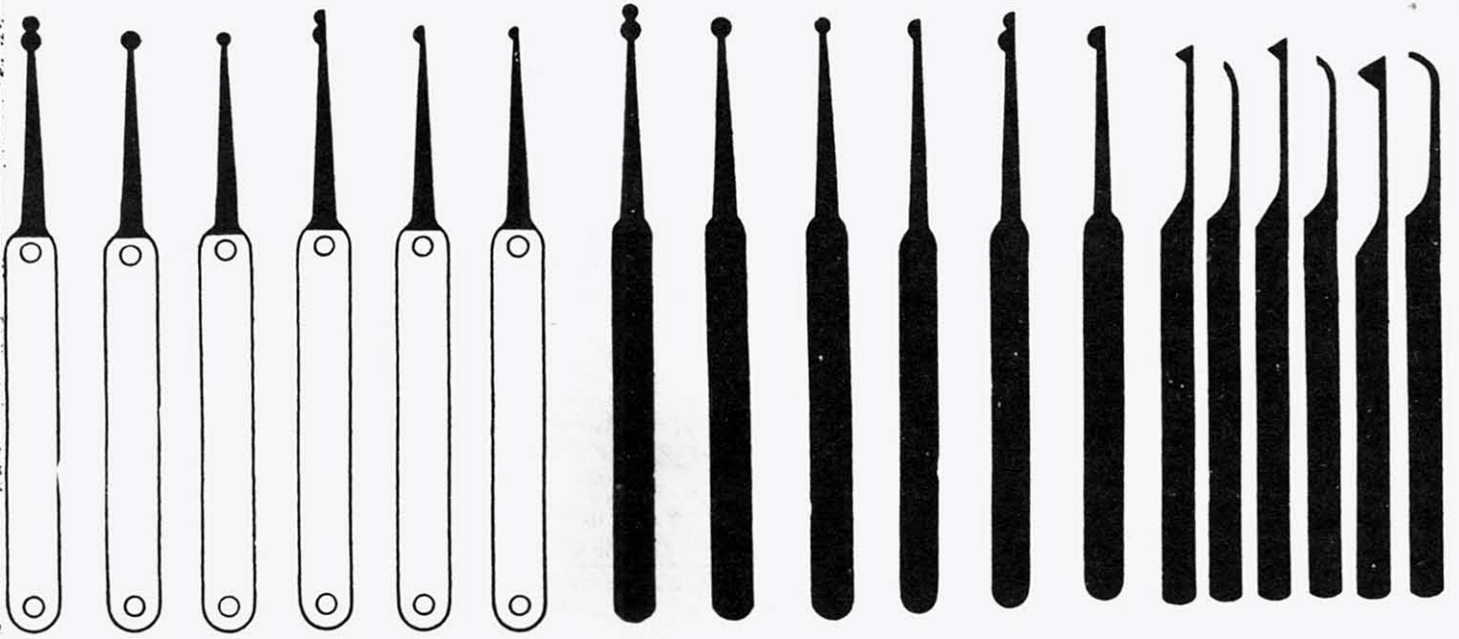
The importance of using the proper amount of tension can not be over-stated. In fact, failure to pick a cylinder open is usually the result of improper control of TENSION! Do not allow this emphatic bit of information discourage you. Your ability to regulate the proper amount of tension will develop quickly as you begin to practice the picking procedure. You will begin with 'cheap' cylinders, or those with substantial tolerance. The tension requirement is not quite so critical with these.

The proper amount of tension is regulated by 'feel.' It is difficult to describe the substance of 'feel.' One may be told, for example, how to drive a car, or how to 'handle' a billiard cue. But the actual feel must be developed through practice. By applying the principles outlined in this book, and by investing a few hours of patient practice, the proper 'feel' can be developed by virtually anybody who seriously wants to master the art of picking locks.

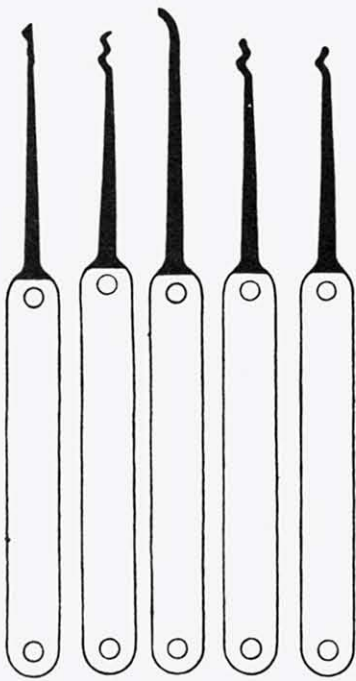
Shown below is an illustration of another type of tension wrench. (The 'tweezer.')

The photograph shows it being used. Because of 'top & bottom' contact with the keyway, this tool provides a somewhat more stable degree of control. But, it can not be used with every cylinder, and because I happen to prefer it does not mean that you will. Like anything else where choice is involved, it's a matter of individual preference.

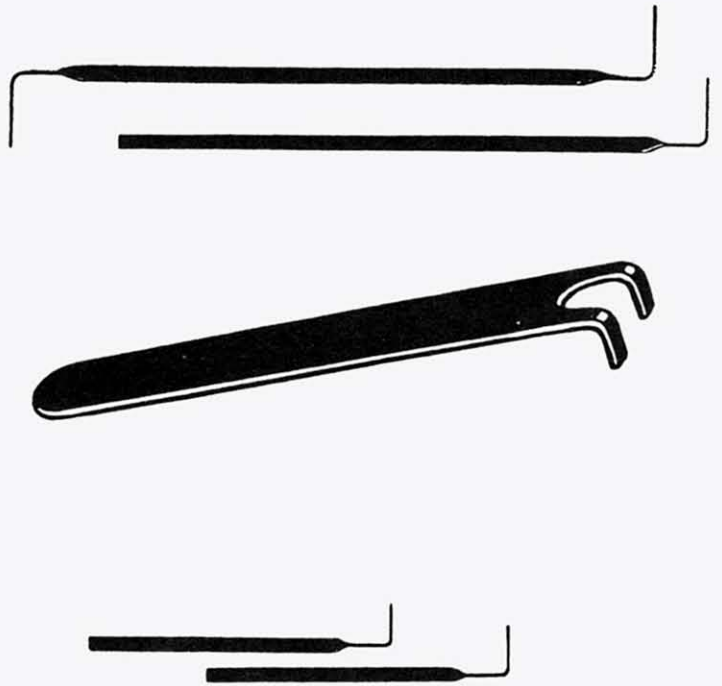




PICKS



RAKES



TENSION WRENCHES

As evidenced by the array shown on the preceding page, the choice of available picks is very broad. While personal preference usually prevails, there are specific circumstances which demand the use of specific picks.

Figure 21 represents a 'fly's eye' view of the inside of a keyway. The rounded, bottom ends of the pins are shown projecting downward into the plug and resting on the ledge which is formed by one of the keyway grooves. This is the way the interior of a plug 'looks' to the tip of a pick.

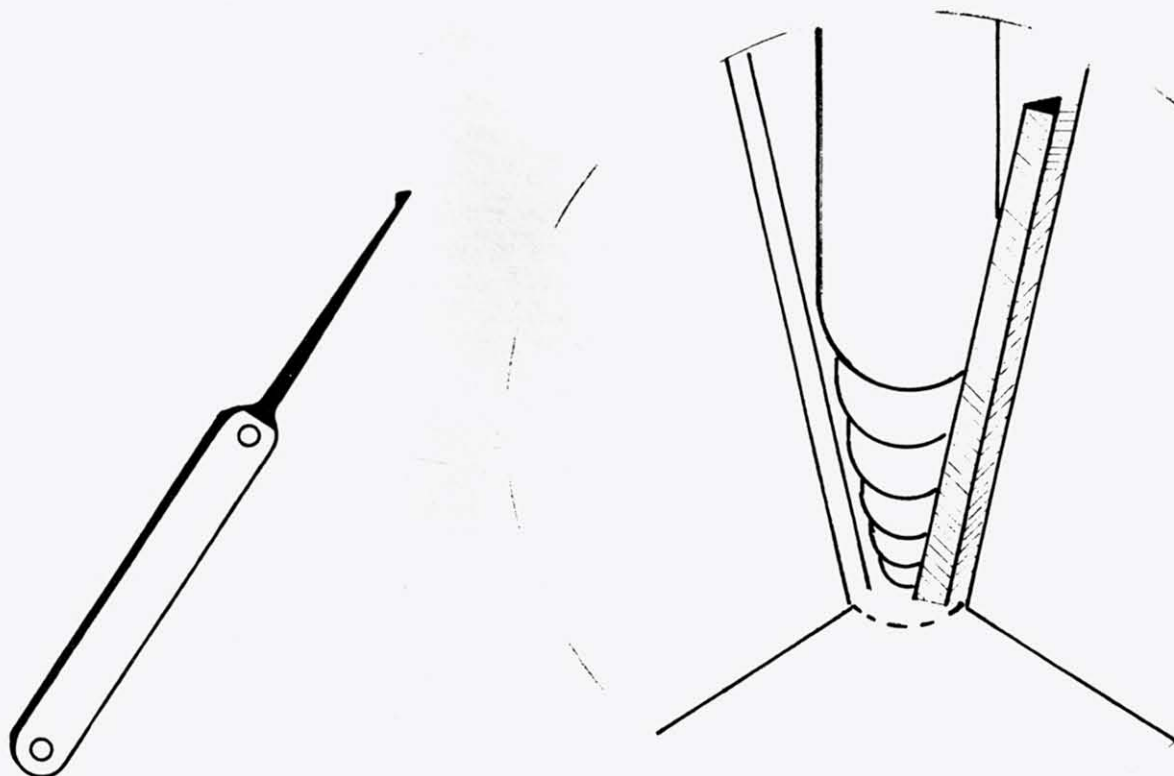


FIGURE 21

Shown adjacent to Figure 21 is a simple 'diamond' pick. This particular model is very easy to move about inside most keyways. It affords a great deal of vertical clearance beneath the pin-heads, and it slips smoothly from one pick to another.

Whenever I provide 'personal' instructions on picking to a student locksmith, I 'set-up' a cylinder with a simple combination, and have the student start off with the diamond pick. True-- these are comparatively ideal circumstances under which to learn. Because of these ideal circumstances, the novice usually probes around a bit, grits his teeth a little, manages to raise all the pins after a few minutes, and when the plug rotates-- breaks into a cocky "Is that all there is..?" grin.

After permitting a few minutes of triumphant pleasure, I then switch to a cylinder which has a particularly pronounced 'high - low' combination. After about a half-hour, and when triumph has turned to rage and confusion, the lesson on when and why a different pick must be used is begun.

FACE OF PLUG →

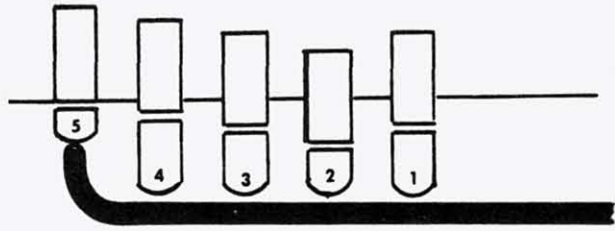


FIGURE 23

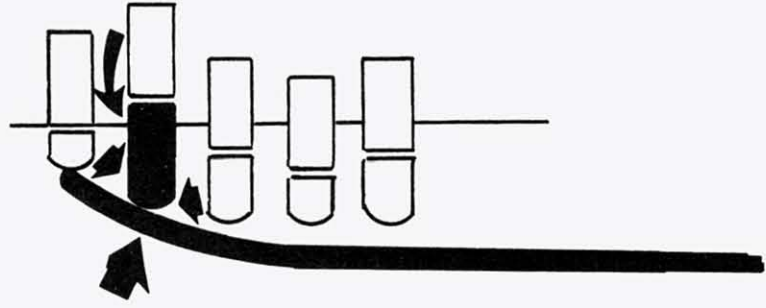


FIGURE 24

A 'high - low' combination is probably the most frustrating feature, (aside from very close tolerances), which can be encountered in the conventional pin-tumbler cylinder. In the days before the recently marketed 'pick-proof,' and pick 'resistant' cylinders were available, the locksmith would set a cylinder up with a high - low combination, (among a few other things), if a customer requested a cylinder that was "hard to pick."

