

EARLY INTERVENTION

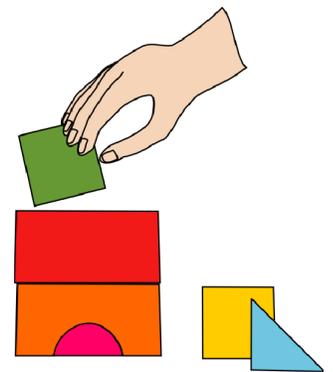
TOOLS TO GROW at Home

What to Expect
& How to Develop

Fine Motor
Skills



0 – 36 Months



References

Folio, R.M. & Fewell, R.R.(2002). Peabody Scales of Motor Development 2nd Edition, Austin Texas Pro-Ed, Inc.

Parks, Stephanie (2004). HELP Strands Curriculum-Based Developmental Assessment, Palo Alto, California VORT Corporation

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TOOLS TO GROW at Home

What to Expect & How to Develop Fine Motor Skills



Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Fine motor skills involve the use of fingers, hands and arms for reaching, grasping and manipulating objects. Fine motor skills are used when a child plays, performs daily self help tasks, or participates at school as a student.

Fine motor skills are used by an adult when caring for their family and performing many tasks at work.

If your child is a baby, he/she requires fine motor skills when playing with a rattle or finger feeding. If your child is a toddler, he/she needs fine motor skills to scoop cereal onto their spoon. If your child is a preschooler, he/she needs fine motor skills to color and string beads. If your child is a student, he/she needs fine motor skills to use a keyboard, open their school locker, and write.

Just like other areas of development, the ability to successfully use your hands is influenced by previous development and experiences. In other words, you may minimize or eliminate future difficulties with fine motor skills by involving your child in activities that are fun!

Your child's Occupational Therapist provided this guide as a tool to learn what step is next and how to help your child move to the next stage. Remember each child is unique and will develop at his or her own rate. Use this information, as well as the expertise of your child's Occupational Therapist, to help your child grow.

Best wishes to you and your child!

TOOLS TO GROW AT HOME

What to Expect & How to Develop Fine Motor Skills

NEWBORN – 3 MONTHS OLD

Your child is developing fine motor skills in this range. Remember each child is unique and will develop at his or her own rate. Use the guide as a tool to learn what step is next and how to help your child move to the next stage.

- ✓ Arms randomly move when shown toys (1 month)
- ✓ Makes eye contact with others (1 month)
- ✓ Uses eyes to follow a moving face while lying on back (1 month)
- ✓ Brings hand to mouth (2 months)
- ✓ Uses eyes to follow toy moving in a 180 degree arc while on his/her back (2 months)
- ✓ Looks from one object to another (2 months)
- ✓ Will smile when interacting with others (2 months)
- ✓ Drops toys involuntarily (2 months)
- ✓ Holds rattle momentarily (3 months)



How to Help:

- Spend lots of time holding and cuddling your baby. He/she needs lots of touch and physical contact. Look into his/her eyes, smile and talk to him/her.
- Place safe rattles into his/her hands. Carefully support your baby's hand and the rattle as you gently shake the rattle to help capture your baby's attention.
- Use sock, wrist and ankle rattles. As your baby moves, he/she will be entertained by the sounds that are made.
- Show your baby toys with colorful and high contrasting colors. Gently move the toys to capture his/her attention. Slowly move the toy in an arc to encourage visual attention.
- While awake and supervised provide tummy time; he/she needs these opportunities to gain strength and receive touch input to the tummy side of their body.
- Around 2-3 months of age, tuck your baby's elbows in toward his/her shoulders. Get close to your baby to use your face/voice or another interesting toy or baby safe mirror to encourage him/her to push into the surface and lift his/her head.
- While supervised, place your baby on his/her back below a mobile. He/she will look at and try to reach for the suspended toys.

TOOLS TO GROW AT HOME

What to Expect & How to Develop Fine Motor Skills

3 – 6 MONTHS OLD

Your child is developing fine motor skills in this range. Remember each child is unique and will develop at his or her own rate. Use the guide as a tool to learn what step is next and how to help your child move to the next stage.

