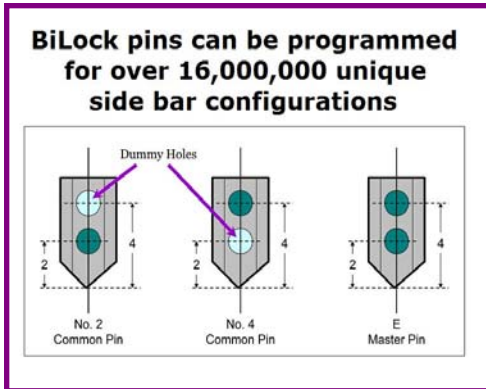


It's Bump Proof – Really!

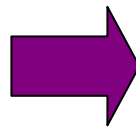
The media and general public are having a field day with the whole Bump Key issue. If you haven't done it yet, make an internet search on "bump key" and see what shows up. There are claims of lock bumping by children as young as six and seven. Locks from the US and all over the world are vulnerable. I even saw a video that showed how to do it with a banana. Yeah, the fruit.



Likewise the lock industry itself has become bizarre in its claims. It seems every lock from KW1 and up is Bump Proof. I get calls all the time from locksmiths who remain confused by all of the claims. What locks are really bump proof? Here's what I tell them. There are only three technologies that I know of that are absolutely Bump Proof – electronic or pushbutton locks that don't have mechanical override cylinders, locks that use rotating discs (like Abloy), and locks with programmable side bars (like BiLock). These locks will stand up to anyone trying to bump them regardless how much experience or knowledge the thief has. Every other lock technology can be bumped.

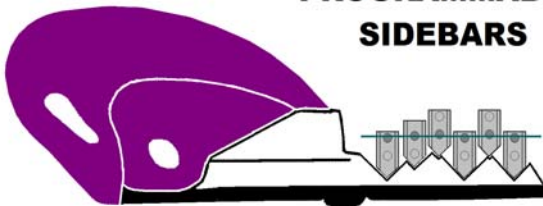


There are 13 different pins in the BiLock pin Kit

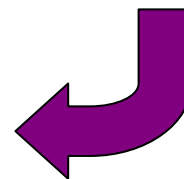


Each Side Bar has six fingers

PROGRAMMABLE SIDEBARS



The Side Bar can retract when the pins align.



Bump Proof Really

The next question is usually “Well what about ____? They are rated high security and have a side bar?” Unfortunately the side bar is usually the same for all keys in a master system. Most times locksmiths use the same sidebar for all of their installations too. So if you have any of the keys in a master system or if you read the dealer’s decal next to a door, you pretty much have the side bar issue solved. “But we have angle cuts.” I ask them back how many keys in the system have the same angles. After that you’re left with pins that can be bumped. These locks may be bump resistant from six year olds and people who use frozen bananas to open their doors. But there are professional thieves and experienced locksmiths who know better. Does the person down the hall or next door have the same style key as your customer? Bumping a high security lock may be one of the easiest ways to get in.

“But what about modifying the existing cylinder?” There are tricks that can be played in some cylinders by adding ball bearings, different tension springs, special pins etc to add bump resistance. Unless your time is free, you are probably better off selling a production solution. Some manufacturers may soon add special pins to their locks to improve protection. In some cases it may make the lock more bump resistant, but probably not Bump Proof.

Today, most of the locks installed in America are not Bump Proof. That includes everything from government housing to single family homes. How many government and commercial buildings still only have a six or seven pin cylinder as their lock system? The bump key issue is a locksmith’s opportunity to survey the facility and recommend a package of solutions. However, if they demand Bump Proof you should sell them a high security lock based upon a technology like electronics, Abloy or Bilock.

By Tom DiVito
July 2007

For more information, here are some reference sites for you check out. They include sites that sell bump keys and places that discuss bumping conventional and high security locks. Some of the brands discussed include American, Arrow, ASSA, Best, Corbin-Russwin, Dexter, Ilco, Kwikset, Master, Medeco, Multilock, Sargent, Schlage, Segal, Weiser, and Yale.

www.peterson-international.com/bump_keys.html

www.engadget.com/2006/08/25/the-lockdown-locked-but-not-secure-part-2/2

www.mybumpkeys.com

www.toool.nl/bumping.pdf