Nowadays, the high - low combination occurs as a matter of chance-- rather than choice. Even the cheapest cylinder can present some difficulty if it has a 'high - low' combination. And what the 'high - low' combination is, is simply a cylinder which is set up with a very high, (short), pin which is next to a very low, (long), pin-- or an entire cylinder filled with 'high - lows.'

Look at Figure 23. Notice that the #1 pin is long, (a 'low' pin), and need be raised only slightly to deliver its driver to the shear line. Notice also that the #4 pin is even longer. ('Lower.') The #5 pin, however, is very short. (High.) It must be raised nearly to the top of the plug in order to deliver its driver to the shear line. To use any type of comparatively level-bladed pick would create the problem shown in Figure 24: While the tip of the pick is raising the #5 pin, the slightly curved section of the blade is quite unavoidably raising the #4 pin at the same time-- and forcing it over the shear line and into the housing. The effect of this action will be to have the #4 pin forced too far above the shear line, trapped there, and producing a locking condition. (See Figure 20, Page 11.)

When this happens, it will become necessary to significantly relax tension in the attempt to release the trapped pin. More often than not, all of the drivers which might have been properly elevated will be released along with the #4 pin.

In cases where such circumstances are detected by 'feel,' a pick of the sharply 'hooked' type must be used in the manner illustrated in figure 23. The 'high - low' combination can be detected by probing the cylinder during the first stage of the picking procedure. You will gradually develop the ability to 'see' the pins in your 'mind's eye' while you are 'feeling' around in the keyway. The experience is somewhat similar to having your fist wrapped around a 'roll' of coins of assorted sizes. Using your thumb, you are able to recognize which are the Quarters, Nickels, Pennies, and Dimes. Picking is something like trying to re-arrange them according to size-- with one hand.

The foregoing emphasizes the significance of the pin combination. You can see that a very 'staggered' combination, (short-pin-next-to-long-pin-next-to-short-pin, etc.), can be the toughest obstacle to surmount. However, regardless of the pin combination, the number of pins, or the overall quality of the cylinder, with the proper degree of experience, a little patience, and practice, it can be picked. Keep in mind that the most important factor is that of quality. Even the most difficult combination is very easily overcome with the 'assistance' of extreme tolerances. Very few cylinders are of the high-quality variety. And the quality of any cylinder, (with regard to its resistance to picking),

diminishes as the cylinder becomes worn.

For the purposes of practice, it is important that you do not inadvertently tackle a high quality cylinder. (Until you become more familiar with lock cylinders, you are not expected to recognize the difference right away.) Therefore, do not commence to practice on just *any* cylinder. You might have the misfortune to select a really fine one, and the effect might be fatally discouraging. Instead, go to a hardware store, (not a locksmith shop), and purchase the least expensive 'rim' type pin-tumbler cylinder available. (It should not cost any more than five dollars.) You are thus assured of obtaining a cylinder with no more than five pins, and considerable tolerance between its parts. If you do go to a locksmith shop, be sure to stress that you want a real 'cheapie.' Because locksmiths generally do not stock such cylinders, what is 'cheap' to the locksmith, might be the most expensive thing that the hardware store has on hand.

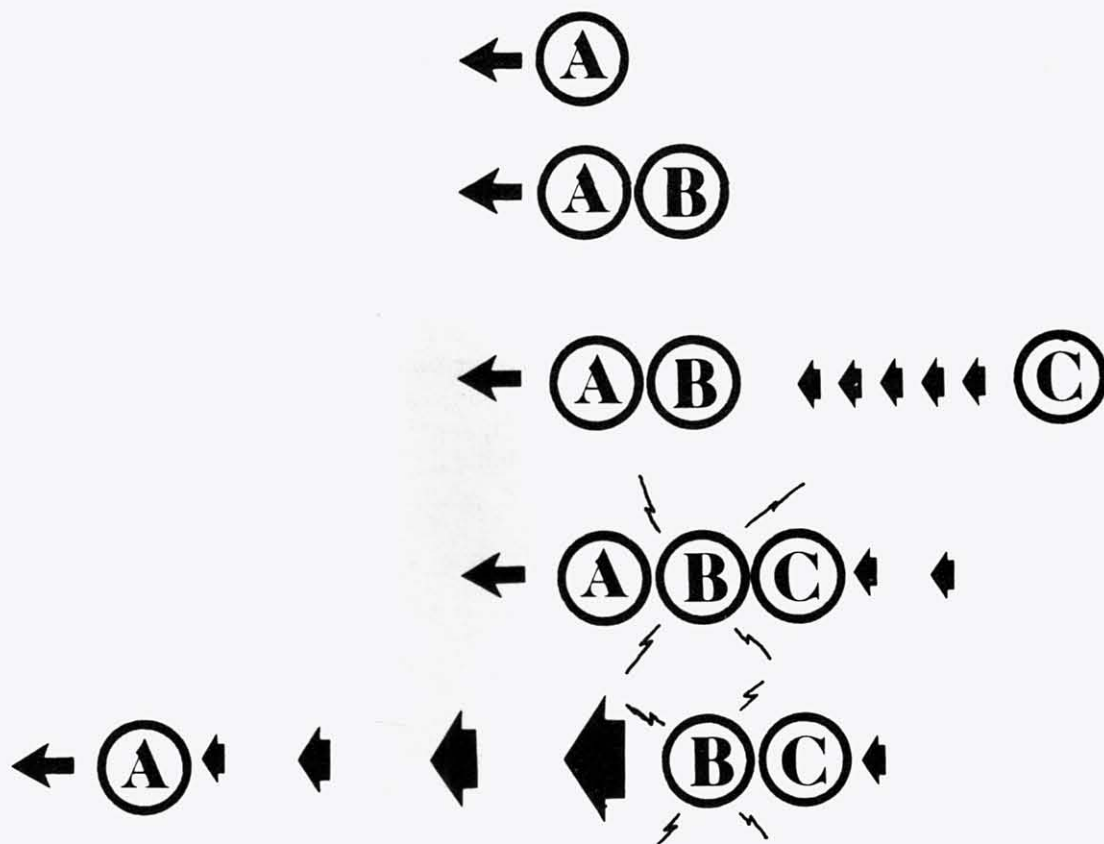
There are other methods of opening the pin-tumbler cylinder. (Other than forceful.) All are considered, (categorically), to be 'picking.' All, however, cleverly employ the comparatively uncertain, although frequently effective, principle of *mechanically transmitted energy*. In the simplest terms, these 'other' methods operate with appreciably less dependency upon the skill of the operator, and aspire to simply jolt the drivers into the proper position. I have nothing against these other methods. I use them frequently, myself. In fact, they all work rather quickly-- WHEN they work. I do not, however, recommend that you begin practicing any of these 'quickie' methods until you have significantly developed your ability to operate the basic 'sequential alignment' method, which I have covered in the previous pages. You might become 'spoiled' by the relative ease, and not bother to develop and further refine your skill. It is my intention to teach you how to 'pick,' not 'jolt.' The hard way is the sure way. Master it-- then look for the 'shortcuts.'

Before describing these other methods, I shall explain their basic principle:

In the game of billiards, or 'pool,' the objective is to move one ball by striking it with another ball. Beginning at the top of the illustration on the next page, 'A' is the ball that you want to move to another specific location. 'A' also represents the driver in a pin-tumbler cylinder.

In this case, there is another ball, 'B,' resting directly against the ball, (A), that you want to move, and right in line with the direction in which you wish to move it. Obviously, the way to move ball 'A' is to strike ball 'B' sharply. Therefore, a third ball, ('C'), is driven into forceful impact with 'B.' 'B' absorbs the impact energy and transmits it to 'A,' which 'inherits' the motive force, thus the motion of ball 'C.'

In this analogy, 'B' is the pin, and 'C' is whatever device you might be using to generate the energy which will ultimately move 'A.' The device used might be a 'rake,'



a 'pick-gun,' a 'snapper,' or a 'vibrator.'

The rake is the least *mechanically assisted* of the four techniques. In fact, use of the 'rake' is so closely related to the basic system of picking that it can be appropriately described as a combination of picking and jolting. Rakes are pick type instruments, but they all have distinctly different 'heads.' (See Page 13.)

Raking requires a very active harmony of control between the tension wrench and the rake. The degree of tension must be decidedly lighter than that applied in the basic method. The amount of initial must be negligible in comparison. The tension applied in the basic method is used to hold the drivers. In raking, tension will be used to 'catch' the drivers as they are jolted into position by the action of the rake. In cases when the raking method is successful, the proper alignment of all the drivers will occur simultaneously, so there is no need to maintain a *holding pressure* on *suspended* drivers. Instead, the slightest degree of tension is used to provide just the trace of a 'ledge,' (as shown in Figure 18, Page 9), for the drivers to be jolted onto all at once-- and trapped there. Minimizing tension is important because both the drivers and the pins must be afforded as much freedom of vertical motion as possible to allow for un-restricted transmission of energy to occur. All of your concentration, and sense of 'feel,' must be focused onto the tension wrench. Operation of the rake is secondary.

The 'Raking' Procedure:

The tension wrench is applied to the lower segment of the keyway. Do not use any more pressure than is necessary to take up the 'slack' of the plug. Hold the rake with the thumb and middle-finger, with the index finger supporting the blade from the bottom and approximately in the middle. Insert the head into the keyway with the highest 'peaks' of the head facing upward toward the pins.

Bring the rake into very light contact with the pins and begin to draw it, in a sawing motion, forward and backward across the pins. (See Figure 25, below.) As the peaks of the rake make contact with each pin as it is drawn across it, the energy of the impact will be transmitted upward toward the driver. Gradually increase the speed of this back & forth oscillation, as well as the pressure against the pins. Your raking strokes should be smoothly, rhythmically, and firmly applied. Do not use short, jerky motions. Try to detect some favorable indication of reaction via your tension hand, (such as an instant of rotational motion, or a 'loosening' of the plug.) If you feel a sudden, distinct 'give,' but the plug does not rotate completely free, you have jolted a few, or most, of the drivers above the shear line-- but one or two are still holding in the locked position. When this is detected, relax tension very slightly while maintaining the raking motion.

