



Developing Your Child's Fine Motor Skills

Fine Motor skills involve the small muscles of the body such as the wrists, hands and fingers, usually in coordination with the eyes. They are important for movements such as holding, grasping, pinching, and releasing objects. Your child needs lots of opportunities for physical activity, both for good health and for building their fine motor skills. Encourage your child try some of these activities:

- **PRECISE POURING:** Pour colored water from a pitcher into different sized containers. Try not to spill or overflow the container. Add challenge by having the child try to fill the small containers right to the top without overflowing.
- **ROUND OBJECT ON SPOON CARRYING:** Carry a small ball, marble or stone at arm's length on a long wooden spoon handle.
- **LARGE DRAWINGS:** Place a large piece of paper on the floor and let your child paint a picture or provide chalk and let your child draw on the sidewalk.
- **FINGER TUG-OF-WAR:** Ask your child to tightly grip a small object like a plastic lace or coffee stirrer between the index finger and thumb. Once the object is securely grasped, the challenge is to try to pull it out of the fingers using the other hand. Switch hands or try with a partner.
- **FINGER LIFTS:** Place your hand flat on table and try to lift one finger at a time. For more challenge, place both hands flat on a table and try to lift the same finger on each hand at the same time.
- **FINGER PUPPETS:** Tell a story using finger puppets, making sure to move the puppets to do the actions of the story.
- **BUBBLES:** Blow bubbles and pop them by clapping between hands, poking with finger, pinching between finger and thumb or stamping with one foot. Try catching a bubble on a blowing stick.
- **USING SMALL OBJECTS:** Invite your child to...
 - Hang up things with clothespins
 - Use an eye dropper to fill a jar
 - Use a key to open a lock
 - Sort coins into different piles
 - String beads onto a shoe lace
- **CONSTRUCTION TOYS:** Build with blocks, Lego and found materials. Let the child determine what to build eg. a tower, a bridge or make suggestions eg. can you build the bridge we saw yesterday on our walk? Try building simple structures and then having your child copy that structure. Invite the child to build a structure and then copy it.



- **SELF-CARE INDEPENDENCE:** Encourage your children to brush their own hair, undress and dress themselves, zip and unzip coats, button and unbutton sweaters. When help is needed try talking it through so that children see what you are doing and hear the verbal description. As the child becomes more confident, talk through the task without actually helping.
- **SENSORY EXPERIENCES:** Expose your child to various smells, tastes, sounds, and textures by engaging in activities like listening to music, playing in water or dirt, working in sand or shaving cream, making crafts with scissors and glue, etc.
- **USE DIRECTIONALITY VOCABULARY:** teach the words needed for locating objects or making shapes. Important words include: top, bottom, left, right, up, down, cross over, above, below.