- ✓ Tries to reach for objects but cannot grasp (3 months)
- ✓ Uses eyes to follow a toy moving across the midline of his/her body while in supported sitting. (3 months)
- ✓ Will smile and vocalizes when interacting with others (3 months)
- ✓ Grasps object when contacts his/her palm (4 months)
- ✓ While lying on back brings both hands together/clasps at chest (4 months)
- ✓ Hands open most of the time (4 months)
- ✓ Begins to transfer objects from one hand to another
- ✓ Lifts arms to be picked up (5 months)
- ✓ Holds objects between index/middle fingers and palm; may not use thumb
- ✓ Brings bottle to their mouth (6 months)



How to Help:

- Allow your baby the safe space and opportunity to roll. This develops the control, strength and flexibility your baby needs now for using his/her hands for playing, and in the future for school work.
- Place easy to grasp child safe rattles into your baby's hand. Carefully support your baby's hand and the rattle as you gently shake the rattle to help capture your baby's attention.
- Provide soft sensory toys that feel interesting and squeak or crinkle when held.
- While awake and supervised provide tummy time. Place interesting toys in front of your baby to encourage him/her to push up on straight arms to look at them.
- Offer toys that are within your baby's reach to encourage swatting and batting toward toys.
- Relax with your baby for a light show in a darkened room. Shine a flashlight slowly across the walls and ceiling to encourage your child to follow the light with his/her eyes.

TOOLS TO GROW AT HOME

What to Expect & How to Develop Fine Motor Skills

6 – 12 MONTHS OLD

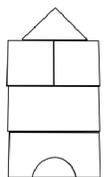
Your child is developing fine motor skills in this range. Remember each child is unique and will develop at his or her own rate. Use the guide as a tool to learn what step is next and how to help your child move to the next stage.

- ✓ Reaches for object with one arm (5 1/2 - 7 months)
- ✓ Transfers objects from one hand to another (5 1/2 - 7 months)
- ✓ Manipulates by twisting, bending and straightening wrist while holding toy (6-8 months)
- ✓ Rakes or scoops tiny objects into the palm (7 - 8 months)
- ✓ Feeds self finger foods (8 months)
- ✓ Holds a spoon
- ✓ Grasps small block with thumb & finger tips (7 - 9 months)
- ✓ Early Pincer- grasps small object with side of index finger & thumb pad (7 1/2 - 10 months)
- ✓ Pokes-uses index finger to poke into small openings (9 - 12 months)
- ✓ Puts objects into a container (10 - 11 months)
- ✓ Pincer-grasps with tip of index finger & thumb (10 - 12 months)
- ✓ Holds an object in each hand & bangs together/Begins to clap hands (8 1/2 - 12 months)



How to Help:

- Encourage your baby to play while on his/her belly or hands and knees. Rocking back and forth and side to side helps develop strong upper bodies and prepare hand arches for grasping and manipulating. While your baby is on his hands & knees or belly, encourage him/her to reach up with one arm to play with toys, such as to bat at a ball.
- About 8 months of age, or when your child is ready, offer small pieces of dry cereal. Place the cereal on the high chair tray and encourage your baby to grasp each piece with his/her thumb and index finger. Offer your child a baby safe spoon to grasp onto during meals.
- If using a bottle, help your baby hold with both hands to bring it to their mouth.
- Show your baby how to poke his/her index finger into small openings in toys. Show baby how to point at pictures in books.
- Offer your baby child safe containers and blocks. Show how to drop the blocks into the container. Use the blocks to stack a large tower. Encourage your baby to knock it down. He/she should enjoy the crashing sound.
- Encourage your baby to release a toy into your hand.
- Help your baby hold a small toy in each hand to make noise by banging them together.
- Demonstrate how to clap and give hand over hand help to play "Pat a Cake".
- Offer rattles and soft books suitable for squeezing, shaking, banging, and exploring.



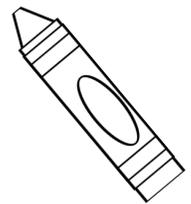
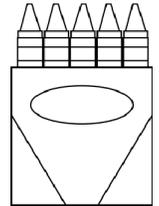
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What to Expect & How to Develop Fine Motor Skills

12 – 18 MONTHS OLD

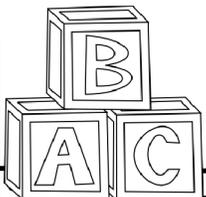
Your child is developing fine motor skills in this range. Remember each child is unique and will develop at his or her own rate. Use the guide as a tool to learn what step is next and how to help your child move to the next stage.

- Claps hands together well
- Puts 3 or more objects into a container
- Imitates waving
- Points—with index finger (12 – 16 months)
- Stacks 2 blocks (14 months), 3 blocks (15 months), 4-6 blocks (18 months)
- Throws small ball over or underhand (18 months)
- Scribbles with clear marks (13 – 18 months)
- Holds arms and legs out for dressing (15 months)
- Removes both socks
- Feeds self with spoon with spillage



How to Help:

- Help your baby learn to poke and point by using his/her index finger to pop bubbles. Show your baby how to use his/her index finger to point at pictures in books.
- Offer your baby shape sorters and boards for inserting large pegs.
- Offer your baby thick crayons for use during closely supervised play. Demonstrate how to make strokes (up, down and circular). Your child will first learn to draw by imitating another person. Draw simple pictures to amuse your child and capture his/her attention.
- Toss and roll a ball back and forth. Your child will enjoy watching and running after the bouncing ball. This is a great activity for improving his/her ability to use vision and hand movements together.
- Help your baby hold a child sized spoon. Offer assistance to practice how to scoop and bring food to his/her mouth. Start with easy to scoop food such as oatmeal.
- Encourage your child to use a sippy cup. Help him/her hold both handles and bring the cup to his/her mouth.



