

Fine Motor

Activities to Help Your Child Grow and Learn

Your child has stronger finger muscles and is more skilled in drawing and writing. She can put puzzle pieces or small toys together, such as interlocking blocks, and can string beads. She's getting better at using scissors and may be able to cut on a line without help. She may even be able to trace over simple designs.



Magazine Cutting and Pasting

Give your child pages from an old magazine, catalog, or junk mail, and a pair of small safety scissors. Let him cut pictures and glue them to a piece of paper. A glue stick works better when your child is learning. You can ask him to find certain kinds of pictures like favorite foods, fruit, cars, clothing, or animals.

Where's the Button?

Provide a couple of clothing items with large buttons for your child. You can also let her help you fasten a button on your clothes. Pretend it is a hide-and-seek game. The button hides first, then peeks out, and then comes through the hole: "There you are, Mr. Button Man! I got you!"

Wrap a Present

Give your child a small box, wrapping paper (or a colorful page from the newspaper), and clear tape. Cut the paper to a size your child can manage. Ask him to wrap the "present" and make believe you're going to give it to a friend. Your child can pull the paper up and around, then tape it to the box. You may have to help a little with the taping: "Look at that. You wrapped it yourself!"

Twisting and Turning

Save empty jars and the caps of catsup, mustard, jelly, or salt. Wash and dry everything well. Let your child match the correct cap to the bottle and twist it into place. Collect other types and sizes to add to the collection!

Tool Fun

Let your child play with tools. Show her how to screw a large nut onto a bolt. Let her try to hammer a short nail into a piece of soft wood after you start it. Help fit a fat screwdriver head into a large screw, turn it, and watch it go into something soft like soft wood or a cardboard box. Tell your child what a great builder she is!

Tub Scrub

After your child's bath, ask him to help you clean the tub by scrubbing all the way around the tub. Give your child a separate sponge or cloth just for this job. (No other cleansers, please). As the water drains out, your child can "scrub" the part of the tub where the water was. When finished, squeeze the cloth or sponge really hard! "Good helper!"

Artist at Work

Make a creative space for your child. Set up an area with clear boundaries where your child can explore materials such as paper, crayons, markers, glue, scissors, yarn pieces, stickers, and tape. Encourage her to create her art piece any way she wants to. Ask her to write her name on it or to show you where to write her name. Find a place to display it for all to see. Now, it's time to clean up!

Dough Fun

Make up a batch of playdough: 2 cups flour, 1 cup salt, 1 teaspoon oil, 1 cup water. Squish it all up with clean hands. Give your child a flat cookie sheet or placemat with a bit of flour on it to keep dough from sticking. Your child will enjoy pinching, pounding, rolling, and squeezing the dough. Add Popsicle sticks or a cookie cutter for more fun! Store in a plastic container in the refrigerator, and let your child help clean up with a damp cloth.

Notes:



Don't Forget! Activities should be supervised at all times by an adult. Any material, food, or toy given to a young child should be reviewed for safety. Always supervise your child using tools.