PUZZLE

LOCKS

Disc Tumbler and Puzzle Locks

Some residential and business doors use puzzle locks that have five numbers that must be pressed in sequence to open the door. These are sometimes referred to as push-button locks. Simplex Security Company makes a good mechanism, and since it is typical of most of these types of locks, we will use one as an example.

One technique used to open such a lock is to apply rotational pressure on the knob and push each button, seeing which one offers the most resistance. This is usually the first combination number. Release the knob, push the first number you found, and apply rotational pressure again. Now search for the second number like you did the first one. Release the knob again, and apply rotational pressure again. Find the third number the same way, and continue on until the lock opens. You must release the knob each time you find a likely number and start the process over to find the next one.

You should be able to open the lock within five minutes. If not, I have had limited success in randomly,

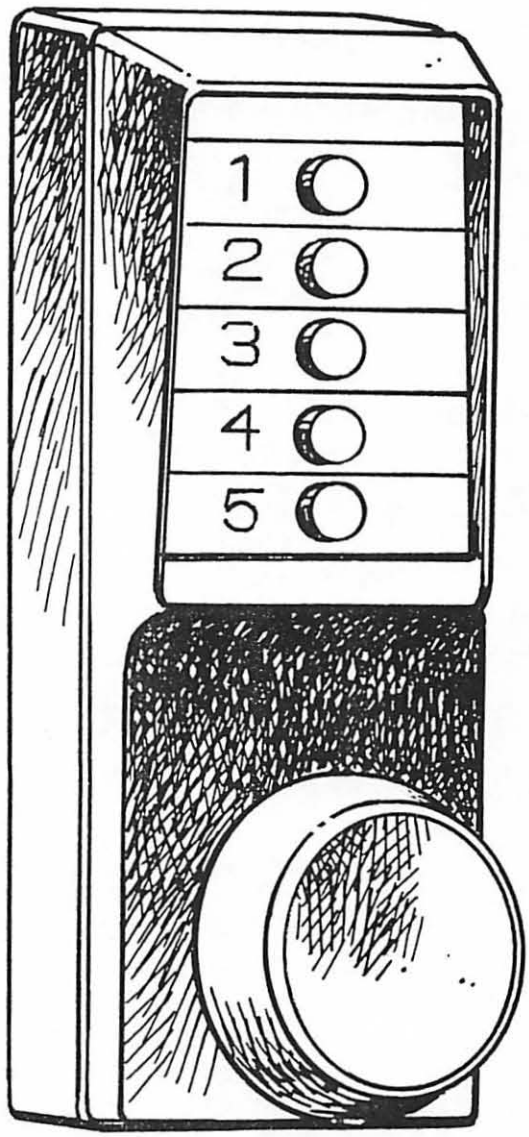


Figure 19. Push-button puzzle lock.

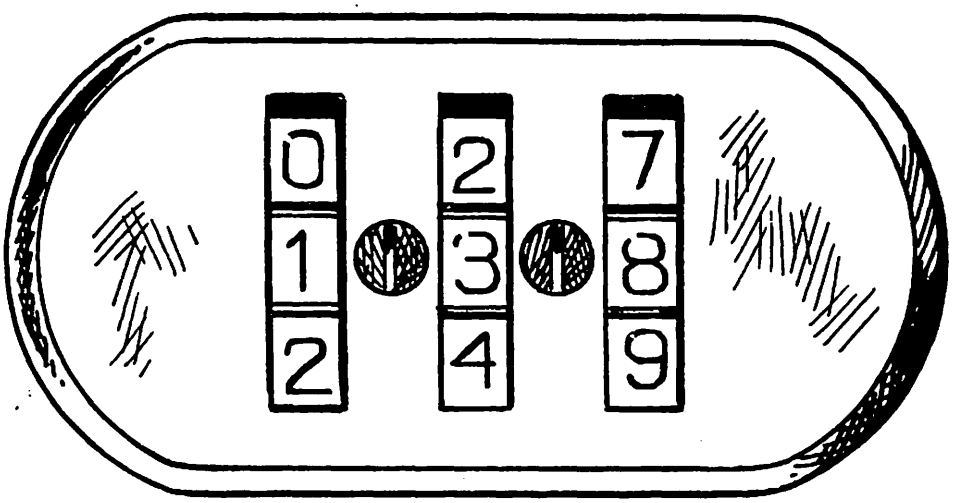
and very quickly, pushing out the numbers until you find the proper combination. The trouble with this method is that you seldom catch what the combination was and have to go through the whole process again in order to gain access a second time. As usual, practice will shorten the time it takes you to open these locks.