Figure 26, on the next page, shows the peaks of the rake forcefully contacting the bottoms of the pins as it is drawn rapidly against them. The energy is transmitted upward, through the pin and to the driver. The driver is actually knocked upward, and if the degree of tension is just right-- or I should say WHEN the tension is just right, the

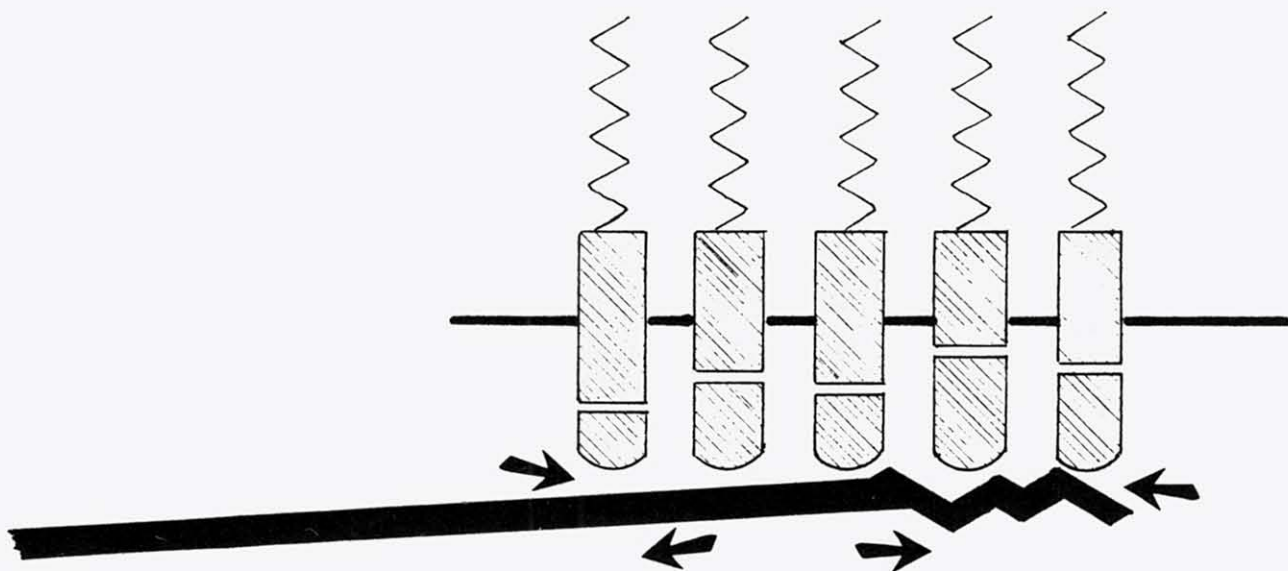


FIGURE 25

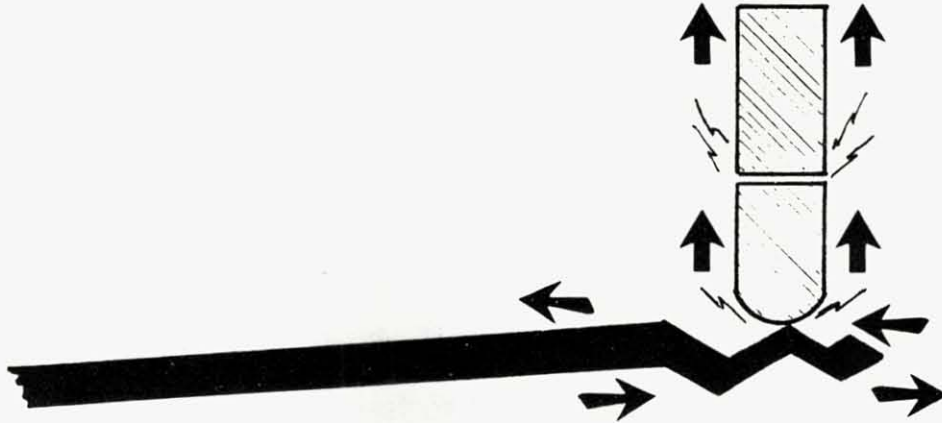


FIGURE 26

the driver will be trapped above the shear line.

Obviously, because of the activity of this raking movement, every driver in the cylinder will repeatedly be driven over the shear line. It is un-avoidable. The whole 'trick' depends on the proper amount of tension to trap them there.

Too much tension will friction-bind the pins and drivers, restricting their freedom of motion. Too little tension will fail to hold the drivers when they are driven above the shear line.

THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE RAKING PROCEDURE, YOU MUST CONTINUOUSLY, AND EXPERIMENTALLY, ALTERNATE THE SPEED OF OSCILLATION, THE PRESSURE AGAINST THE PINS, AND -- ABOVE ALL-- TENSION,

Raking takes a little time to learn. It is a skill, and must be developed by patient practice. The first time that you successfully rake a cylinder open, the sudden rotation of the plug will occur as a complete surprise to you. However, your memory will 'imprint' the feel of the mechanism during the few seconds preceding the rotation. In this way, you will acquire a reference point for the next time. The 'surprise' factor will soon expand to a definite sense of anticipation, and you will thus be able to better control and co-ordinate the speed, pressure, and tension.

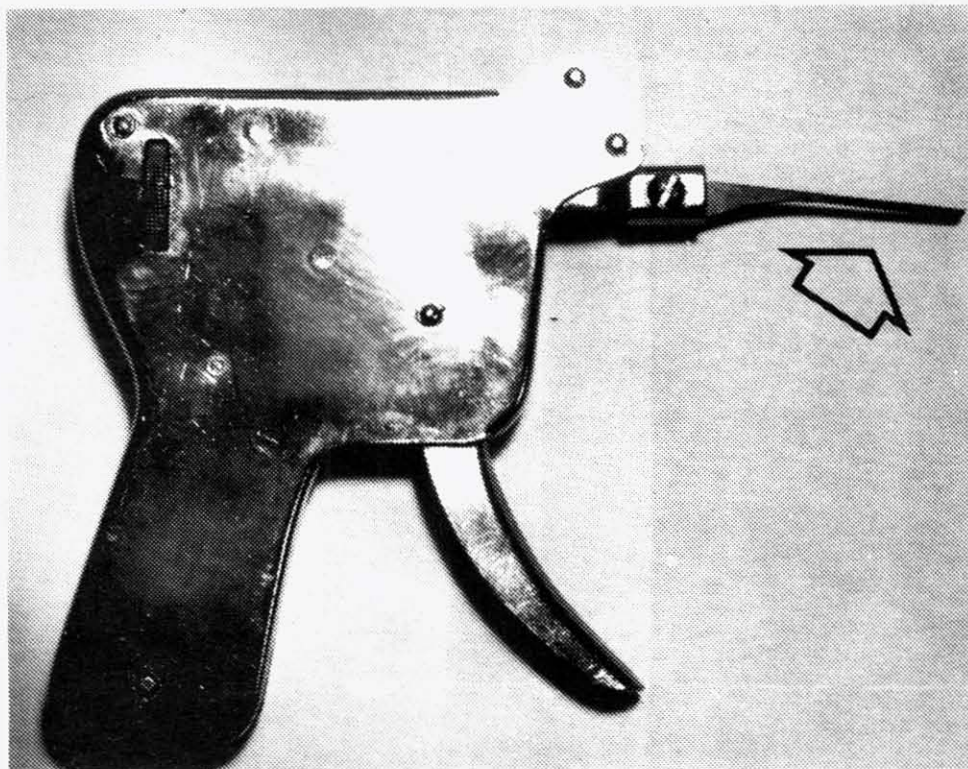
After you rake open your first cylinder, your proficiency will develop very rapidly. You will find that many cylinders, (particularly those which are a bit worn), will respond to the rake in as little as two seconds. There are locksmiths and lock experts who have become so practiced at this technique that they can open the majority of cylinders with a rake as quickly as it can be opened with the proper key!

One final suggestion about raking: As you can see on Page 13, there are numerous rake head patterns. (There are, in fact, many more than I have shown here.) If one does not produce results-- try another, and another. If all fail-- PICK IT OPEN!

'Other' methods:

In the foregoing pages I have explained the two most directly effective methods of passive, (non-forceful), lock cylinder manipulation-- Picking and Raking. These two methods can not conceivably, (at this time), be improved upon. Furthermore, it has already been demonstrated that the skill in employing the basic picking method can be developed to a point of absolute certainty. And while I do not consider 'raking' to be picking in the refined sense of the word, raking has the distinction of being the most practical, reliable, and the most frequently successful of the 'quickie' methods. In addition, raking is a specific technique which requires cultivation of skill to master. Therefore, I can not refer to raking as a 'gimmick' method.

As I have mentioned previously, there are 'other' methods of manipulating, (that is, *attempting* to manipulate), the pin-tumbler mechanism. All of the other methods are 'gimmick' improvisations of the *mechanical transmission of energy* principle such as discussed on Pages 16 & 17. None of these 'other' techniques are even one-half as effective or as reliable as the hand-raking method. (And the predictable reliability of the hand-raking method, itself, is only about one-half that of the basic one-pin-at-a-time procedure.) Actually, these other 'methods,' or 'techniques,' are really a few very cleverly designed devices.



The particular device shown in the above photograph is called a 'Pick-Gun.' Seen protruding from its front end, (indicated by the arrow), is a detachable, level blade. This blade is attached to a pivoting arm, which is controlled by an adjustable degree of tension deriving from a powerful spring located within the handle.

The 'travel' of the pick-gun's trigger, (approx. 1½", and about 40 lb. pull), produces compression of the spring and a slight, (adjustable), downward movement of the protruding blade. At the final moment of the trigger's travel, the arm is abruptly released, it snaps free of the imposed compression, and the blade thrusts sharply and firmly upward. That's all!

Rumors have circulated among the un-informed concerning the existence of a "gun that can open any lock by just applying it and pulling the trigger-- once!" This, of course, is utter nonsense, and is typical of the way facts are exaggerated and distorted through rumor. (Similar to the existence of a 'master' key that will open any lock.) The pick-gun simply facilitates a means whereby *mechanical transmission of energy* may be applied to all of the pins in a cylinder at the same instant. It does work-- But not on every cylinder, and not every time. And by no means will 'one shot' do it every time...

First of all, this is not a 'one-hand' gadget. A tension wrench must be used with it. The level-edged blade of the pick gun is inserted into the keyway. It must be held directly, (and steadily horizontal), beneath the row of pins. Contact of the blade with any other part of the keyway must be carefully avoided or the snapping action will be baffled.

Rarely will one snap produce rotation of the plug. Also, it would not be stretching the facts to say that a separate technique must be developed to 'master' the use of this device. Once mastered, however, the Pick-Gun can be a very handy, time-saving tool. I own one, and have used it with reasonably satisfactory results. In the long run, the time which can be saved by successful use of such a device definitely makes it worthwhile to have one in the busy locksmith's toolbox.

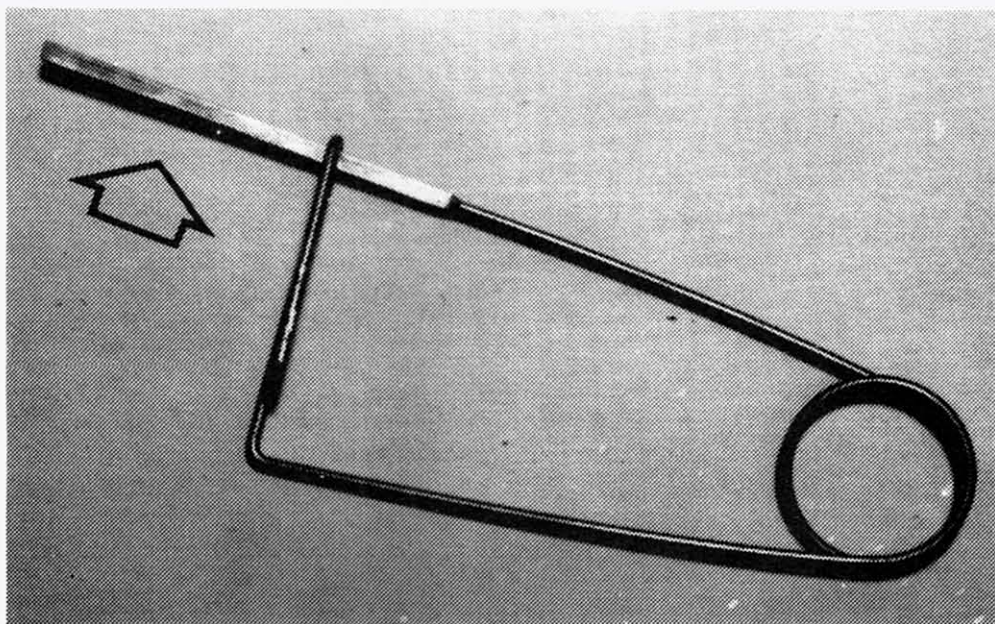
A variation of the Pick-Gun is the 'Rake-Gun.' In outward appearance, the rake-gun is almost identical to the pick-gun. The major differences are that the rake-gun employs a rake-head blade instead of a level-edged blade, and the physical motion of this rake-head blade is in-and-out, (back & forth), rather than up-and-down. It in fact imitates the principal movement and action of the hand-raking procedure-- only a bit more sharply. The performance reliability of the rake gun is approximately equal to that of the pick-gun.



