

What Are Fine Motor Skills?

Fine motor skills are achieved when children learn to use their smaller muscles, like muscles in the hands, fingers, and wrists. Children use their fine motor skills when writing, holding small items, buttoning clothing, turning pages, eating, cutting with scissors, and using computer keyboards. Mastery of fine motor skills requires precision and coordination.



Fine Motor Skills Require Precision

Fine motor skills develop after **gross motor skills**, which control actions like throwing and kicking balls, as well as walking and jumping. Gross motor skills utilize larger muscle groups and require less precision.

How Do We How Do We Help Children Develop Fine Motor Skills?



Practice, practice, practice. In most cases of fine motor skill development, practice does, in fact, make perfect. Some ways to develop these skills are having children do the following activities:

- Experimental play with play dough
- Pop bubbles on bubble wrap with just the index finger and thumb
- Opening pegs - squeeze and release



- Fastening clothes, zipping up clothes
- Use of tweezers/ tongs/ Pegs to lift objects
- Threading - beads, string through holes in paper
- Placing items through small spaces – putting coins in a in a money box, art match sticks through straws



- Finger painting
- Puzzles
- Trace shapes or letters



- Legos or building blocks



These activities focus on smaller muscle groups. Using the same muscles can help children develop **muscle memory**, which is when repetition of one action allows that action to be performed almost automatically without much effort.

