



# Developing pencil grip

Most children naturally develop a pencil grip that is comfortable for them. In a classroom there are lots of ways that children hold a pencil.

A pencil grip is only a problem if a child has difficulty writing legibly, at a reasonable speed, or complains of a sore or tired hand when writing. If a child has an awkward grip pattern and it becomes a habit, it is more difficult to change later. Pencil grips are easier to change in the early school years.

Encourage your child to hold their pencil in a way that allows their hand and fingers to move freely and easily when writing or drawing.

## Holding a pencil

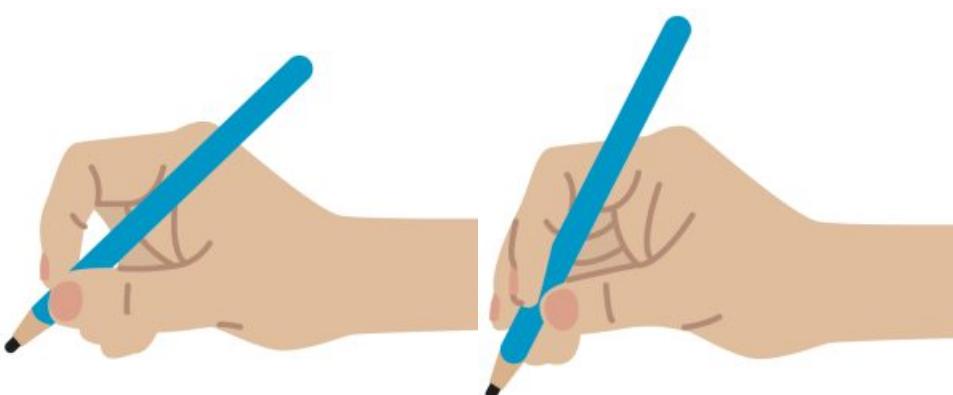
The pencil should be held in a stable position between the thumb, first finger and middle fingers.

The ring and little fingers should be bent and rest comfortable on the table.

The first finger and thumb form an open space.

The wrist should be bent back slightly, and the forearm resting on the table.

The pencil should be held 1cm to 2cm from the tip.



## Helpful strategies

- Show your child the correct finger and thumb positioning for holding the pencil and help them place their fingers and thumb in these positions
- Try a pencil grip



- Encourage your child to practice for a few minutes
- Encourage lots of fun and interesting drawing and writing activities using different types of pencils, crayons, chalks

## Sitting and paper position

A guide for sitting in the correct position for writing is for their bottom to be right at the back of their chair, with their feet flat on the floor. Their forearms should rest comfortably on the table. The table and chair should be suitable for the child's size.



## Activities to develop a pencil grip

- Use a variety of pencils, crayons, chalks, on different sizes of paper
- Vary where your child does their activities such as at a table, on an easel, blackboard, outside with chalks
- Make a special occasion card
- Use activity books such as dot to dots or mazes
- Write on a Magna Doodle
- Draw or trace around hands
- Write a shopping list
- Play noughts and crosses

## Activities to develop and strengthen thumb and finger muscles

- Playdough
- Tear up paper for collages
- Use tweezers to pick up small beads or objects
- Encourage your child to hold an object (coin or marble) against the palm of their hand with the ring and little fingers whilst writing or doing above activities
- Threading activities such as beads or lacing cards
- Lego, K'Nex or Meccano
- Squeeze clothes pegs to remove them from the rim of a container



## Activities that strengthen the wrist

- Encourage your child to draw or write as much as possible, on a vertical surface as this can help your child to achieve a good wrist position.
- Other activities on a vertical surface such as placing stickers on a window or piece of paper taped to the wall, playing Connect4
- Rolling and kneading playdough
- Baking activities

### Disclaimer

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