Some of my readers have been having trouble opening Sesame-type padlocks. These locks have isolated bolts; that is, they cannot be manipulated open by touch and listen exclusively. If you ever have to open one in a

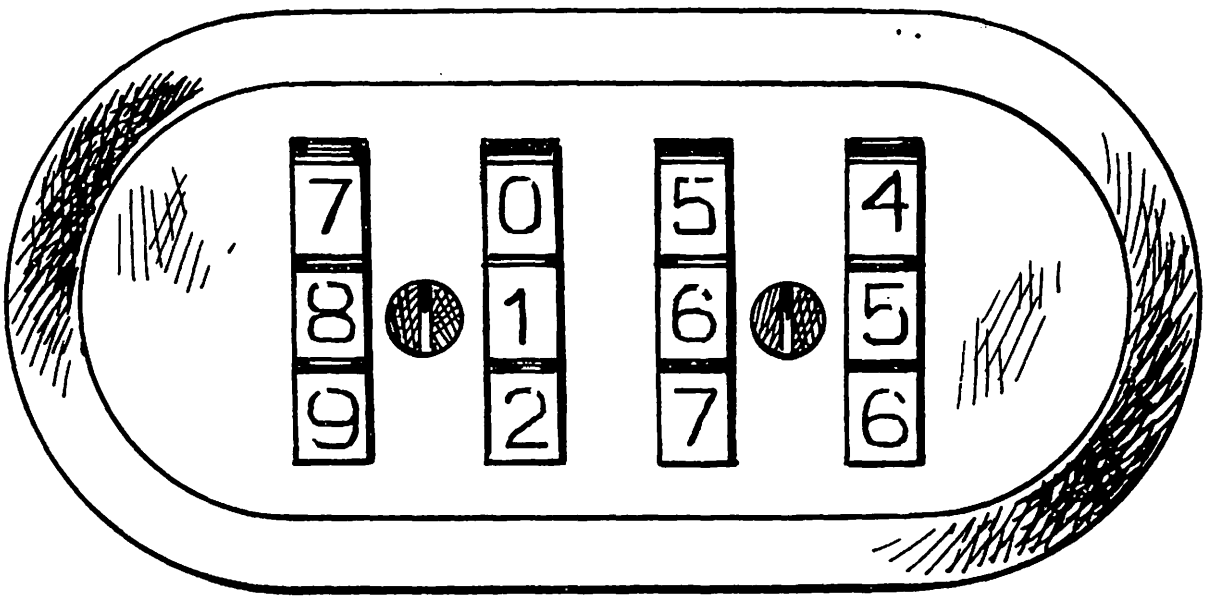
hurry, I suggest the following method.

Figure 20 shows three-wheel and four-wheel model Sesame locks that have been drilled. For illustration purposes, I have drilled the holes larger than necessary. Through the holes you can see the cams rotate as you turn the wheels. Simply rotate each wheel to line up the flat spot on the cams so that they are straight across as you look into the holes.

The numbers at which the wheels are now set do not comprise the actual combinations. However, adding seven to each number on the dials will give you the right combination. For example, after all of the cams are lined up straight across and the wheels are set at 1-3-8, as shown in the top illustration on the following page, simply add seven to each one to get the combination of 8-0-5.



1-3-8 = 8-0-5 to open



8-1-6-5 = 5-8-3-2 to open

Figure 20. Three- and four-wheel Sesame locks.