

Your 3-step guide to

SMARTER KEY CONTROL IN THE WORKPLACE





IS POOR KEY MANAGEMENT PLAGUING YOUR WORKPLACE?

If so, it could be costing you a lot more than you think.

Just for starters, having to replace individual keys regularly is annoying – and those small outlays start to add up.

But what happens when master keys get lost? You could find yourself spending tens of thousands of dollars re-keying an entire site.

And what about all that time your personnel spend chasing, handling and replacing keys – day in, day out?

From physically searching for keys to scouring manual records to traveling between work sites, there's no doubt about it: poor key control saps staff productivity.

On top of this, there are the massive safety and security risks of keys falling into the wrong hands. Overnight, your business could be exposed to theft, property damage or data privacy breaches.

But it doesn't have to be this way.

By following the three steps in this guide, you can cut these costs and reduce those risks.

Let's go.



CONDUCT A KEY AUDIT

If you're serious about getting your keys under control at your workplace, there's only one place to start: a 'key audit'.

We know that any kind of audit sounds like hard, painstaking work. But like anything in life or business, you *must* understand the status quo before you have any chance of moving forward.

Whether you have just one site or many sites, conducting a key audit will allow you to see exactly where the gaps are – and what processes you need to refine.

Here's a simple step-by-step outline for your key audit:

1. Track down and retrieve as many keys as you can

To do this, you will need to list and get in touch with all the personnel, contractors and service providers who carry keys regularly – and ensure they have all the keys they're supposed to have.

2. Make a note of all your communal keys

These are the ones that don't belong to anyone in particular but are used as needed on a temporary basis.

3. Make a note of all your spare and emergency keys that might be locked away

Do they ever get used? Do they even work?

During this process, you'll likely discover that many keys are missing – and that some initial lock replacement is in order.

Or, if you have too many missing keys, you may well need to re-key everything.

Not sure what that entails? Read on.

2

RE-KEY LIKE A MASTER

If too many keys have gone AWOL, the safest move is to install a new key system.

This involves two main steps:

1. Changing and replacing all locks
2. Creating a clear key hierarchy

A key hierarchy is a powerful way to organize your keys. It involves building a system in which the grandmaster key can decrypt all the other keys.

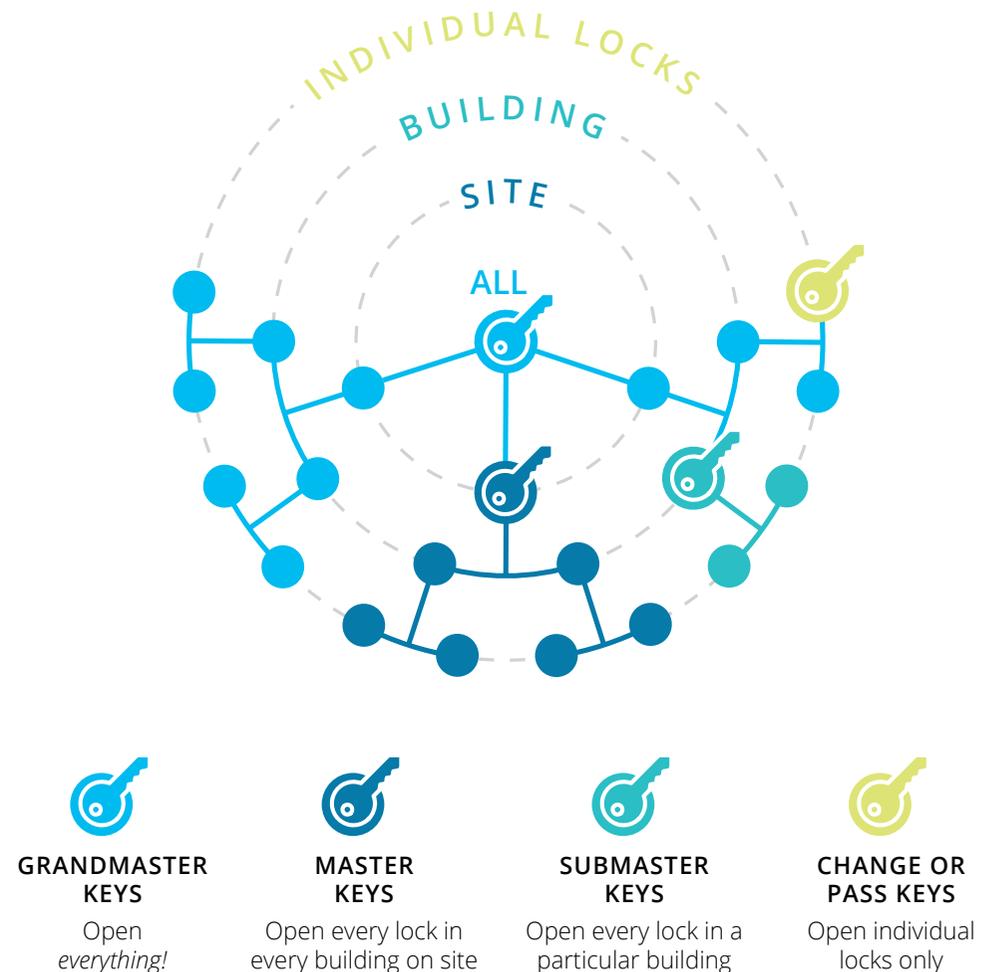
When creating your new key system, make sure it's patented – that is, individualized.