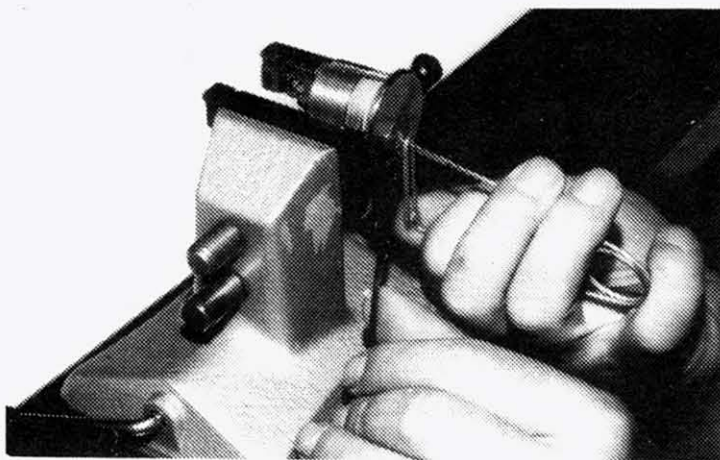
The above photograph shows the position of the hands while applying the pick-gun and tension wrench. The trigger is slowly squeezed by drawing with two, or three fingers.

Operation of the rake-gun is basically identical.

The device shown in the photograph below is called a 'Snapper.' Actually the predecessor of the Pick-Gun, this gimmick is still around-- serving as the 'poor man's pick-gun.' Instead of an entire mechanized contrivance of springs, triggers, etc., the fingers provide the 'power' for the compression and release of the blade. (The 'blade' segment of the 'snapper' is indicated by the arrow.



Again, use of the 'snapper' is accompanied with a tension wrench as shown in the photo below.



The 'snapper' is applied in much the same way as the Pick-Gun: The blade is inserted into the keyway, horizontally aligned under the pins. Through practiced and 'educated' finger pressure, the blade is compressed and quickly released, ('snapped'), to deliver a sharp impact to all pins simultaneously.

The 'snapper' does not work as well as the Pick-Gun, nor as easily. But, it works!

Last on the list of devices which are worthy of discussion is an interesting, electrically operated apparatus known as a 'vibrator pick.' I do not have a photograph of one of these gimmicks to show to you, but a picture really is not necessary. Just imagine a device that is physically similar to the Pick-Gun, but with an electrical cord connected to the handle.

The blade of the vibrator is applied to the cylinder's pins in precisely the same way as that of the pick-gun's blade, or that of the Snapper. But in contrast to the one sharp rap per-manual-operation of the latter two, the vibrator's blade oscillates rapidly up-and-down-- energetically striking the pins about 30 times a second. (This translates as the up-stroke reaction to the 110 Volt, 60 CPS current across its electro-magnetic coil.)

The damn thing works beautifully. It is a real novelty, and a pleasure to use. And while not quite as reliable as the basic picking method, the vibrator pick works better than any of the other methods I have described-- or am aware of. But before you go running out to buy one, a commercially available vibrator pick is about as easy to locate as a chicken's lips!

The reason for the conspicuous absence of vibrator picks, (or their popularity), in case you haven't guessed, is that an efficient one requires 110 Volt electrical power to 'drive' it. More often than not, a power receptacle will not be conveniently available to you when you need it. And by the time you go through the "Madam, would you mind plugging this 100' extension cord into your outlet for me while I pick the lock next-door...?" routine, you could have picked open six cylinders using the basic method, and tools.

The vibrator pick is a very clever, imaginative, novel, and effective apparatus. But it simply is not practical. However, if you must have one, a satisfactory model can be easily fabricated by attaching a pick-gun type, level-edge blade to the clapper arm of a standard door-bell from which you have removed the clapper ball, and gong. (Now you need a transformer, too!)

Cordless vibrator picks have been fabricated by affixing level-edge blades to such battery-powered apparatus as tooth-brushes, scissors, razors, and, of course, those very suspiciously shaped battery-powered 'massagers,' (dildos!), which the American female has become recently so fond of. While any one of these DC powered versions might produce an occasional success-- on a particularly co-operative cylinder, their principal deficiency proceeds from the comparatively limited amount of electrical force. Low amperage DC driven devices can not 'kick' the drivers up as smartly as will a 60 cycle coil.

Having extensively experimented with every type of device imaginable which can conceivably be used to elevate the drivers above the shear line of a pin-tumbler cylinder-- and keep them there, I have come to the conclusion that the very best 'gimmick' of all is the human nervous system. This gimmick is used to connect a simple set of picks to the brain, via the fingertips.

The best conventional pin-tumbler cylinder in the world is no match for this gimmick!

Cylinder dis-assembly & re-assembly:

The following information probably will prove to be more valuable to you than any other single lesson you have learned from the following pages. Learning the basic picking method is a process comprised of understanding the mechanism of the pin-tumbler cylinder, and the comparatively more difficult task of developing the proper 'feel' for the mechanism, and the effect of your actions upon it.

By simply *attacking* a cylinder, armed only with a set of picks and the information you have thus far absorbed, the possibility exists that developing the 'feel' may not come easily to you, or quickly enough. This might discourage you to the point of giving up. There is no need for this to happen because there is a method of practicing which virtually guarantees success. In this final section I will show you how to dis-assemble the pin-tumbler cylinder, and re-assemble it. In this way you may begin practicing by approaching a cylinder which has been only partially re-assembled, and which contains only one pin and driver combination-- rather than all five sets. By then graduating to two sets, then three, and so on, you will be developing your skill one step at a time. This method precludes any possibility of failure-- other than your own lack of enthusiasm. If you truly want to learn this phase of locksmithing, the methods laid out by this material are the most practical and effective available-- other than the attentions of a private instructor.

Earlier in this book I recommended that you purchase a 'rim' type cylinder to practice on. A 'rim' cylinder is one which is used with a surface-mounted lock. (The 'night latch' kind.) I recommended this type of cylinder only because it is a few dollars cheaper than the 'mortise' type pin-tumbler cylinder. (This is the type that screws into a lock case which is mounted within the door, rather than onto it.) The cylinder shown on Page 1 of this book, ('Introduction'), and in all other photographs and illustrations, is a mortise type cylinder. There is absolutely no mechanical difference between the rim and mortise type cylinders. The only difference exists in the shape of the housing. You will find the mortise cylinder to be easier to handle, therefore to practice with. In addition, it will 'seat' better in the jaws of a vise during practice.

DIS-ASSEMBLY:

By reviewing the foregoing material you will see that the plug of a cylinder will rotate free when the pins & drivers are separated at the shear line. In a completely assembled cylinder, the reason why the plug can not be withdrawn from the housing, (when freed), is that the retainer, (a small cam, or disc fastened by screws at the rear of the cylinder), holds the plug in place. By removing the retainer, and inserting the proper key, the plug can be pulled right out of the housing. But if you do this-- THE SPRINGS AND DRIVERS WOULD COME POPPING OUT AND FLY ALL OVER THE PLACE. The proper way to dis-assemble a cylinder is slowly and carefully, and with complete awareness of just what is happening-- and how to control it.

Step one in dis-assembly is to remove the retainer by loosening its screws at the rear of the cylinder as shown in Photo 12.

The retainer & screws may not look exactly like these, but however they look, remove them. (On a rim type cylinder the retainer will be a round disc which also serves to hold the 'tailpiece' in place. It is removed in the same way.)

Step two is to insert the key. When you have done this, commence to be very careful. The entire locking mechanism is now disengaged, and all parts are eagerly poised to come flying apart. Do not tilt the cylinder forward, (off horizontal), and do not make any moves quickly, or without thinking.

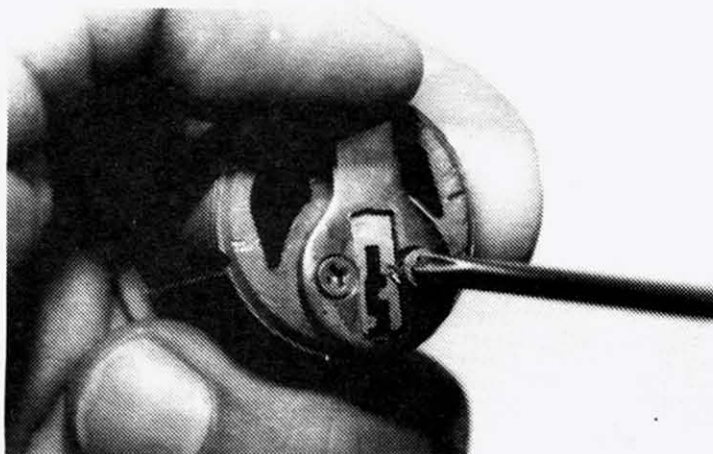


PHOTO 12

After inserting the key, rotate the plug about 1/8" in either direction, (this will present a smooth surface to the drivers as the plug is drawn out beneath them), and slowly withdraw the plug from the housing by pulling on the bow of the key. When the end surface of the plug clears the first driver chamber, (closest to the rear of the housing), the driver and the spring from this chamber will pop out. It is best to do this for the first time while holding the cylinder over a smooth, soft blanket to avoid losing small parts.

As you continue withdrawing the plug, the driver chambers will empty one at a time. Be sure to hold the plug sufficiently upright as to avoid spilling out the pins during this procedure. When the plug has been completely withdrawn, the cylinder has been dis-assembled. Dump the pins out of the plug and you will see how their individual lengths conform to the cuts in the key. Look inside the housing 'bore' and you will see the row of driver chambers. (Photo 13.) If some of the springs failed to pop all the way out, (Photo 14), and you can not shake them out, lift them out with a tweezers.



PHOTO 13

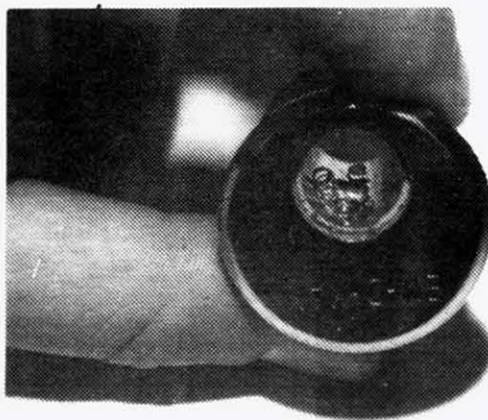


PHOTO 14

RE-ASSEMBLY:

The first step in re-assembly is to be sure that the pins are replaced in the proper chambers of the plug. To do this, insert the key into the plug and begin experimentally placing the pins into the chambers. When a pin is introduced to its proper chamber, its top surface will align flush with the top surface of the plug.

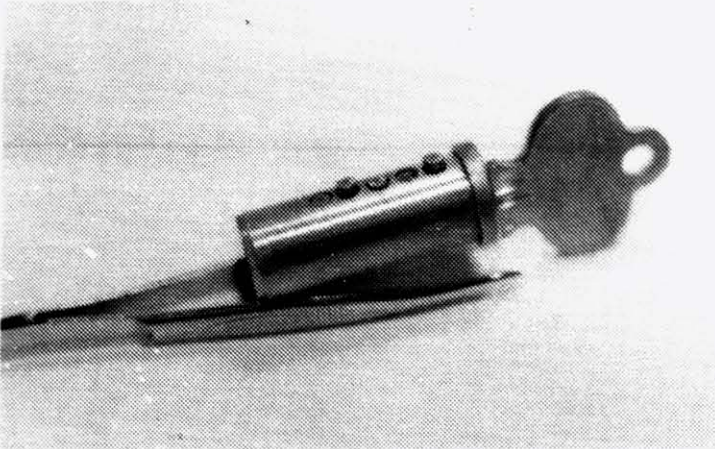


PHOTO 15

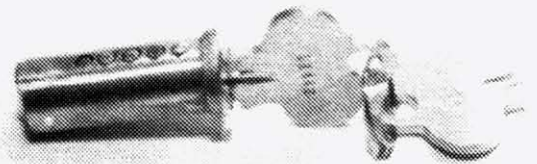


PHOTO 16

Photo 15 shows a plug with the pins improperly seated. Notice that the first pin, (from the left), only is flush with the top surface. The next pin is high. The next is also high. The next is low, and the last is high. Photo 16 shows a plug with all pins properly seated in their respective chambers. All are flush with the top surface of the plug. When you have properly replaced the pins in their chambers, set the plug aside for now.

