

Fine Motor Skills for Preschoolers

Fine motor skills refers to the use of small muscle movements in the hands. School activities such as printing, writing, use of computer, drawing, colouring and cutting all necessitate the use of fine motor movement. Self-help skills such as dressing, toileting or eating also require manual dexterity skills. Fine motor development involves learning to move and stabilize objects in the hand / fingers, pinch and grip strength, tactile sensation, coordinating the use of both hands, and precise, controlled movements of the fingers.

Activity suggestions to promote fine motor skill development:

- Play with Megabloks, Duplo, Lego – pushing, pulling apart and constructing items with the pieces.
- Play dough, theraputty, Silly Putty etc. can be pinched, pulled, rolled, flattened, etc.
- Dominoes, Perfection, Connect Four, Snakes and Ladders, Operation, Pick up Sticks are some of the many games, which require manipulative skills.
- Play with a slinky.
- Collect objects such as coins, beads, dried beans, small candies, etc. Pick up an object one at a time, using one hand. See if the child can place three or four objects in one hand without dropping any. Then shift the objects back up to the fingertips one at a time, using only the hand that is already holding the items.
- Use a pinch purse or piggy bank to place / remove coins.
- Play with tool sets or construction sets.
- Play musical instruments.
- Complete crafts e.g. stringing beads for a necklace, tearing paper for a collage, and painting.
- Copy simple pegboard designs, play with Lite Brite.
- Use tongs or tweezers to pick up objects. Sort objects into groups.
- Sewing cards, lacing crafts.
- Finger action songs
- Play with water squirt toy.
- Finger games, finger puppets, make animal shadows on the wall using fingers/hands.
- Pop bubble wrap packaging.
- Stretching rubber bands.
- Play penny hockey
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