



Activities for Preschooler Hand Development



Activities to work on hand strength:

- ✎ **Spray bottles** - fill an empty spray bottle with water. Take the child outside and let them "paint" the sidewalks, walls, plants, and other objects with the water.
- ✎ **Clothespins** - clip clothespins to a cardboard box, coffee can or plastic container. Use other types of clips such as hair clips, binder clips, snack bag clips, etc.
- ✎ **Weight bearing activities** - wheelbarrow walking by holding the child's feet or under their stomach if more support is needed, and let them "walk" on their hands, crawling over pillows and couch cushions on the floor, donkey kicks, and crab walking.
- ✎ **Lego/Duplo Bricks or Unifix Cubes** - make patterns or copy models with these by pushing together and pulling apart.
- ✎ **Hole punch** - let the child punch holes in paper with a hand held hole punch.
- ✎ **Bubble wrap** - pinch the bubbles to pop them. Provides a motivating pop sound.
- ✎ **Playdoh play:**
 - Make a large ball
 - Press it flat into a pancake
 - Roll it into a snake
 - Pinch the snake into small pieces
 - Make each piece into a small ball
 - Press the balls into mini pancakes with thumb and index finger
 - Hide and find objects in the dough

Activities to work on grasp:

- ✎ **Various tongs** - use several types of tongs and let the child pick up small objects with them such as cut up sponges, small blocks, golf tees, packing peanuts, cotton balls, etc.
- ✎ **Lacing cards** - buy or create lace cards and have child lace with a loop or stitch pattern.
- ✎ **String beads, Cheerios, Fruit Loops, etc.** onto a string, pipe cleaner or wooden dowel.
- ✎ **Tweezers** - put small "pony" beads into a dish. Let the child pick up beads with the tweezers and place them beads onto the suction cups of bath tub grippers. (More appropriate for older preschoolers and rising kindergartners.)
- ✎ **Use a vertical surface like an easel or paper taped to the wall** - break crayons into small pieces and write or draw on the paper. Break small chalk into pieces and use black paper taped to the wall for writing and drawing as an alternative.
- ✎ **Toothpick and packing peanut structures** - let your child push the toothpicks into the packing peanuts and "build" structures by connecting the packing peanuts together.

Activities to work on classroom tool use:

- ✂ **Cut drinking straws** and string them to make necklaces or bracelets.
- ✂ **Cut playdoh** as cutting playdoh is an excellent way for a child to improve scissor skills! Make snakes and cut into chunks or make pancakes and cut into strips. Or simply just cut!
- ✎ **Draw with a toothpick, golf tee, or lead-less mechanical pencil** on aluminum foil or soft dough.
- ✂ **Use a pair of scissors** and have child cut pictures from an old toy catalog, sales flyer, or junk mail and let them cut out their favorite toys to make a fun picture collage.
- ✎ **Play marker cap mix-up** by placing caps on the markers incorrectly and have the child fix by removing and placing caps correctly.
- ✎ **Dot markers or small ink stampers** to create dot or ink stamp pictures.

Most important, have fun while building skills!

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