In order to re-assemble the cylinder, a tool called a 'plug-follower' must be used. While regular plug-followers are made of steel rod, and are sold by locksmith suppliers, any smooth, cylindrical object that will fit snugly into the bore of the cylinder's housing can be used. The diameter of the average bore is $\frac{1}{2}$ " to $\frac{9}{16}$ ". An excellent 'follower' can be fabricated from a $3\frac{1}{2}$ " length of wood dowel. If the dowel is a bit too large for the bore, it can easily be adapted to a perfect fit by sandpapering it. The follower must not fit too tightly. It must be able to snugly slide through the bore.

In a 'pinch,' I have used such objects as a lipstick, a narrow plastic vial, a rifle cartridge, (.308 calibre), and numerous other objects as a follower. Actually, a less-than-snug fitting object may be used, but throughout the re-assembly procedure, sufficient pressure must be applied to ensure that the follower remains in snug contact with the surface of the bore in the area of the driver chambers. Use of the properly fitted follower, however, makes the job a lot easier.

One further note before proceeding: The majority of drivers in a cylinder are of the same length. If you find a cylinder in which the drivers are of varying lengths, don't be concerned about it. This is not a critical factor. Just be sure, when re-assembling, that the longer drivers conform to the chambers having the shorter pins.

When you have obtained a follower, or a suitable substitute, you are ready to 'load' the housing chambers with the springs & drivers.

Hold the housing upside-down as shown in Photo 17, and slide the follower in from the rear just far enough so that it covers only the last two holes. (You should be able to see only the last three while looking in from the face of the cylinder.) Bring the face of the follower up to the edge of the third hole in, (the middle hole), and using a tweezer, pick up a spring by the middle and insert it into the middle hole. (The spring will not go all the way in at this time.)

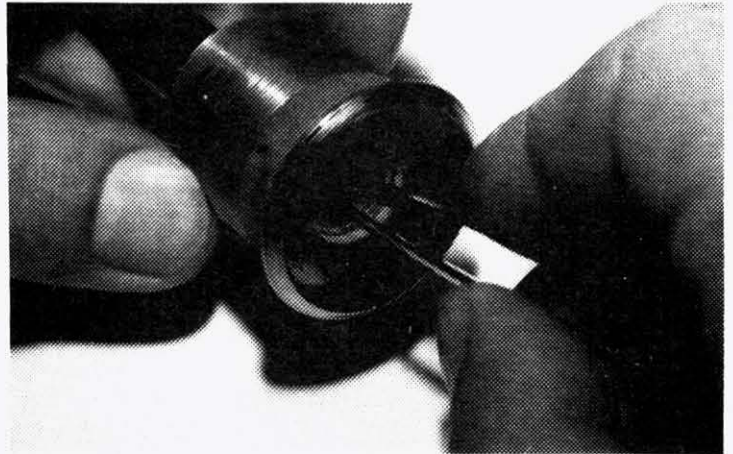


PHOTO 17

The next step requires a little patience, and some 'digital dexterity.'

Using the tweezer, grip a driver close to one end. (This will be the 'top end.')

Reach in and place the 'bottom' of the driver above the spring and use it to push the spring all the way down into the chamber, and follow it with the driver until the driver is about half-way down into the chamber, itself. At this point, APPLY PRESSURE WITH THE FOLLOWER AGAINST THE EXPOSED SECTION OF THE DRIVER SO THAT IT CAN'T POP BACK UP. (This operation is very similar to the use of 'tension' in the picking procedure. The principle is identical.)

Having the driver thus situated about half-way down into the chamber, compressing the spring, and wedged in place by the applied pressure of the follower, release the grip of the tweezer and use the tweezer's point to push the driver the remainder of the way down into the chamber. When the driver slips all the way in, (over its shear line as it would be known in the picking procedure), the follower will move suddenly forward, (toward you), and its surface will have trapped the driver and spring in their chamber. Thus, the 'middle,' (and the most difficult), chamber has been 'loaded.'

Now move the follower up to the edge of the next chamber hole, (the second one in), and repeat the foregoing procedure. Then repeat it with the first chamber from the face of the plug-- as is being done in Photo 17.

The next step requires only common sense. (But proceed slowly and carefully.) Turn the cylinder around. Slide the follower through the housing, (toward the face), until only the remaining two holes are exposed. (If you are not careful, and you slide the follower clear of the middle, 'loaded' hole, the driver and spring will pop out.) Load these remaining two chambers in the same manner as you did the first three.

When you have loaded the fifth, and final, chamber, you are ready to complete the re-assembly. All that remains to be done is to replace the plug in the housing, and fasten the retainer in place. Obviously, you can not just pull the follower out of the housing because the drivers and springs would just come popping out again. Photos 18, 19, & 20, on the next page, show the proper procedure for replacing the plug without disturbing the loaded chambers.

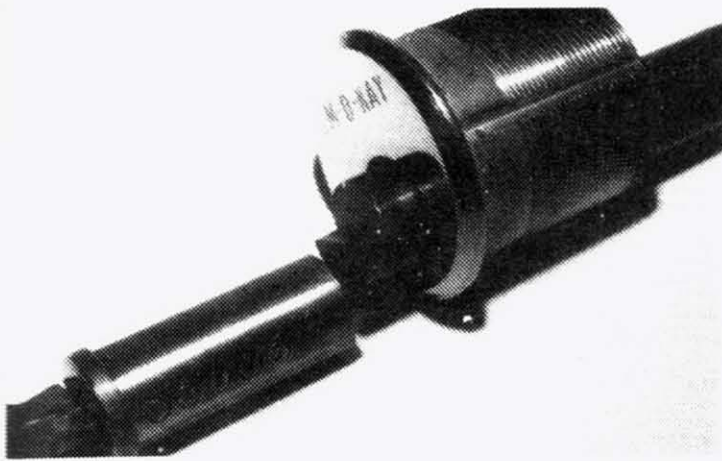


PHOTO 18



PHOTO 19

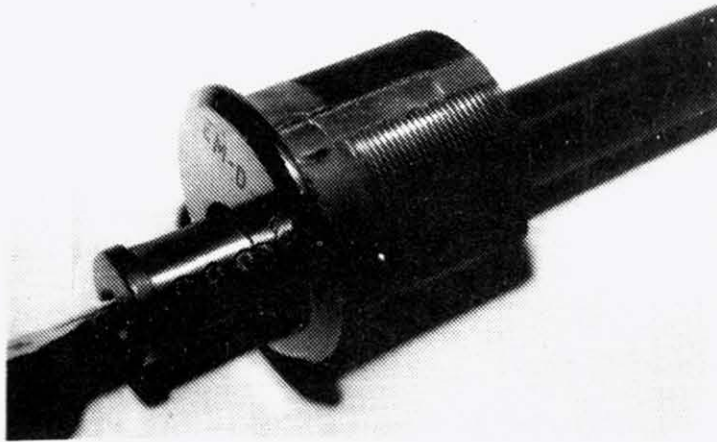


PHOTO 20

Slide the follower so that only about $\frac{1}{4}$ " or so protrudes from the face of the housing. (Photo 18.) With the rear of the plug, (Photo 19), slowly propel the follower into--and through--the housing, (from the face), and out the other side.

Remember that when dis-assembling the cylinder, the plug was rotated about $\frac{1}{8}$ of a turn before removing. When replacing it, (Photo 20), the plug should be likewise rotated to present a smooth surface to the driver chambers.

When the plug is in all the way, rotate it to center until you feel the pins & drivers 'snap' together. Hold the plug in place with fingertip pressure against its face, and withdraw the key. Replace the retainer and screws.

(A special note on the foregoing procedure:) The handling of pins and drivers with a common tweezer might prove to be a problem. The pins often tend to snap out of the tweezer's grip. (This is a good way to lose them.) A way to vastly improve upon this is to file a slight notch in the jaws of the tweezer so that the pins and drivers can not slip away.

For your future reference, the plug can be removed from the housing without permitting the drivers and springs to pop out by using the follower to push the plug out in the same way as it was used to push the plug in. Figure 27, (on the next page), illustrates the method: 'A' is the follower. 'B' is the plug, (with the pin chambers rotated $\frac{1}{8}$ of a turn.) 'C' shows the drivers being contained in their chambers by the smooth face of the follower. This method will be useful when you wish only to remove one, or two sets of pins and drivers

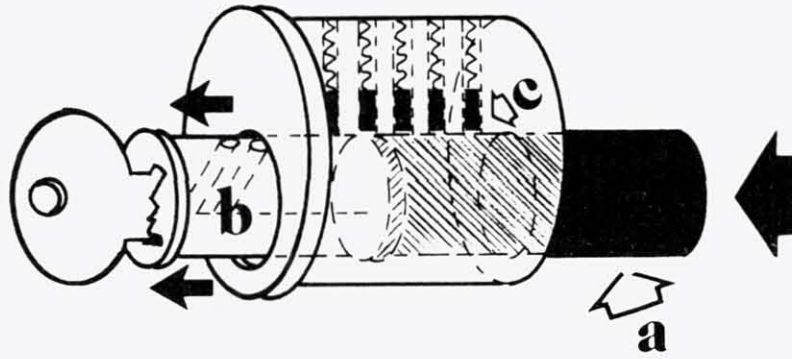


FIGURE 27

This is also the method used when you wish only to change the pin combination. (Re-arrange the pins to conform to the cuts on another key.) By containing the drivers in this way, the job is done much more quickly.

For the purpose of practicing the skill of picking, the following is the recommended procedure:

- 1) Completely dis-assemble the cylinder.
- 2) 'Load' only the middle driver chamber, and replace only that pin for the middle chamber of the plug.
- 3) Develop the 'feel' of applying tension to the plug, and raising the pin to elevate the single driver over the shear line.
- 4) Now, using the follower, dis-assemble the cylinder and 'load' the pin and driver chambers closest to the rear of the cylinder. Re-assemble, and work on these two loaded chambers.
- 5) Now load the chamber closest to the face of the cylinder. The picking procedure will now present some difficulty because of the three loaded chambers. When you are able to confidently pick three pins, you have developed 'feel.' Whichever of the two remaining chambers you load next is up to you.

When you have graduated to opening the fully loaded, five pin cylinder, you will have developed not only the 'feel' for picking, but an intimate familiarity with that particular cylinder which you have been practicing on. Obtain another cylinder, (with an unfamiliar combination), and practice on it.

From this point on, you can develop a proficiency limited only by your willingness to practice.

The 'Rapid Destruction' Procedure:

There are exceptional individuals whose fascination with the challenge of surmounting the mechanical 'puzzle' of the pin-tumbler cylinder is such that they become obsessively determined to compromise any pin-tumbler cylinder in a matter of seconds. For these devoted Masters of the Craft, the concept of lock-picking skill has evolved into a serious art form. The person who can apply a set of picks to any cylinder and open it within a few seconds is truly an artist within the ranks of the Master Locksmith. (Contrary to popular notion, there are few, if any, burglars who possess this advanced mastery. It would seem that the requisite degree of self-discipline is alien to the typical personality of the anti-social thief.)

The average locksmith is proficient at picking locks, and is able to open a majority of cylinders by this method. However, there are some cylinders which are stubbornly resistant and will yield only to the true artist. There are times when even the best of the average locksmiths will encounter a really stubborn cylinder on a 'lock-out' call, when the circumstances call for a fast opening. (Medical, or other emergency.) Such circumstances dis-allow the luxury of 'patient endeavor.'

