

Picking Medeco Locks

This assumes you understand how the lock works; why the pins need to rotate, how they interact with the sidebar, etc. Every step should be done with progressively pinned locks. Starting out with 6 pins is not a good way to learn as you won't have any idea if you are doing things right.

Rotating Pins

The first thing is to know how to rotate the pins. There are 3 rotations per pin, essentially left, right, and center. I use a standard hook for the entire picking process but there are hooks with a notch in the tip made specifically for grabbing the chiseled tip of the pins. The pins are asymmetrically chiseled on the tip, like a knife which was only sharpened on one side instead of both sides meeting at a point. Learn to feel whether the chiseled face is facing you or away by putting only 1 pin in and feeling it.

To rotate the pins, you want to get your pick under it and then turn your pick to the right/left to put the tip of your pick on right/left side of the pin. Then you can push/pull to rotate. If the chiseled face is away from you, you pull on the right/left side to rotate it. If the chiseled face is facing you, you push to rotate. You always push/pull on the angled chiseled face. Try to avoid lifting as well since that might cause some confusion in feedback; some pins can accidentally set to shear when trying to rotate if you lift.

Classic/Biaxial (Gen 1 & 2)

Left rotation

The direction you pick the lock changes how you have to pick it. Picking with a left rotation will bind the rotation of the pins before the shear line. The binding pin doesn't need to be lifted, but rotated. Apply tension and find the binding pin. Release tension completely and rotate the pin in a direction and reapply tension. If it's still binding, release tension and rotate it the other way. If it still binds, then try to rotate it centered instead of all the way in one direction. The tricky part is knowing when all the rotations are set because there will still be a binding pin since we haven't picked to shear yet. If you put only 2 pins in the lock and then tension the plug, if the rotations are not set, the plug doesn't turn much when you put tension on it. But if you align the rotation of the pins and then tension the plug, you will see the plug has more movement both in rotation and side to side movement. This is how you know the pins have been rotated to their correct position. It's highly recommended to test with 1 or 2 pins first so that you can tell the difference between not enough plug movement and enough plug movement to know when rotations have been set.

Once rotation has been set for the pins, they stay in place. Tension is not required to keep the rotations. From this point, just pick as a normal pin tumbler.

Right rotation

With right rotation, you will first pick to shear as a normal pin tumbler. Then you will have what seems like a deep false set. This is because the plug will rotate more until the sidebar binds

against the pins. You must be able to differentiate between a false set from the security pins and when shear is picked. Start with 1 or 2 pins (with at least 1 security pin) so you can differentiate.

Once picked to shear, you need delicate control of tension to rotate the pins. When rotating the pins, you don't want to have tension or they won't rotate. But you can't let the plug rotate back or the pins will drop from shear. You will apply tension, find the binding pin, release tension (but not so much the pins drop), rotate the pin, reapply tension to see if it's set, and repeat for the rest of the pins. Unlike picking with a left rotation, if you remove tension completely then the pins will drop from shear and you have to start over.

M3 (Gen 3)

The exact same as the classic and biaxial but there is a slider at the bottom right of the key way. It will bind in a random order to the lifting/rotating of the pins so just every now and then push in on it to see if it's binding and will set. It pushes straight back.