



# Fine Motor Skills

## WHAT ARE FINE MOTOR SKILLS?

Fine motor skills are the ability to use and coordinate the smaller muscles of our wrists, hands and fingers effectively and functionally.



## WHY DO WE NEED FINE MOTOR SKILLS?

We use fine motor skills in many activities of daily living, including writing, drawing, typing, cutting, opening and closing containers, picking up items, tying shoelaces, doing up buttons and zips, eating, brushing our teeth and so many more things!

## WHAT ARE THE COMPONENTS OF FINE MOTOR SKILLS?

### visual-motor integration

- hand-eye coordination
- visual input coordinated with motor output

### sensory processing

- receiving, interpreting and responding to sensory input
- predominantly includes tactile, visual, vestibular (movement) and proprioception (body awareness)

### posture and stability

- keep the trunk, shoulders and elbows still while rotating the forearm and moving the hands
- activate core muscles

### bilateral coordination

- a sense of left and right
- using both sides of the body together

### midline crossing

- reaching across the middle of the body

### manipulation

- in hand manipulation is moving objects around within the hand such as positioning a pencil

### hand strength

- pinch and grasp against resistance
- dependant on muscle tone



### finger isolation

- moving fingers one at a time
- supports finger-thumb opposition
- needed for precision and dexterity

### grasp

- progress from palmer grasp (whole hand) to pincer grasp (thumb and index finger)
- hold tools such as pencils, scissors and cutlery
- draw or write with a functional grip
- includes voluntary reach and release of items









SEE OVER PAGE FOR ACTIVITY IDEAS TO DEVELOP FINE MOTOR SKILLS







# Activity Ideas

## General Activities

- play with textures such as lotion and shaving cream
- push and pull heavy objects
- tear open boxes
- play clapping games
- squeeze water out of a cloth
- squeeze the trigger on a spray bottle
- crumple and rip paper
- pick up coins 
- create a paper clip chain 
- string beads or pasta to make a necklace 
- nuts and bolts or hammer and nail games
- jigsaw puzzles
- stickers 
- build with magnets
- use small pegs on and off a cup using thumb and index finger 
- lace up objects
- mazes and dot-to-dots
- use eye droppers with water and food colouring
- use chopsticks or tweezers to pick up cotton wool balls or marshmallows 
- draw vertically on a whiteboard
- breath exercises for core development
- throw and catch a ball
- try and guess small objects or toys in a bag
- make a pipe cleaner spider in a strainer 
- create block towers with tongs
- find objects in a container of rice using tongs 



## Play-Doh Exercises

- roll Play-Doh in hands 
- roll Play-Doh between each finger and thumb one at a time
- pinch Play-Doh with thumb and index finger
- hide small toys such as marbles in the Play-Doh to find
- use Play-Doh tools such as cutters, rolling pin, noodle makers
- use a potato masher in the Play-Doh 



## Board Games and Card Games

- Jenga
- Connect 4
- Uno 
- Spot it
- Hanging monkeys
- Dominoes
- Lego 
- Pop the Pirate
- board games with playing pieces to move and dice