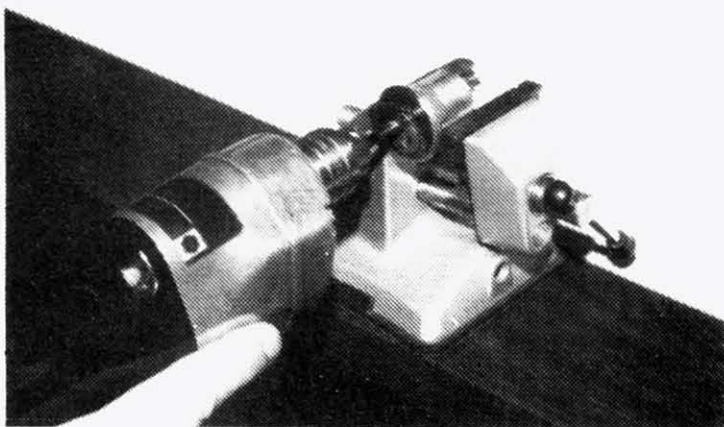
Assuming that the conditions exclude access via a window, etc., and that none of the specially designed heavy forcing gear such as jacks, prying bars, etc., is available, or it is not desirable to produce costly damage as the result of 'crude' force, the most sophisticated, professional of the 'forceful' methods is that of Rapid Destruction of the cylinder by drilling.

While the drilling technique, (properly executed), is very fast as well as comparatively certain, it-- like picking-- requires some knowledge, practice, and experience. Simply stated, the conventional pin-tumbler cylinder, (including all of its component parts), is made of brass-- or some similarly non-ferrous, (rust-proof), soft alloy composition. Therefore, its inherent resistance to the penetrating effect of a sharp, hardened steel drill bit is minimal.

Assuming that you are thoroughly familiar with the mechanism of the pin-tumbler cylinder, you know that the locking influence occurs at the 'shear line.' The objective of the drilling technique is to destroy the shear line-- as well as the immediate portion of the drivers impeding rotation.

While the drilling technique may be implemented with practically on common electric drill, the vast majority of *unspecialized* drills operate at a constant speed of approx. 2200 RPM. This comparatively high rate of speed, combined with a tendency to 'surge' immediately into high speed rotation, significantly reduces one's ability to control the critical stages of this relatively precise procedure. Therefore, if an AC powered drill is to be used, the recommended type is one which provides trigger controlled, (rheostat), variable speed.

Because convenient AC receptacles are not usually available when this procedure must be used, the use of a battery-powered, ('cordless'), $\frac{1}{4}$ " drill, such as the Black & Decker, Model #7078, shown in the photo on the next page, is ideally suited. These are comparatively low-speed, (under load), drills, and the noticeable absence of starting surge allows



for satisfactory control.

The ideal drill bit diameter is 3/16". It is not wise to use just *any* bit. If a common, hardware store variety bit is used-- it is best to use a brand new one. Although brass yields easily to a steel bit, the interior of a pin-tumbler cylinder is not solid throughout. Once the bit penetrates the mechanism, its 'flutes' will encounter various sharp-edged objects, (pin fragments, etc.), which will tend to 'snag' the bit and impede its rotation. This is un-avoidable, but by applying the proper amount of control while drilling in, the snagging effect can be minimized.

The hazard of using a cheap, common bit, however, is the possibility that rather than just momentarily stalling at a sharp snag-- the bit will snap off, or shatter within the cylinder. This would create an additional obstruction than the normal, intact locked cylinder. The way to avoid this is to use a bit which is specially hardened, or obtain a carbon steel bit from a machinist's or locksmith's supply house.

THE PROCEDURE:

Unless you are sufficiently familiar with cylinders to recognize at a glance how many pins it contains, (five or six-- or possibly more or less), use a 'short-hook' pick to count them.

Figure 28 indicates the drilling point. Use a center-punch to impress a substantial anchor point for starting the bit.

Apply firm pressure, commence to drill, and maintain rotation until the entire tip of the bit is imbedded. It is particularly important that you concentrate on drilling into the cylinder as straight as possible.

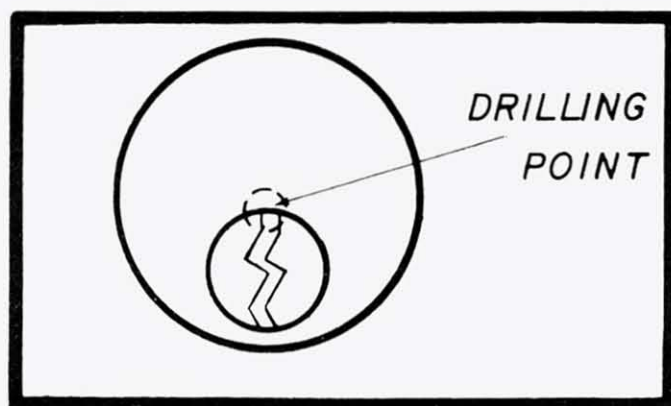


FIGURE 28

Figure 29, on the following page, is a cut-away view showing the penetration course of the bit-- drilling right through the drivers to completely excavate the shear line. In order to accomplish this, the most critical element of the entire operation), it is vitally important that the bit be driven in true straight! If the bit is allowed to steer off true, or it becomes deflected off true by snagging a fragment of the first destroyed driver, the initial mis-alignment will increase in proportion to the depth of penetration and the bit

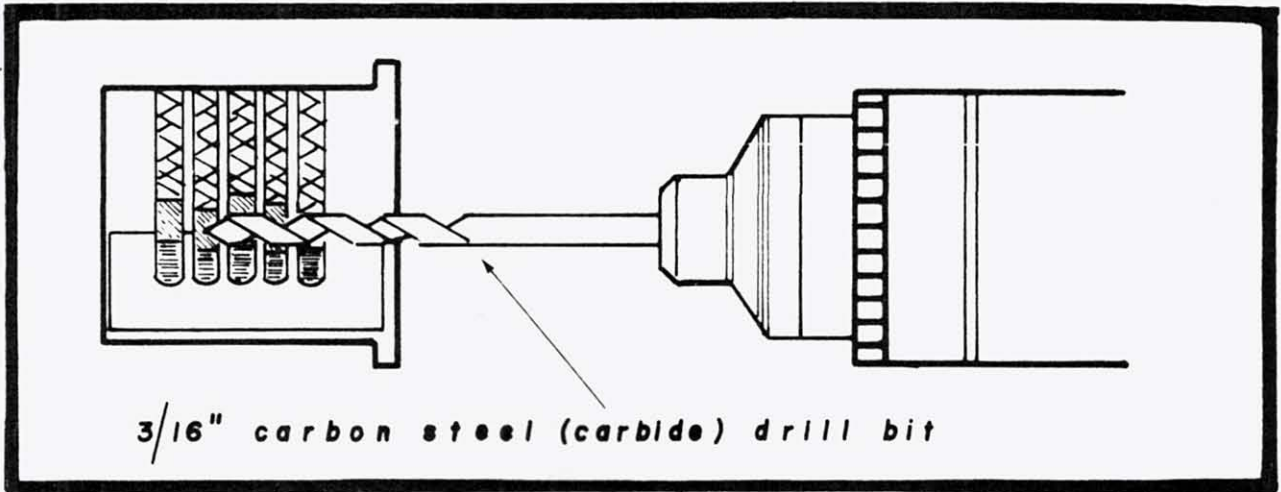


FIGURE 29

will ultimately miss the last driver-- or more than just one. If your hand is experienced in the use of an electric drill, you probably will have no difficulty and will be able to drill straight in 'freehand.' But the use of a drilling guide, ('jig'), is an enormously helpful item, and is highly recommended.

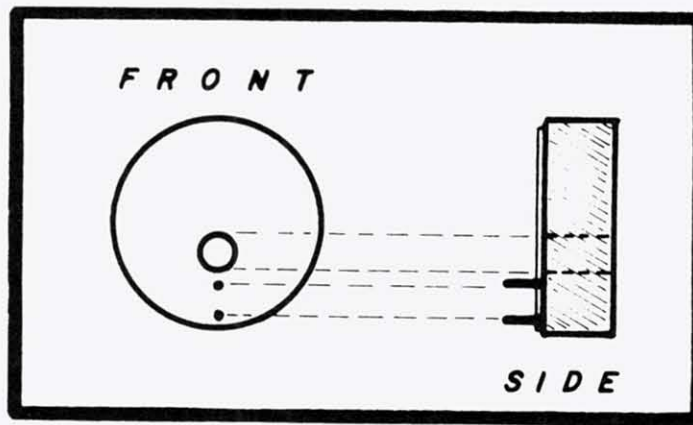


FIGURE 30

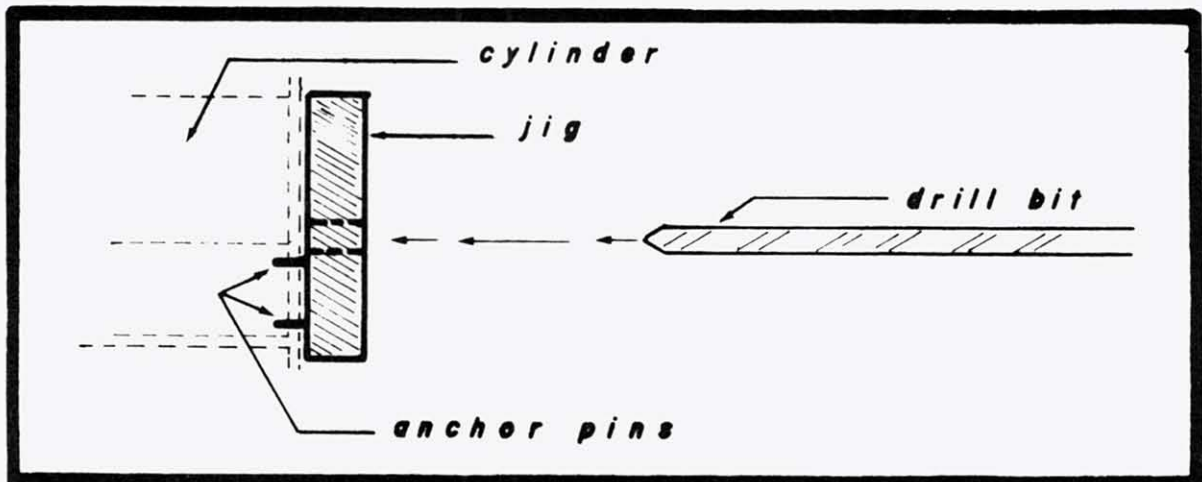


FIGURE 31

The item shown in Figure 30 is a commercially available jig which is made specifically for the purpose of drilling cylinders. It is a very well made little gadget, and enables very fast, accurate drilling. Its 'anchor pins,' as shown in Figure 32 are situated to fit into any keyway, which properly aligns the guide hole and stabilizes the entire process. The jig is simply positioned, held in place with one hand, and the bit is inserted into the guide hole for straight, accurate boring.

'CONTROLLING' PROGRESS OF THE BIT:

When the cutting edges of the bit penetrate the first driver, you will distinctly feel the effects of the action: The bit will shudder a bit, a 'grinding' vibration will occur, and the rotation may abruptly stall. When the drill stalls, immediately release the trigger. Back off slightly, restore high speed, and slowly restore firm, forward pressure. You will notice that when the bit clears the first chamber, and is boring through the divider wall into the next chamber, smooth, stable operation will resume.

From destruction of the second driver, onward, the grinding and shuddering action will be less distinct, but the tendency to stall will increase. Stalling is controlled by alternately decreasing and increasing pressure, and stopping the drill whenever a sharp snag occurs. You will notice that the flutes of the bit will excrete the ground-up driver fragments and the powdered cylinder material. Occasionally it may be necessary to withdraw the bit and use a pick, (or extractor tool), to clear loose debris from the bore hole.

Each time the bit attacks a driver, you will be able to feel it. Keep count of each driver as it is eliminated. When the bit begins to 'chew up' the last one, prepare to let up on the drill to avoid drilling completely through the cylinder. This could possibly sever the operating cam, or damage the mechanism of the lock, itself.

When you feel that the last driver has been severed, relax pressure and begin to move the bit, (still under full speed), in and out of the bore hole to remove as much of the debris as possible. Withdraw the bit and blow out the hole. The hole should be clean, smooth, and free of any large fragments. (You will see that, in effect, a new shear line has been created-- with no drivers present to impede rotation of the plug.) Wedge the tip of a screwdriver into the keyway, and sharply rotate the plug.

