






Top Tips for Developing Pencil Grip

Before carrying out any of the activity suggestions below, always prepare your child by discussing the strategies beforehand and let them take the lead as much as possible. Choose the ones that you feel are most appropriate for your child. The lists of activities are not prescriptive and you can vary them. Use a little and often approach to ensure your child has fun with these activities.

A good pencil grip	
 <p>Right Hand</p>  <p>Left Hand</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pencil is held in a good stable position between the thumb, index and middle fingers. • The ring and little fingers are bent and rest comfortably on the table. • The index finger and thumb form an open space. • The wrist is bent slightly, and the forearm is resting on the table. The wrist should be in an extended position as opposed to a hooked/ flexed position • The pencil is held about 1-2 cm from the tip.
Activities	
 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use activities to strengthen fingers and heighten position and movement awareness, such as pinching play dough between the thumb and each finger, clipping clothes pegs onto rim of an empty container. • Incorporate the use of tools such as tweezers into activities. Reinforce the use of the thumb, and the middle and the index finger when using these tools. With tweezers try picking up small objects e.g. dried peas, raisins, cocktail sticks. • Play commercial games such as 'Operation'. • Practise cutting with scissors, being sure to reinforce an appropriate scissor grasp: the scissors are held with the thumb and the middle finger, while the index finger helps support and close the scissors. The ring and little finger should be inactive as they are when writing. • Scrunch up pieces of tissue paper between thumb, index and middle fingers and make into a collage.

Activities	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use small pieces of chalk and draw on a blackboard or on slabs outside. • Try activities that provide sensory input to reinforce joint and finger position e.g. draw/write on paper placed over sandpaper, textured rubbings. • Try different thicknesses of pencils and different commercially available pencil grips. • Threading activities such as beads, lacing cards. • Playing with a water pistol, helping to water plants with a spray bottle. • Where possible, encourage your child to draw/write on a vertical surface e.g. easel, blackboard, tape some paper on to a wall. This automatically places the wrist and hand in to a better position.