

Take Home Tips

Early Learning
Pre-Writing Skills

What are the building blocks necessary to develop writing readiness (pre-writing)?

- **Hand and finger strength:** An ability to exert force against resistance using the hands and fingers that allows the necessary muscle power for controlled movement of the pencil.
- **Crossing the mid-line:** The ability to cross the imaginary line running from a person's nose to pelvis that divides the body into left and right sides.
- **Pencil grasp:** The efficiency of how the pencil is held, allowing age appropriate pencil movement generation.
- **Hand eye coordination:** The ability to process information received from the eyes to control, guide and direct the hands in the performance of a task such as handwriting.
- **Bilateral integration:** Using two hands together with one hand leading (e.g. holding and moving the pencil with the dominant hand while the other hand helps by holding the writing paper).
- **Upper body strength:** The strength and stability provided by the shoulder to allow controlled hand movement for good pencil control.
- **Object manipulation:** The ability to skillfully manipulate tools (including holding and moving pencils and scissors) and controlled use of everyday tools (such as a toothbrush, hairbrush, cutlery).
- **Visual perception:** The brain's ability to interpret and make sense of visual images seen by the eyes, such as letters and numbers.
- **Hand dominance:** The consistent use of one (usually the same) hand for task performance, which allows refined skills to develop.
- **Hand division:** Using just the thumb, index and middle finger for manipulation, leaving the fourth and little finger tucked into the palm stabilizing the other fingers but not participating.



What activities can help improve writing readiness (pre-writing) skills?

- Threading and lacing with a variety of sized laces.
- Play-doh (playdough) activities that may involve rolling with hands or a rolling pin, hiding objects such as coins in the play dough or just creative construction.
- Scissor projects that may involve cutting out geometric shapes to then paste them together to make pictures such as robots, trains or houses.
- Tongs or teabag squeezers to pick up objects.
- Drawing or writing on a vertical surface.
- Every day activities that require finger strength such as opening containers and jars.
- Pre -writing shapes: Practice drawing the pre-writing shapes (I, —, O, +, /, square, \, X, and Δ).
- Finger games: that practice specific finger movements such as “Incy Wincy Spider”.
- Craft: Make things using old boxes, egg cartons, wool, paper and sticky or masking tape.

Source: Kids Sense. Writing Readiness (Pre-Writing) Skills

Retrieved from: <https://childdevelopment.com.au/areas-of-concern/writing/writing-readiness-pre-writing-skills/>