It will be possible that a stray fragment, or the remainder of a partially severed driver has dropped down to impede rotation. If so, there is now ample access to insert a pick into the bore hole, or the keyway, and just push the interfering object out of the way.

Proficiency at the foregoing procedure can be quickly developed by using the proper tools, and by practicing on a few 'junk' cylinders. The technique is easily mastered. If, however, by accident or error, a bit shatters inside the cylinder, (thus precluding further progress), or if the drill drifts off true center, unless you are able to correct the condition and resume, the entire cylinder may have to be destroyed.

The first step toward this more 'radical' method of destruction is to chuck a $\frac{1}{4}$ " bit into the drill and attempt to 'salvage' the procedure by expanding the diameter of the bore hole. If the $\frac{1}{4}$ " bit won't do it, graduate to a $\frac{5}{16}$ " bit. If your drill chuck capacity is limited to $\frac{1}{4}$ ", there are bits available, (from $\frac{5}{16}$ " to $\frac{1}{2}$ "), which have $\frac{1}{4}$ " shanks. ('Reduction shank' bits.) By constantly increasing the bit size, the entire plug will eventually be destroyed, providing sufficient access to operate the lock with a screwdriver or long-nose pliers.

The method of 'radical destruction' if only a $\frac{1}{4}$ " bit is available is to 'riddle drill' the entire mechanism, allowing it to be pulled apart piece-by-piece. This is done by punching a number of anchor spots on the face of the cylinder as shown in Figure 32 and boring in at each of them at alternate intervals. These anchor spots should be struck at measured $\frac{1}{4}$ " intervals, and drilled with a $\frac{3}{16}$ " bit. It will then be a simple procedure to 'eat' away at the weakened, remaining segments with a larger bit, or by just knocking the rest of the 'guts' out. Figure 33 shows the boring pattern for radical drilling.

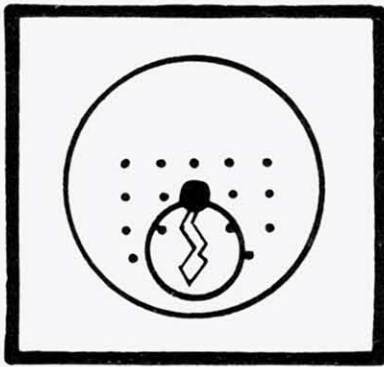


FIGURE 32

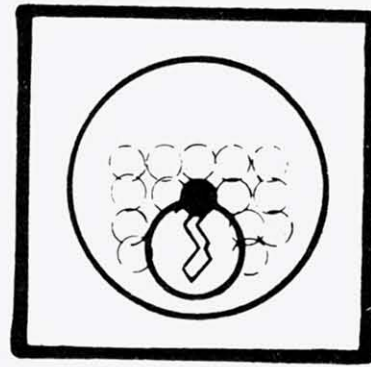


FIGURE 33

A set of 'rotary files,' (various shaped cutting heads terminating with $\frac{1}{4}$ " shanks), is very helpful for this sort of destruction of a cylinder. With all the proper tools readily available to him, an experienced locksmith can rout the guts out of a cylinder in less than ten minutes. It should be noted that a 'cordless' drill, (even under full charge), might not be adequate for bore-expansion, 'riddle drilling,' or 'gutting' with rotary files. For these radical procedures, an AC powered drill should be used-- and the heavier, the better. (A $\frac{1}{2}$ " chuck, 6 amp motor will chew it up like peanuts.)

Radical drilling of the 'rim' type cylinder is made somewhat simpler by the comparatively easy access to its retainer screws. (See Figure 34.)

On the majority, (not all), of rim cylinders, straight-on drilling alignment with the retainer screws can be obtained by bisecting the vertical diameter of the cylinder face with a scribed line, (see Figure 35), at a point $\frac{5}{8}$ " from the top center of the face. On this line, and $\frac{3}{16}$ " from each side edge of the cylinder face, punch an anchor spot.

The objective is to drill straight in at these points, contact the retainer screws as shown in Figure 34, and ream them out of their seatings in the housing. If this is done properly, (and with a little bit of luck), the cylinder can be removed with just two passes with a $\frac{1}{4}$ " bit. If you 'miss,' or drift off, the average 'rim' cylinder is easier to 'riddle drill' than the mortise type.

NOTE:

When the rim cylinder is successfully loosened by reaming its retainer screws, it is best not to pull it out of the lock right away. Instead, grip its edges and try to rotate

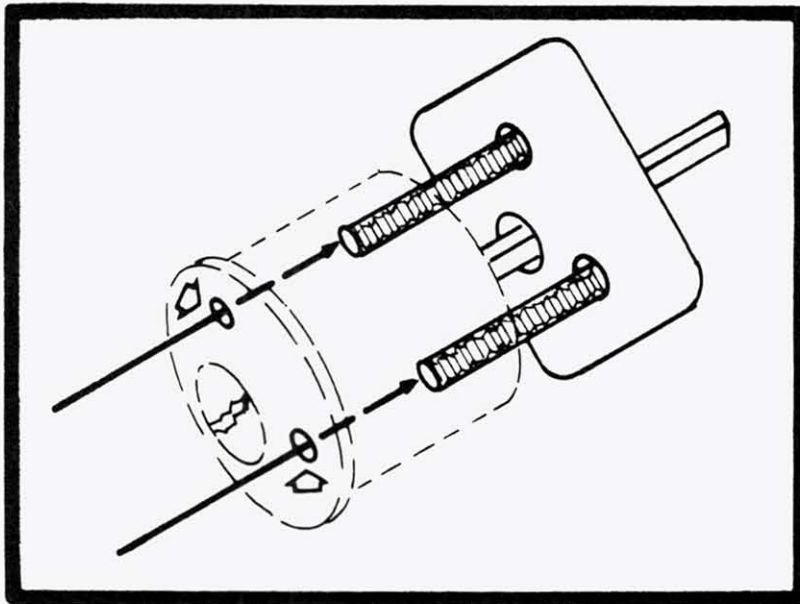


FIGURE 34

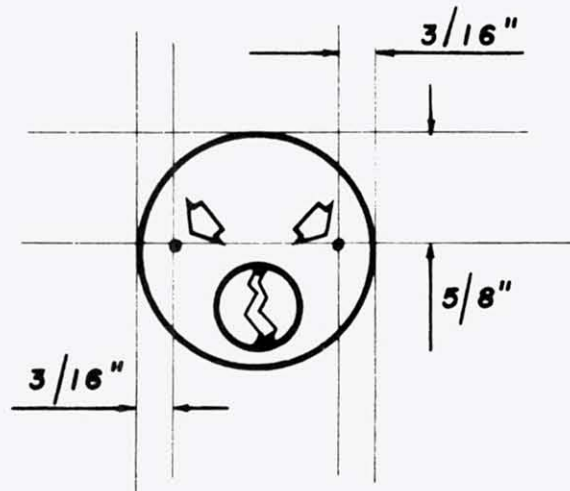


FIGURE 35

the lock open by turning the whole cylinder. The reason for this is that the better rim locks have a spring-loaded shutter arranged at the opening to the operating cam. When the 'tailpiece' is withdrawn, the shutter closes over the access hole. Having to push this shutter aside with a scriber tip, or ice-pick point, to regain access is a pain-in-the-neck worth avoiding.

If a retainer plate of the same type used with the particular rim cylinder in question, (see Figure 34), it can be positioned over the face of the cylinder and used to mark the drilling points. Align the tailpiece aperture with the plug surface, and the retainer screw holes will provide accurate alignment.

In order to best understand the procedure for drilling at the retainer screws of a rim cylinder, examine a few rim cylinders before attempting the actual procedure. 'Hands-on' examination is worth a thousand words, and a hundred pictures.

As a beginner, or student locksmith, you are likely to encounter difficulty in obtaining a 'small purchase' source of supply for specialized tools and other equipment needed to practice your trade and further your education.

In the event that you are unable to locate a local, small quantity supplier of tools for the Locksmith and Burglar Alarm trade, the author suggests that you contact the following company:

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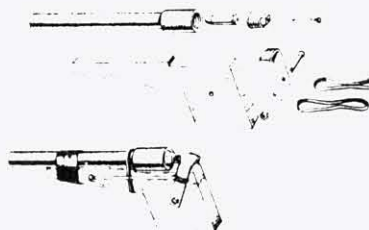
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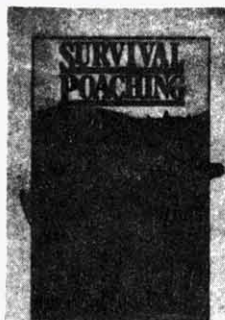
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MANUAL**

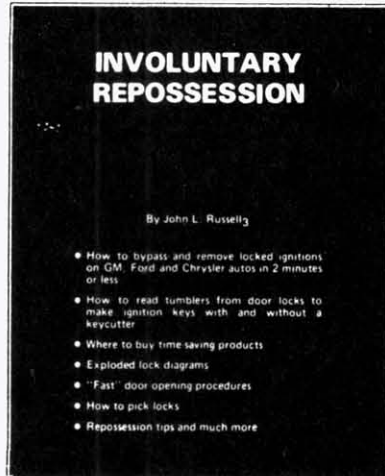
This manual was originally used by various government agencies to assist in surreptitious entry. It was written from knowledge obtained from European sources and reveals lock picking techniques known by only a few American locksmiths. With large diagrams & drawings, it discusses the picking of pin tumbler locks, Helason Locks, tolerances and mushroom pin locks. This is an extremely technical presentation of techniques previously kept hush-hush. It is a must manual for every locksmith and locksmith student.