In a patented key system, a manufacturer will design locks and keys specifically for your business. This way, your keys can't be duplicated if the wrong person gets their hands on them.

Follow these steps and you'll have a solid foundation to create top-notch key control – so you never have to re-key again.

And speaking of top-notch key control...

AN EXAMPLE KEY HEIRARCHY

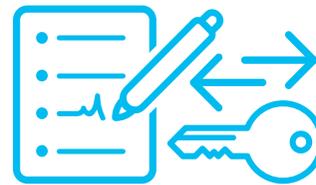


3

PLAN & INTRODUCE STRICT POLICIES

A key control system is only as strong as the protocols it's built on. That's why you need to create clear ground rules for key control from here on in.

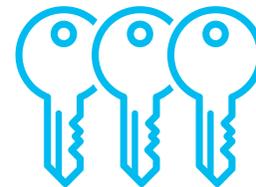
Here are a few big ones to get you started.



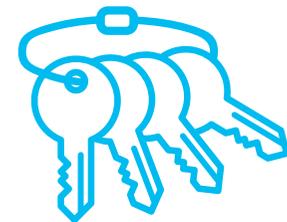
STRICT SIGN-IN,
SIGN-OUT SYSTEMS



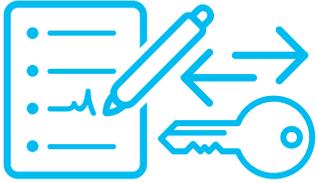
KEYS STORED
ON SITE



MINIMAL
KEY COPYING



LOGICAL
KEY BUNCHING



INTRODUCE A SIGN-IN, SIGN-OUT SYSTEM

Are your workplace keys being handed in and out each day with no or minimal recordkeeping?

If so, it's time to introduce a formal sign-in, sign-out system. One that will be monitored and adhered to – *always*.

What that system looks like will depend on the size of your workplace and the number of keys on hand. At the very minimum, start with a manual logbook or spreadsheet that's easy for everyone to maintain and access.

But, of course, the larger your workplace, the more keys you manage – and the more sophisticated your system needs to be.

Ideally, you'll want an automated system to reduce human error as much as possible.

Whatever recordkeeping process you start with, you'll be much better placed to determine who has what keys at any point in time.

This will instantly make your staff, contractors and other visitors more accountable.

And for shift workers, this means there's one less thing to communicate (or forget to communicate). Staff will now know the status of any keys they need – without the guesswork.





KEEP YOUR PEOPLE CLOSE, AND YOUR KEYS EVEN CLOSER

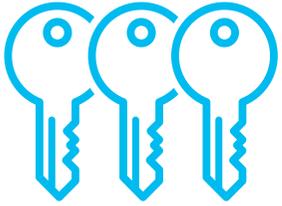
If your staff and contractors are having to travel from one destination to another – *just to collect a key* – that’s a lot of unnecessary downtime.

Just as worryingly though: the more distance your keys travel, the higher the risk of loss or non-return.

That’s why it’s crucial to store keys on the same sites they’re actually needed.

And, of course, they should be kept securely – with reliable sign-in and sign-out processes on each site.





DON'T BE A KEY COPYCAT

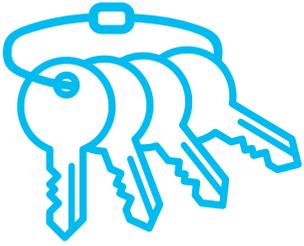
If the same people are regularly visiting the same sites, it can be tempting to give them copies of the keys they need... to have and to hold, until the end of time.

But the more copies you have floating around, the less control you have. Keys and locks will inevitably need replacing. And the risk of a key falling into the wrong hands is high.

So what's the alternative?

Fewer copies paired with a reliable key control system on each site, so you can track the movement of each and every key – *with certainty.*





GET LOGICAL WITH KEY BUNCHING

Bunching keys together can be a help or a hindrance to your key management processes.

It all depends on how you do it.

If you haven't already, combine your keys logically and strategically so that the right people have all the keys they need in a single bunch.

For example, you may have a bunch especially for your cleaning contractors. And another one especially for tradespeople.

Consider what's holding your keys together, too. They might seem insignificant, but key rings are... well, key.

Although traditional rings may seem convenient (because you can add and remove keys easily), they give you a lot less split control over key loss.

Instead, consider using specialized key rings that permanently stay together. There are many types on the market – with many different features.

Some things to bear in mind when choosing a key ring are:

- Its size (how many keys need to fit on each set?)
- Its thickness (some keys, especially vehicle keys, have a small hole)
- Whether it's tamper-evident (will you know if someone substitutes the keys?)
- Its ease of identification (does each ring have a serial number?)
- Its ease of use (how easy is it to seal or cut?)

Have designated bunches of keys ready to go – and stored exactly where they're needed – and everyone's day will get that much easier.





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smart key control in the workplace.

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