

# OT News/ Home Edition


A toolbox of helpful tips & OT approved activities to help your child develop & thrive

## Pre-Writing Skills

“Pre-writing skills” are fundamental skills children need to develop before they are able to write. A major component are the pre-writing shapes that make up most letters/numbers. (I, \_, O, +, /, \, square, X, and triangle.

## What can you do at home?

### Pre-Writing Skill #1: Hand & Finger Strength

- Play dough: Rolling, squishing, pinching, and pulling the play dough. Use tools like cookie cutters or rolling pins that require your child to use both hands
- Tearing paper 
- Cutting with scissors (have your child cut playdough or cardstock to make it more challenging)
- Squeezing a wet sponge out during water play

### Pre-Writing Skill #2: Bilateral Integration

- Remind your child to use their “helper hand” to hold their paper while their “worker hand” cuts or writes
- Opening containers during a cooking activity
- Stringing beads
- Zipper/buttons
- Cut w/ a knife & fork



### Pre-Writing Skill #3: Pencil Grasp

The following activities can help your child develop a more mature pencil grasp:

- Threading beads on pipe cleaners
- Use Q-tips for painting
- Use broken crayons for coloring (bonus: have your child break crayons in half to promote hand and finger strength!)
- Practice picking up small objects and moving them with tweezers or tongs



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## Pre-Writing Skill #4: Visual Perception

Visual perception is a child's ability to take in information they see and have the brain interpret it to give it meaning. **Try this:**

- Puzzles
- Find the differences between two similar pictures
- Playing "I Spy"
- Where's Waldo
- Try to memorize numbers/pictures in order
- <https://eyecanlearn.com/perception/>



## Bonus: Scissor skills

- Try cutting different materials, such as play dough, coupons, junk mail, cardstock, snip straws, etc.
- Encourage your child to hold scissors correctly by reminding them to use "thumbs up" while cutting. You can also put a small sticker on their thumb or draw a smiley face as a visual reminder.



## Pre-Writing Skill #5: Core Strength

It is important to have strength in your larger muscles (abs, shoulder, etc.) in order to have stability when doing fine motor activities with small muscles (fingers and wrist). **Try this:**

- Yoga (**Cosmic Kids Yoga** is available online at [www.cosmickids.com](http://www.cosmickids.com); videos can be viewed for free! **Super Stretch** is a free app that can be downloaded on a phone or tablet. For more information, check out [www.adventuresofsuperstretch.com](http://www.adventuresofsuperstretch.com)!)
- Try animal walks; walk like a crab, crawl like a bear, jump like a frog. The possibilities are endless!
- Paint, draw, or color on a vertical surface (for example, tape a coloring page to an easel or the wall)
- Draw or color while laying on tummy- this activates muscles of the back for developing good posture