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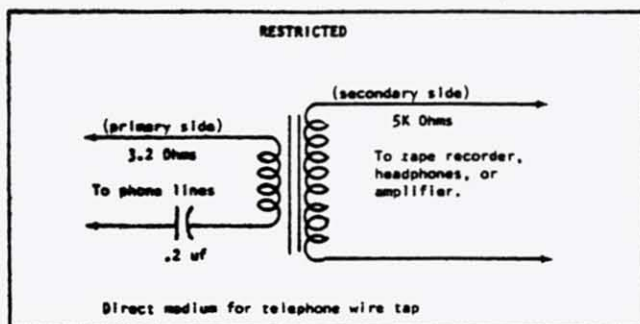
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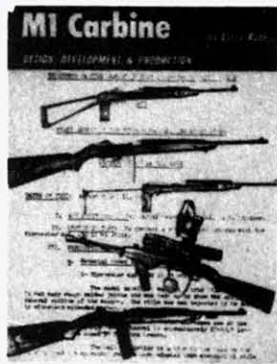
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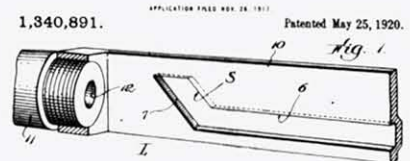
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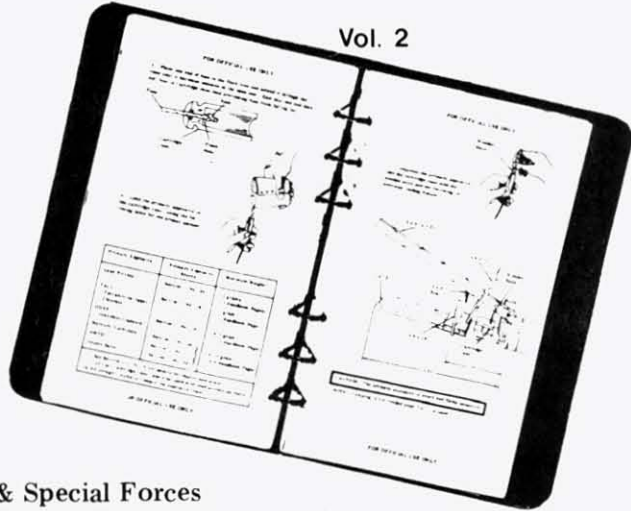
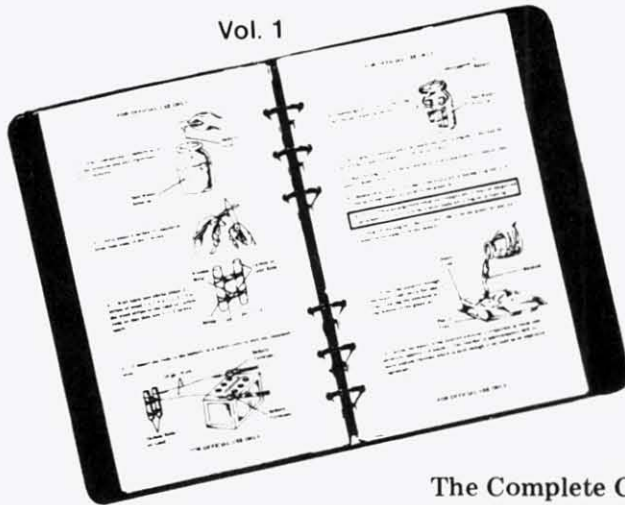
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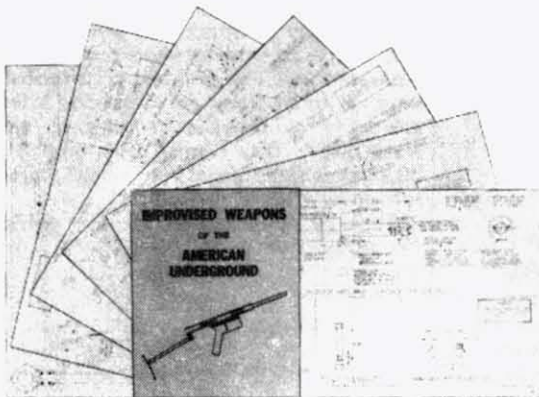
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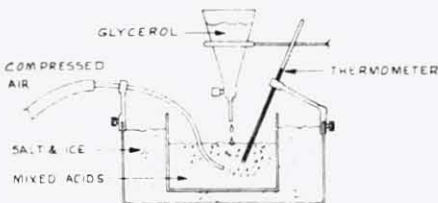
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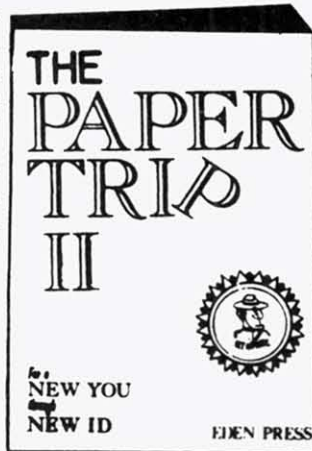
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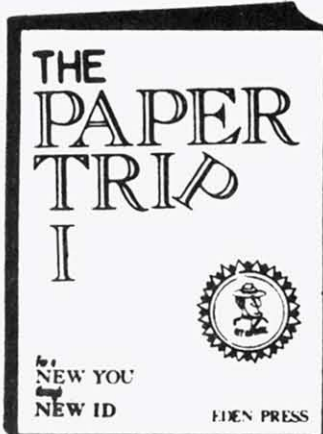
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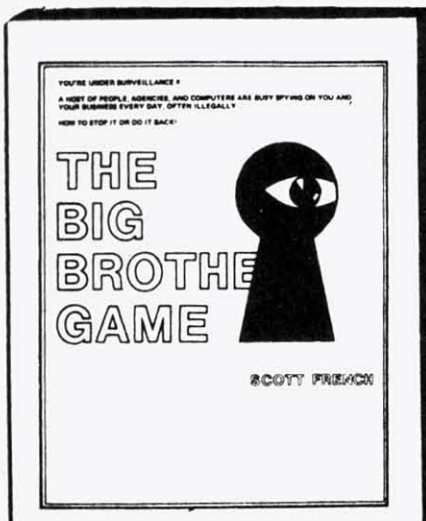
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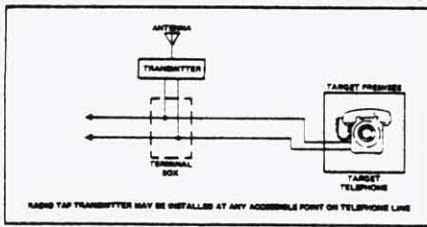
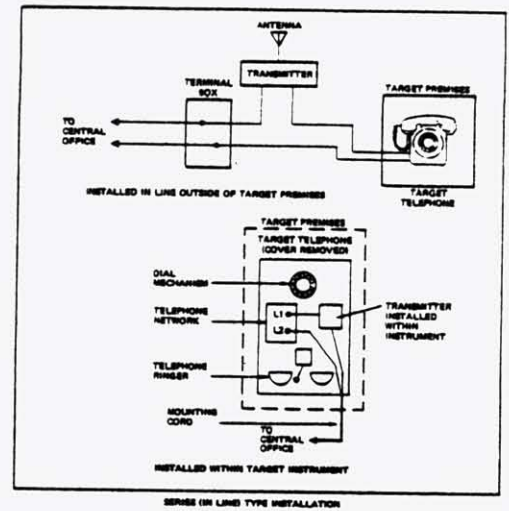


FIGURE 8. RADIO TAP TRANSMITTERS



TOP SECRET

Back in September, 1977, the major news services carried an item pertaining to a top-secret research document devoted to telecommunications privacy and wiretapping methods, ranging from simple to highly sophisticated. It seems that the document was accidentally *de-classified* and released through general distribution before the error was noticed. This controversial document is a concise, technically explicit and clearly understandable explanation and description of WIRETAPPING METHODS. It was prepared for restricted distribution to top-level White House officials by a well-known telecommunications firm at a cost of \$49,000.00. It turned out to be much more *revealing* than expected, so much so that the Executive Office of The President recommended it be destroyed! Instead, a number of copies *leaked*.

It is extremely difficult to obtain copies of this now historical document, unless one has connections to cut through a lot of red tape. However, we are offering actual reproductions of the original with nothing edited, deleted, or omitted. A reporter who was shown a copy of this item called it "a text-book on wiretapping." It contains such specific, detailed information as:

- ➔ *INTERCEPTION OF A SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL TELEPHONE LINE.*
(How to tap a private phone line.)
- ➔ *INTERCEPTION OF A BUSINESS COMMUNICATION-TO-COMPUTER SERVICE.*
(How to tap a business phone and/or gain access to its computer data, via 'bank' terminals, etc.)
- ➔ *INTERCEPTION OF CONVERSATIONS ('carried') OVER THE DIRECT DISTANCE DIALING NETWORK.*
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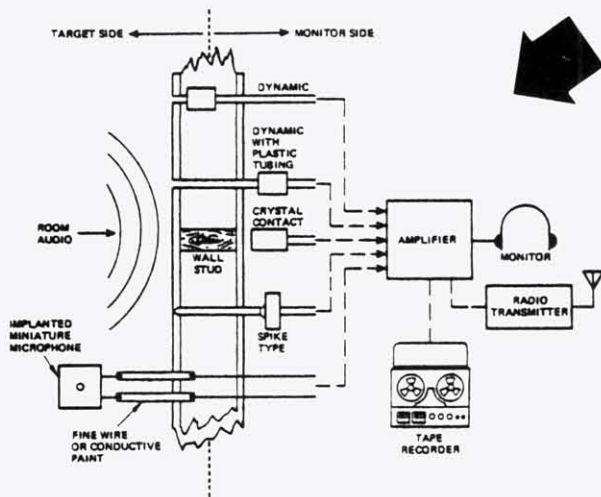
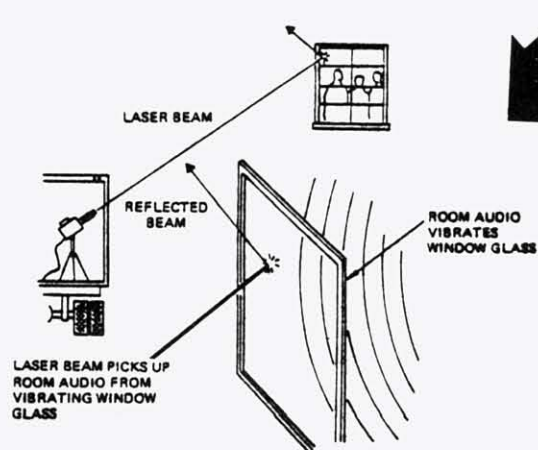


FIGURE 7. VARIOUS MICROPHONES TYPES AND METHODS OF COVERT INSTALLATION



LASER WINDOW PICK-OFF

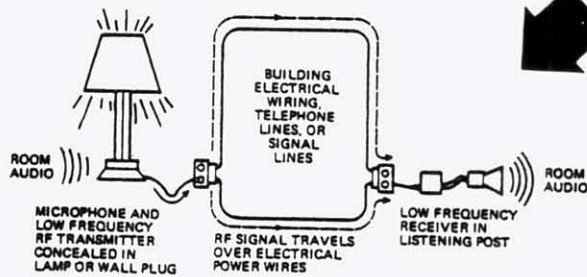
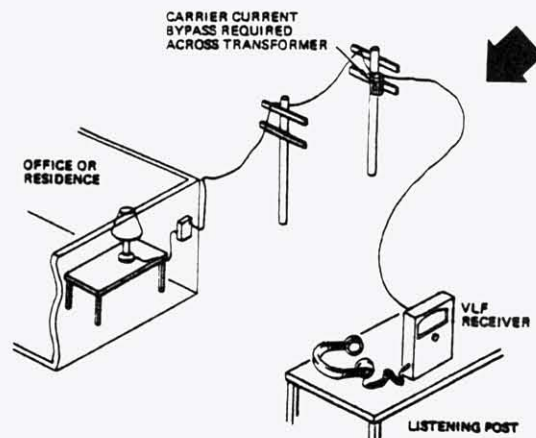


FIGURE 9. CARRIER CURRENT TRANSMITTER



This huge volume is another official government document that deals quite thoroughly with the *guarded* topic of ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE.

We have obtained a number of printed copies of the original, un-edited, 240 page report prepared by the NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE REVIEW OF FEDERAL AND STATE LAWS RELATING TO WIRETAPPING AND ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE. This is an extensive, highly informative document that cost hundreds of thousands of (tax) dollars to produce, and was presented to The President, The Senate, and The Congress in 1976.

The bulk of this unique, book-form report is extremely interesting, well written, and filled with fascinating technical descriptions. Supportive illustrations are typified by the above. Bugging devices of every type are clearly explained, as are wiretapping equipment and procedures. In addition, there are several lengthy, intelligent discussions of surveillance practices. The letter and principle of the laws pertaining to the subject are plainly defined. A complete glossary of terms used in the surveillance field and a bibliography of reference materials are found in the back.

This is a real gold-mine of pertinent information on a highly confidential subject, and a definite must for anyone with a serious interest in it. We highly recommend this item to security professionals, investigators, police, attorneys, and above all, counter-surveillance specialists and consultants.

★ THE 'TOP SECRET' ★ REGISTRY OF U.S. GOVERNMENT RADIO FREQUENCIES

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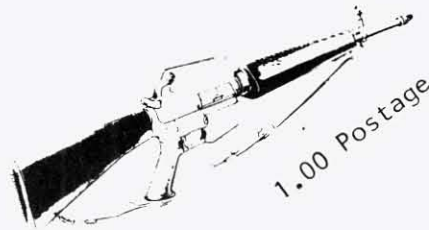
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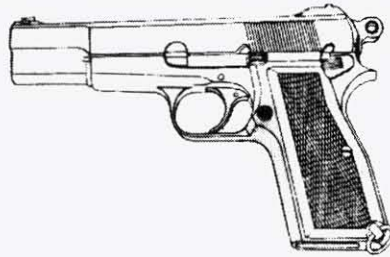


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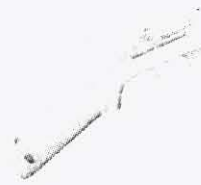
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