



Humber Sensory Processing Service

Community Services for Children
aged 0-18 years



Fine Motor Activities

Fine Motor Skills

Fine Motor skills involve the small muscles in our hands which we use to perform precise movements of the hands and fingers; these skills are involved in activities such as writing, fastening buttons, using cutlery, and picking up small objects.

Some people may find it easier to learn about the movements and sensations required in a task by watching videos of other people completing those tasks from a first-person perspective, which they can then copy. The 'Watch Me Do It' Programme has a library of videos to support with this:-

<https://watchmedoit.mmu.ac.uk/>

Activities to promote fine motor

Practising fine motor skills as part of fun activities can help to develop and refine these skills. These activities can be adapted to suit your child's developmental age. Some activities may feel overwhelming, so it's important to adjust them based on your child's interests and gradually grade the difficulty to ensure they are accessible and enjoyable.

1. Making Playdough:-

Mix playdough from 1 cup of plain flour, 1/2 cup of salt, 1 tablespoon of cooking oil, a few drops of food colouring and flavouring and a little water to make a thick consistency. Store in a plastic bag and keep in fridge.

- Knead the dough.
- Roll into balls and snakes.
- Pinch between thumb and fingers.

Advanced:-

- Cut playdough with a biscuit cutter.
- Make playdough snails and snakes.
- Make any model you like.
- Make jewellery.

2. Threading:-

Threading is when you put beads, pasta, or buttons onto a string or lace.

- Start with large beads threading them on to stiff tubing or pipe cleaners.
- Gradually reduce size of beads and then introduce laces or string.
- You can challenge them by:-
 - Adding them in a random order
 - Adding in a specific order
 - Adding them on as fast as possible



- Giving them a pattern to copy

Advanced:-

- Thread buttons onto a string.
- Thread macaroni onto a string to make a necklace.
- Sewing cards or lacing cards – a piece of cardboard with holes punched in it will do using wool or a shoelace.
- Lace a shoe.

3. Hand-eye Coordination:-

- A busy board (sometimes called an activity board) is a hands-on play board that has everyday items for children to explore and manipulate, such as locks, latches, nuts, and bolts.
- Clipping clothes pegs onto a rim of an empty container.
- Practice opening and closing the pegs using a two fingered grip. See how fast he/she can do it.
- Post coins, buttons, letters, small shapes into a slot in a box
- Place Lego bricks in a tub with kitchen tongs.

Advanced:-

- Picking up cocktail sticks/coins/buttons and placing in box. Sorting into different colours, sizes and shapes.
- Making a chain of paper clips.
- Peg cardboard shapes and pictures to a washing line.
- Use a peg board to make string or elastic band pictures.
- Using tweezers or kitchen tongs to pick up objects and place in a container, e.g. cotton balls, noodles, sultanas, marbles etc.

4. Dexterity activities:-

- Find buttons hidden in a container of beads or dry rice.
- Taking off and putting on screw top lids
- Build tower with construction blocks such as stacking or Duplo toys.
- Solve peg or chunky jigsaw boards

Advanced:-

- “Tiddly Winks” or “Flick Football” – using buttons or small counters, see who can flick theirs the furthest!
- Button a blouse and buckle belt on a dressing doll or your clothes.
- Paper weaving.
- Build towers and structures using Lego, hammer toys, screw toys.
- jigsaws age 3+



3. Hand games:-

- Finger songs- “Tommy Thumb, Tommy Thumb, Where Are You,” “Incy Wincy Spider”, “Two little Dicky Birds.”
- Action songs- “Wind the Bobbin Up” “1,2,3,4,5 Once I Caught a Fish Alive”.
- Finger puppets.

Advanced:-

- Cat’s Cradle game.
- Yo-yo’s
- Any card game – shuffling, sorting, and sharing cards.
- “Feely box” – put a variety of objects in a box and ask the child not to look or blindfold the child if they can tolerate it. Let he/she reach in and identify each object.

4. Water play:-

- Tipping water from one container to another
- Water pistol – using pointer finger on the trigger.
- Transfer water from one container to another using a thick sponge.
- Pour water into a cup from a jug.
- Use a whisk to make bubbles in soapy water.
- Painting fences, paths and outdoor areas with water and paint brush.

5. Sand play:-

- Draw letters in a tray of sand or seeds.
- Dig-up plastic animals hidden in the sand.
- Filling and emptying containers

6. Messy Play:-

- Mud pies
- Any stamping, Apple, or Potato printing, Make a print by pressing half an apple or potato into paint, then onto paper
- Draw patterns in shaving cream smoothed onto table. Encourage circular movements with their arms in opposite directions.
- Cutting out pictures, gluing and sticking and make collages.
- Find an object of their interest hidden in shaving cream.

7. Drawing:-

- Draw on a large piece of paper on floor.
- Tracing, copying or dot to dot and build up the difficulty level.
 - Lines
 - Patterns
 - Shapes
 - Pictures



- Colouring in and chalk pictures using chunky equipment and reduce size.
- Press hard with crayon; rub paper placed over a leaf to produce a picture.

Advanced

- Drawing between guidelines, varying the distance from 2cm to 2mm in width (Lines, shapes, letters, numbers).
- Line games with the child to follow different shapes, designs, mazes etc. with index finger or pencil.
- Trace around a stencil.
- Paint on chalkboard by dipping a brush into water, gradually using smaller brushes.
- “Spirograph” or “Etch a Sketch”

8. Creativity:-

- Make patterns with toothpicks.
- Simple origami (paper folding). Libraries often have books of instructions e.g. fan, plane, hat etc.
- Bend pipe cleaners to make shapes and figures.
- Place pennies into a pattern to make a letter, numbers, or pictures.
- Cutting along straight lines, along curved lines, pictures and magazines, folded paper to make pattern.
- Shadow puppets

9. Food Play:-

- Spread jam on a piece of bread.
- Use a nutcracker to crack nuts.
- Squeeze juice from a lemon or an orange.
- Help prepare meals by cutting, scooping, stirring and sieving etc.



For more advice and strategies like this, you can visit our website:
sensoryprocessinghub.humber.nhs.uk

Or you can contact us with a question on the email address below:
hnf-tr.humbersensoryprocessingservice@nhs.net

