



# YOUTUBE FREEBIE

## 5 Activities to Help Teach a Functional Pencil Grasp

These activities are great for kiddos of all ages to help develop the skills required for grasping a writing utensil to complete handwriting tasks as easily as possible.

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### 1 VERTICAL SURFACE & ON THE FLOOR

Complete coloring, drawing, and writing tasks on a vertical surface, as well as on the floor with the child laying on their stomach.

These positions help promote a functional grasp, assist with proper forearm and wrist alignment, and engage upper body muscles.

### 2 WEIGHT BEARING ON BOTH HANDS

Complete activities that require the child to put weight into both of their hands - making sure their hands are open and flat on the floor, as well as that the hands are pointing forward with good upper body alignment.

- Crawling
- Animal walks
- Ball walk-outs

### 3 FINE MOTOR COORDINATION TASKS

Complete tasks that work on dexterity and in-hand manipulation skills.

Additionally, complete with both hands and promote crossing midline with reaching to place small items (such as beans) into a container.

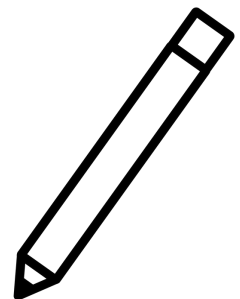
### 4 PROVIDE A VISUAL

Take a picture of the grasp you'd like the child to use on their writing utensil and have the picture available so the child can use it as a reference.

### 5 TECHNIQUES FOR PICKING UP THE PENCIL

Try different techniques (like the "pinch and flip") and modifications (like a pony tail around the wrist to pull the pencil back into the web space of the hand) to promote grasp development.

Talk to your child's OT before implementing use of a pencil grip.



# BONUS Ideas!

## 1 SLANT BOARD OR 3 RING BINDER

Using a slant board or a 3 ring binder to create a slanted writing surface are great strategies to use while seated at the table / desk. While not fully vertical, a slanted surface provides great stability to help with grasp and arm alignment.

## 2 SQUIRRELING

Grab a handful of beans or coins and place them on the table. Have the child "squirrel" the items one at a time into their palm - using just thumb and index finger, grab one item and transfer it into the palm, and hold it there with 3 fingers. Continue until the palm is "full." Then, "de-squirrel" by transferring one item at a time out of the palm (without dropping the rest!) and into a container.

## 3 UPPER BODY STRENGTH

When working on proper grasp techniques, it's important to remember that good fine motor control requires good upper body strength and stability.

Work on upper body strength with animal walks, wall push ups, and theraband exercises.

# Want more ideas?!

## [CHECK OUT OUR FINE MOTOR SKILLS DIGITAL ACTIVITY COURSE](#)

Harkla's Fine Motor Skills Activity Course provides a library of activities to help improve all areas of fine motor development - including handwriting, self-care tasks, self-feeding, and more!

Visit: [harkla.co/products/fine-motor-skills-activity-course](https://harkla.co/products/fine-motor-skills-activity-course)