

How to Improve Your Preschool Child's Motor Skills Over The Summer

Many parents ask what they can do with their child at home to get ready for kindergarten. Listed below are a variety of activities that you can work on at home to develop your child's classroom skills.

Upper Extremity Stability/Postural Control

Upper extremity stability is required to use your hand without moving your entire arm. Children who haven't fully developed shoulder and wrist stability typically tire very easily during writing tasks.

-Lying on their stomach, holding themselves up on their arms while playing games, reading a book, etc. (NOT resting their chin in their hands)

-Any gross motor physical activity that incorporates the entire body: swimming, lacrosse, basketball, soccer, catch, karate, and horseback riding.

-Wheelbarrow walking, crab walking, yoga, monkey bars, crawling through tunnels,

Fine Motor Skills and Bilateral Coordination

Fine motor coordination is the ability to use your hands and fingers for precise movements. Bilateral coordination refers to using two hands at once, whether they are doing two different jobs or working together. (Ex: holding a piece of paper while cutting with scissors, tying shoes, holding a ruler and drawing a line)

-Lacing, tracing, and coloring activities Use small broken pieces of crayon

-Making bracelets with beads, macaroni, cut up straws

-Scissor activities: clipping coupons, cutting out favorite cartoon characters, finding a certain letter in a magazine, etc.

-Games with small pieces: hi-ho cherrio, lite brite, pop-up pirate, dominoes, boggle, perfection, sorry, etc. (hold cards with thumbs on top)

-Using sidewalk chalk to practice letters, numbers and shapes

-Legos, Knex, Mr. Potato Head, pop beads



Visual Motor and Visual Perceptual Skills

A visual perceptual skill does not involve visual acuity (whether or not they need glasses) at all. Instead, it refers to their ability to appropriately space their writing, visually identify two identical shapes, find pictures hidden in a busy background, etc. A visual motor skill refers to the ability to take in visual information and reproduce it motorically. Examples are: copying someone's movements, taking notes from a textbook or the board, copying a picture accurately, etc.

-Jigsaw puzzles 24 pieces, sorting objects by color, shape, size, etc.

-Card Games (memory, uno, go fish, etc.) Letter recognition games, matching.

-Tracing pictures, using stencils, drawing a person with all the important parts (head, body, legs, arms, face) Use Magnadoodle, Aquadoodle, colored pencils, paint.

-Practicing letters in the sand at the beach, or use sidewalk chalk (very small one inch pieces promote a good pencil grasp)



How to Improve Your School-Aged Child's Motor Skills Over The Summer

Parents often ask what they can do with their child over the summer. Here is a variety of activities you can work on at home to develop your child's classroom skills. These activities are appropriate for children ages 5 and up. Please use supervision.

Upper Extremity Stability/Postural Control

Upper extremity stability is required to use your hand without moving your entire arm. Children who haven't fully developed shoulder and wrist stability typically tire very easily during writing tasks.

-Lying on their stomach, holding themselves up on their arms while playing games, reading, coloring, drawing (NOT resting their chin in their hands)

-Any physical activity that requires their arms up, against gravity. Painting, washing windows, washing cars, drawing on a vertical surface (easel, chalkboard, etc.), hanging things in a closet, hanging laundry on a clothesline, putting away dishes or groceries on a high shelf

-Backyard games: volleyball, badminton, horseshoes, obstacle courses with crawling

-Yoga

-Swimming



Fine Motor Skills & Bilateral Coordination

Fine motor coordination is the ability to use your hands and fingers for precise movements. Bilateral coordination refers to using two hands at once, whether they are doing two different jobs or working together. (Ex: holding a piece of paper while cutting with scissors, tying shoes, holding a ruler and drawing a line)

-Sewing activities, crocheting, learning to knit, embroidering

-Building model airplanes/cars, etc. & painting/detailing them when finished

-Office-type work (using hole-punchers, paperclips, staplers, ripping masking or scotch tape, etc)

-Making bracelets with beads, embroidery thread, rainbow loom or lanyard (Craft stores like Michael's, and Dollar Stores have a nice variety of these crafts)

-Latch hook rugs (be sure to buy a "child" set, they are much smaller)
Perler bead projects (craft store, Michaels)

-Building anything with hammer and nails, screwdrivers, etc.
(supervision needed, of course!)

-Play with two-handed toys; legos, magnetix, k'nex, pop-beads, tube-locks, bristle blocks, skoolzy structures, color clix, squigz

-Scissor activities: clipping coupons, scrapbooking, wrapping gifts, etc.

-Card games & building card houses