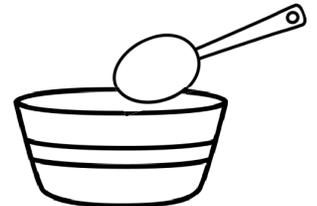
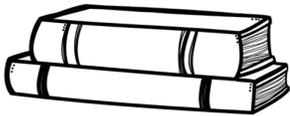
TOOLS TO GROW AT HOME

What to Expect & How to Develop Fine Motor Skills

18 - 24 MONTHS OLD

Your child is developing fine motor skills in this range. Remember each child is unique and will develop at his or her own rate. Use the guide as a tool to learn what step is next and how to help your child move to the next stage.

- ✓ Place tiny objects (raisin) into narrow container (15 - 23 months)
- ✓ Imitates up and down vertical stroke (18 - 24 months)
- ✓ Removes shoes with laces untied (18 months)
- ✓ Uses spoon to scoop & feeds self with a little spillage (20 months)
- ✓ Turns book pages one at a time (21 - 24 months)
- ✓ Stacks 6 small blocks (22 - 24 months)
- ✓ Holds a crayon with thumb and fingers (23 - 25 months)



How to Help:

- Help your baby hold a child sized spoon. Offer assistance to practice how to scoop and bring food to his/her mouth. Start with easy to scoop food such as oatmeal.
- Offer your baby small cups for playing at bath time. Teach him/her how to use them to scoop up water and pour the water out into the tub.
- Offer your baby simple puzzles with large knobs for grasping and large peg boards.
- Offer your baby thick crayons for use during closely supervised play. Demonstrate how to make strokes (up, down and circular). Your child will first learn to draw by imitating another person. Draw simple pictures to amuse your child and capture his/her attention.
- Offer small, lightweight picture books with thick pages for little hands to turn.
- Help your baby to use his/her hands to pull off shoes, socks, hat, and shirt from the top of his/her head.
- Offer your child a doll. Encourage him/her to use their hands to participate in holding the doll, feeding the doll, wrapping the doll in a blanket, washing the doll with a cloth, and dressing the doll.



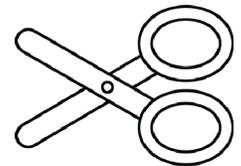
TOOLS TO GROW AT HOME

What to Expect & How to Develop Fine Motor Skills

24 – 36 MONTHS OLD

Your child is developing fine motor skills in this range. Remember each child is unique and will develop at his or her own rate. Use the guide as a tool to learn what step is next and how to help your child move to the next stage.

- Holds crayon with thumb & fingers (23 - 25 months)
- Strings several one-inch beads (23 - 25 months)
- Folds paper in one-half (24 - 30 months)
- Throws a large ball (26 months)
- Imitates circular scribble (24 - 30 months)
- Imitates horizontal stroke (24 - 30 months)
- Copies a circle (25 - 36 months)
- Pours from one container to another (32 months)
- Throws tennis ball over hand (36 months)
- Imitates a 4 block "train" (27 months)
- Stacks 9 small cubes (32 - 36 months)
- Imitates a 3 block "bridge" (36 months)
- Uses a fork (30 months)
- Dresses self with assistance
- Snips with safety scissors (31 months)
- Makes continuous cuts across paper with safety scissors (36 months)



How to Help:

- Offer your child thick crayons for use during closely supervised play. Demonstrate how to make strokes (up, down and circular). Your child will first learn to draw by imitating another person. Draw simple pictures to amuse your child and capture his/her attention. Offer coloring books and water colors for painting. There are many "no mess" coloring and painting products available. Your child could "paint" outdoor areas and the bathtub using water and a large paintbrush.
- Practice snipping straws, thin strips of construction paper, and rolled dough. When your child is ready to advance, offer heavier (construction) paper and help him/her to hold the paper. Children begin by using both hands to grasp the loops to snip. When he/she is ready teach how to grasp the scissors correctly with his/her thumb up.
- Toss and roll a ball back and forth.
- Create structures with blocks; there are so many sizes, shapes and styles to keep your child interested.
- At this stage he/she will be independent with removing many articles of clothing, but may require help putting on his or her clothing. Just "get them started". For example... put one leg in his/her pant leg or pull the shirt over his/her head. Encourage your child to finish.