

## Fine motor skills

**Fine motor skills** use the smaller muscles that control the hand, fingers, and thumb and involve those smaller actions such as picking up objects between the thumb and finger.

They help children perform important tasks like feeding themselves, grasping toys, buttoning and zipping clothes, writing, drawing, and much more.

**Fine motor skills** will develop and improve as your child grows and moves through childhood.

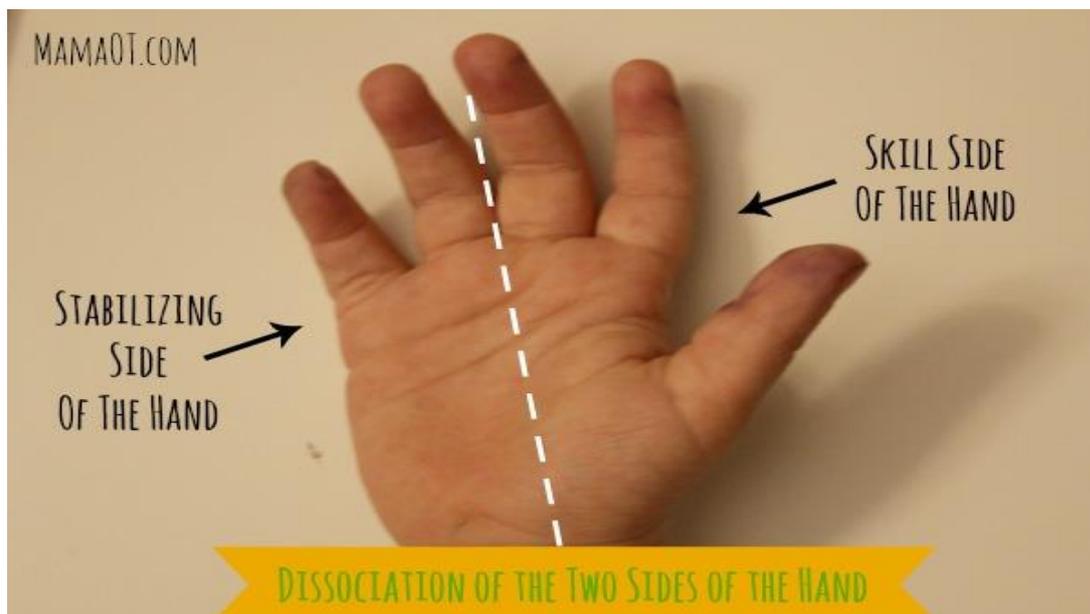
Your child's Early Years provision is full of **fine motor skills** activities such as threading beads, cutting and sticking, jig saws, peg boards etc.

**Fine motor skills are essential for handwriting.**

You can help your child at home by giving them activities to do which help develop the muscles in their hand.

Let's start by looking at your child's hand.

It's pretty much split down the middle. Each side has a different job to do and we need to develop the muscles on both sides.



**Fine motor skills activities you can do to develop both sides of the hand:**

**After looking through this sheet - take a look at the Fine Motor Skills Videos on our power point showing a child carrying out fine motor skills practice at home!**

Draw a picture of treasure chest or a box on the *stabilising* side of your child's palm with a washable marker. Then, show your child that you are going to put some jewels" into their treasure chest. Ask them to keep the treasure safe and show them how you can fold their fingers down onto the treasure chest. They should cover the gems with just the pinkie finger and ring finger. You can use sequins or buttons or even cut some small pieced of coloured paper from a magazine.



**Click your fingers**

Most children want to be able to click their fingers, so the motivation is already there for them to practice.

Give your child a bead or small object to hold under their pinkie and ring finger and practice clicking fingers.



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Children love to pop bubble wrap, so give them a sheet and let them get on with it.

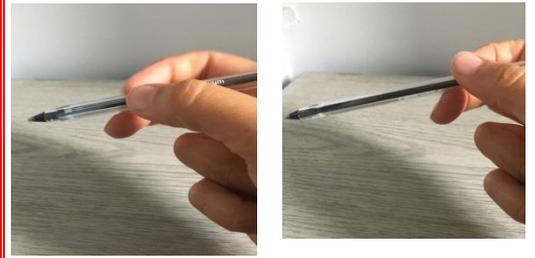
They will automatically use their thumbs, first finger and middle finger, which is perfect for developing the strength and stability of their pincer grip and web-space.



Try holding a Bic pen (with a lid on) using your pinkie and ring finger and see if you can taking the lid off just using your thumb, forefinger and middle finger.

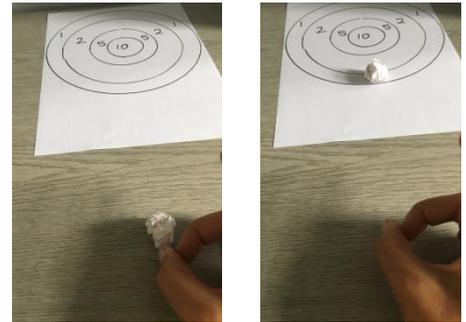


Hold a pen or pencil between your thumb, first and middle finger and try inch-worming your fingers up and down. Start at the bottom and work your way up to the top and then back down again.



Make a target and flick a paper ball into it. Play the game with a partner and take turns.

Play on your own:  
What's the highest score you can make in 3 minutes?



Build a tower with clothes pegs - using only the ends of thumb and forefinger (not the side of the finger)



Peg socks onto a washing line - using only the ends of thumb and forefinger (not the sides of the finger)



Put pegs around a container – make a game of it and take turns.



Sort small objects - using thumb and forefinger and place them into a container such as an egg box or bun tin.



Practicing doing and undoing nuts and bolts is a really good activity because it develops fine motor skills **and** It involves both hands doing different things, at the same time.



Try using a colander or another container with holes such as an Ikea cutlery container and fasten the nuts and bolts into it.



Another use for your colander is to stick pipe cleaners through the holes.

If you don't have pipe cleaners then could use:

- straws,
- sticks
- blades of grass
- dry spaghetti



Make a spider web using string or wool and plastic basket and use a peg to collect spiders or other objects.

Make the spiders different colours and make a colour spinner to see which one you need to get.

