



Building Blocks for Handwriting

Why is this important?

We need to use all our senses to get ready for scribbling, drawing, colouring and writing. Learning about shape, size and direction is an important step in learning how to write. Children tend to learn in stages. Please see below for more information.

First: Developing awareness of what our hands, fingers and bodies are doing:

- Messy Play; finger paints, playing with slime or cornflour gluck. Playing with dry and wet sand.
 - *If your child doesn't like sticky or wet fingers/ hands, you can introduce it in a 'safe' way - e.g. by putting different textures in a zip lock bag and explore it with a dry paint brush. Or use plastic gloves when playing with the above ideas.*
- Action songs - whole body e.g. 'heads, shoulders, knees and toes' and finger rhymes e.g. 'Tommy Thumb'.
- Popping bubbles with different body parts
- Playing in different positions – lying, crawling and kneeling on the floor.
- Heavy work games - pushing a swing, pulling a trolley.



Next: Becoming aware of shape, size, and direction:

- Sort beads or buttons into matching sizes and shapes.
- Feel around the edges of objects and talk about them together - are they big or small? Are they curved or straight?
- Talk about shapes
- Relating shapes to self e.g. 'be as small as you can, then as tall as you can'. 'Reach up to the top, down to the bottom and from side to side.
- Trace around shapes - e.g. plates/ Frisbee/ around your hand.



Then: Making marks & drawing

- Making shapes with finger in shaving foam, or with a stick in the earth.
- Rolling out dough and making straight or curved lines, shapes and letters.
- Keep it fun by using e.g. bath crayons or chalks outside.
- Chunky, short, triangular crayons and chalks, or 'finger crayons' are easiest to use.
- Scribbling & Drawing. Give lots of different colours of pencil/pen/crayon/chalk.
 - Draw pictures of people
 - Draw rainbows
- Colouring in: you could draw a coloured line around the outside of the shape
- Holding an object (like a plate or a cup) and drawing around it.
- Tracing over lines in simple pictures.
- Dot to dots, mazes and pencil patterns
- Change your position - you can draw on an easel, blackboard, or lying on your tummy.

