



Activities for Little Hands

Activities to work on hand strength:

- ☞ Spray bottles: fill an empty spray bottle with water. Take outside, and let your child "paint" the sidewalks, walls, and other objects with the water.
- ☞ Clothes pins: clip clothes pins to large coffee can or plastic bucket. Get other types of clips: Hair clips, metal office clips, snack bag clips, and let your child clip them to your shirt or pant legs.
- ☞ Wheelbarrow walking: Hold your child's feet or under her stomach, and let her "walk" on her hands.
- ☞ Tug of war: Use a towel or rope and "tug" (gently) with your child. Also, have your child sit on a towel, hold on to the sides of the towel and drag your child—they love this "ride."
- ☞ Have your child pull a wagon loaded with favorite stuffed animals
- ☞ Swimming: let your preschooler hold a swim noodle while you pull them around the pool.
- ☞ Legos/Duplos: Make patterns with these push together/pull apart blocks.
- ☞ Playdoh: Try taking your child through the sequence below:
 - Make a 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 pancakes with one finger
- ☞ Tennis ball with slit opening: squeeze the ball, the slit opens like a "mouth," and you can pop a poker chip, bead, or coin in!
- ☞ Hole punching: Let your child punch holes in paper with standard, hand held hole punch.
- ☞ Rub a Dub: Get a small wash tub, doll clothes, washcloths, clothesline, and clothespins, and let your child wash and hang out the doll clothes and the washcloths to dry.

Activities to work on grasp:

- ☞ Tongs: Available at kitchen stores, get several types of tongs, and let your child pick up small objects with the tongs (example: cut up sponges, ice, small blocks, golf tees, packing peanuts, etc.)

- ✂ Eyedroppers: Fill ice cube trays half full with water. Put colored water into small containers, and let your child squeeze drops of colored water into the ice cube tray sections.
- ✂ String beads, cheerios, froot loops, etc. Make a bird feeder with cheerios on a string. Hang on the tree in the yard and watch the birds from the window.
- ✂ Tweezers: Put small "pony" beads into a dish. Let your child pick up the bead with the tweezers, and place the beads on the suction cups of a soap dish. (More appropriate for older preschoolers and rising kindergartners.)
- ✂ Use vertical surface like an easel or paper taped to the wall: break crayons into small pieces and create masterpieces.
- ✂ Toothpick and packing peanut structures: Let your child push the toothpicks into the packing peanuts and "build" structures, connecting the packing peanuts together.

Activities to work on classroom tool use:

- ✂ Hammer golf tees into Styrofoam: Get a child-sized hammer, golf tees, and some Styrofoam and allow your child to hammer away.
- ✂ Water painting on the sidewalk/driveway: Use small paint brushes for this fun, warm weather activity.
- ✂ Cut drinking straws, string them to make necklaces
- ✂ Cut playdoh: cutting playdoh is an excellent way for your child to improve scissors skills. Make snakes and cut into chunks, make pancakes and cut into strips. Or just cut!
- ✂ Draw with toothpick on aluminum foil: Place aluminum foil over piece of cardboard, and let your child create a shiny picture.
- ✂ Give your preschooler an old toy catalogue and a pair of scissors and let them cut out their favorite toys.
- ✂ Don't forget the "old standbys": markers, crayons, and pencils and chalk.
- ✂ Shaving cream painting:
 - Have student color or draw a picture.
 - Take shaving cream and spread on paper plate
 - Add drops of food coloring—several colors
 - Have student swirl with a stick
 - Place picture on top of shaving cream, press, then lift off and wipe off. It looks cool

These are just a few activities that you might want to try with your preschooler. Most important, have fun together!

Ideas for Home: Fine Motor Development:

It would be really great if you can find opportunities to have him do a few of these things every day or a few times a week.

Water Play (can do during bathtime):

- Spray bottle
- Squeeze out water bombs (those balls that hold water)
- Turkey Baster
- Tub toys (spray toys)

Cooking Play:

- Stirring any kind of dough with a spoon (cookies, cake dough)
- Kneeding dough
- 'finding' raisins, choc. Chips, etc in dough & pulling it out
- Sifting flour
- Turkey Baster

Constructional Activities:

- Staple
- Hole Punch
- Pulling caps off of markers
- Kid scissors with construction paper
- Squeezing glue bottles

Games

- Connect 4, Bingo, etc. (hold several 'coins' in hand at a time & try to get them out using only the same hand they're held in)
- Ants in the Pants, cooties, etc. (pressing down on the 'tails' of the ants is great)
- Cards (shuffling, holding, etc. all great)
- Playing in playdough, modeling clay, etc.

Odds and Ends:

- Watering Plants with spray bottle
- Using clothes pins to hang clothes, paper or paper towels
- Opening up bottles
- Turning pages in books
- Wheelbarrow walking
- Carrying heavy items (like shopping bags)
- Push/pull activities with resistance (use yourself, rearrange furniture, wagons) or Have brother/sister lay on a sheet and pull them around
- Performing household chores or yard work that use big movement (vacuuming, sweeping, carrying chairs, watering plants, raking, pushing carts at store)
- Tug of war
- Wash the car