

Privacy/Bed/Bath Key

Bob Levine of Ivy Hill suggested this article. In our homes the bedroom and bathrooms have a door knob or lever that has a locking function to prevent anyone from entering the room. A "privacy/emergency key" is used to unlock the door from the outside if necessary. The key is usually stored on top of the molding outside the door. Check to see if yours is still there and/or painted into the molding. Bob's granddaughter locked the bathroom door and closed it behind her on the way out. Bob tried to open the door with the supplied key for over five minutes before he got it to work. And, as he said, there was no emergency because no one was in there that had fallen or was injured. If that was the situation it would have been panic time and he probably would have had to break the door down.

After he told me this, I tried my keys and found the same result. If you practice for a while with them you can get it down to less than a minute to open the lock. But you are doing it in practice conditions.



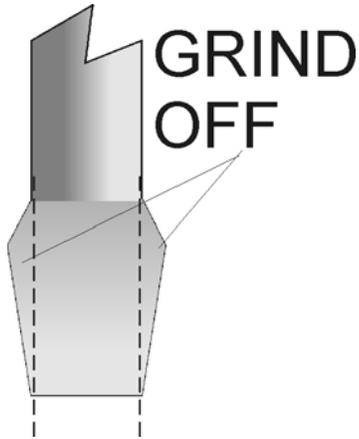
The reason it is so difficult is the supplied key has a thin diameter and when you insert it in the hole it is hard to line up because the piece you have to engage and turn projects outward and the key keeps sliding off. See diagram at right. You also feel as though the key should go in deep but actually the piece you want to turn is located just $\frac{3}{4}$ " inside the handle and has a slot, much like the head of a screw. When locked, the slot is horizontal. Feel for it and jiggle the handle at the same time as you turn the key. A $\frac{9}{64}$ " or $\frac{5}{32}$ " diameter electronics screwdriver also works well. An electronics screwdriver does not have any fanned out shape at the bottom of the blade so you can get it in the hole of the handle. Picture of one is below. The actual size of the hole in the door handle is

$\frac{5}{32}$ " so I took a piece of welding rod I



had in that diameter, ground and filed a blade on one end and bent over the other end to facilitate turning

and it worked every time. That's because it fits fairly tight in the hole and that helps it to align up to the slot you need to engage and turn. I made a couple and put them over the doors so I won't forget where



they are. The screw driver also works well but you will have to remember where you put it, and you know how that goes. You can also file or grind off the sides of a conventional screw driver that has a round shank of 5/32" or a little less. A 10 penny nail is just



about the right size also. A nail is made of softer steel so

it is easier to grind or file but will bend or wear easier, that said, you shouldn't have to use it all that often to worry about that I hope.

As always, check this and other tips at - <http://www.aaazzz.net/id5.html> or go on the Fairways web-site and click on "Resources" and then on "Maintenance".

Bob Mattsson