

What I need to do

- I can squeeze and roll play dough using the palms of my hands
- I can thread a bead
- I can carefully build a tower
- I can control scissors with one hand to make a snip in paper.
- I can use a safe knife to cut food
- I can squeeze tweezers to pick up objects
- I can fasten and unfasten clothing such as; zip up/unzip, button up/unbutton, open & close velcro
- I show a preference for a dominant hand
- I can hold a pencil between thumb and two fingers
- I can control mark making tools to make circles, lines and zig-zags

How you can help

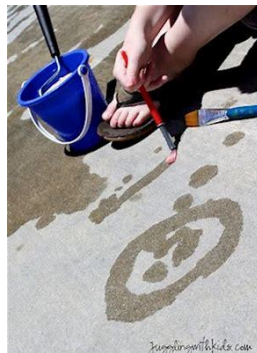
- Provide play dough for your child to explore – encourage squeezing, rolling, pressing using fingers, thumbs and palms.
- Encourage your child to 'take their time' 'persevere' 'concentrate' when building or threading as this can be tricky.
- Encourage your child to put on and take off clothing supporting them with fastening and unfastening zips, buttons, Velcro. Reduce frustration by 'starting your child off' and guiding them through it with lots of praise.
- Place your hand over your child's to guide them with opening and closing scissors.
- Help your child position their fingers on a mark making tool for better control.

When playing with play dough use a safe knife or picnic utensils to practice 'cutting' Place your hand over your child's to guide them in moving the knife and holding the fork still.



Your child can make marks using a range of tools; sticks, paint brush, feather, straw, wands, chalk.

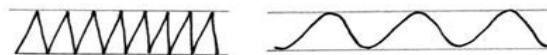
Dip a paintbrush in a pot of water and mark make on the fence, pavement.



Let's Get Ready for School Developing Fine Motor Skills

Fine motor skills involve the use of the small muscles that control the hand, fingers, and thumb. They help children perform important tasks like feeding themselves, buttoning and zipping clothes, writing, drawing and much more. Little hands can develop dexterity and strength through practical play activities such as; play dough, safe scissors, threading, building. These will you help your child prepare for holding a pencil, mark-making and ultimately write.

When mark-making encourage your child to make anti-clockwise circles, zig zags, up and down lines. These movements are all essential for forming letters when writing.



Fastenings on your child's clothing can be tricky at first.

Provide play opportunities to practice these skills – dressing and undressing a doll or teddy. Helping an adult with their fastenings first can give children confidence but can also help your child see skill that little bit easier.



Clothes pegs help to strengthen the muscles for fine motor control. Let your child help with squeezing the pegs when hanging clothes or provide pots to clip the pegs on to.



Thread beads onto string, pasta, ribbon, pipe-cleaners

Practising new skills is tricky and needs lots of time and encouragement!