

Hand & Finger Stability

Strategies to try:

- First of all work on Postural Stability.
- Encouraging taking weight through elbows and hands while playing on the floor, e.g. on their tummy, in 4-point kneeling or side sitting, will help to develop shoulder and upper limb stability.
- Play games that involve weight bearing through hands, e.g. wheelbarrows.
- Try pushing or carrying heavy objects, such as helping out at home and with the laundry or carrying the shopping.
- Working above shoulder level will help to develop postural and shoulder stability, e.g. at easel or on a blackboard / whiteboard.
- Work on whole hand stability by encouraging activities where a "power" grip is required.
- Activities that involve pinching with fingers and thumbs against resistance repeatedly will increase strength.

Some children have flexible joints which feel loose and unstable. This may impact on the strength and control of their hands making it difficult for them to sustain grasps and stabilise their fingers and thumbs to complete fine motor tasks. The more stable your child is the better their functional abilities will be so working on postural and upper limb stability first will help to develop hand skills.



WHOLE HAND



FINGER STABILITY

- Tug of war or holding on to a swing or climbing frame.
- Hold bats, paddles and rackets, for games such as suspended balloon tennis, sponge ball or rounders.
- Use tools to dig or rake in sand or dirt. Make it wet for more resistance.
- Water play is a fun way to encourage using hands or fingers to squeeze sponges / cloths / foam toys or squirt water pistols. Water plants with water spray bottles.
- Squeeze, roll and shape play dough or for more resistance move on to plasticine. Stirring or kneading when baking can be very motivating!
- Toys that join together and pull apart provide resistance, e.g. Duplo, Lego, simple construction toys.
- Rip, gather, scrunch and fold different types of paper to make pictures. Start with tissue paper and move on to more resistive paper or card.
- Use small hand staplers and hole punches or stamps and stamp pads to decorate pictures.
- Use tongs to serve snacks, or easy to use plastic tweezers to pick up pom poms or small plastic characters.
- Pop bubble wrap.
- Use clothes pegs to clip onto a box/edge of a paper plate, to hang up dolls clothes or hang paintings on a makeshift clothes line.
- Use cork boards with pins to make shapes or pin pictures.
- Play finger games like tiddly winks or hopping frogs
- Play with wind up toys.

