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# Activities for the Development of Fine Motor Skills





## Activities for the development of fine motor skills

Fine motor skills are defined as small co-ordinated movements using the small muscles of the fingers, toes, wrist, lips and tongue. Some children with hydrocephalus can have a delay in the development in their fine motor skills due to a processing difficulty.

### The movements they may find difficult can include:

- Picking up and holding onto small objects
- Pinching objects between fingers
- Tying shoelaces
- Using zips and buckles
- Drawing, painting and colouring
- Doing puzzles, making crafts and using scissors
- Holding and using utensils correctly
- Developing and maintaining an effective and proper pencil grip
- Playing games that require precise hand and finger control
- Writing legibly without significant muscle fatigue
- Putting small objects together

The above are skills that may simply need some extra work to develop and the best way to do this with children is through fun activities and games such as:

- Snakes and Ladders
- Etch a Sketch
- Operation Board Game
- Pick up Sticks
- Construct O Straws
- Mr/Mrs Potato Head
- Lego bricks, starting off with large pieces and working on to smaller parts
- Jigsaw Puzzles

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## Top Tip!



You don't have to buy expensive toys to develop fine motor skills. Here are some of SBH Scotland's favourite household alternatives:

- Finger painting or potato printing
- Put flour or sand on a flat surface and have your child trace letters and shapes with their fingers
- Posting coins, buttons, letters and small shapes into an old shoe box with slots
- Hand and finger songs such as "Tommy Thumb, Tommy Thumb, where are you?"
- Clenching a hole punch with your hand
- Making a paper cup tower
- Pinching clothes pegs and also using them to hang your child's favourite pictures on a line
- Threading dried macaroni or penne pasta shapes onto string
- Get a bowl of buttons, dried pasta and sea shells and have your child use tweezers or tongs to separate them into groups
- Playdough is incredibly versatile offering many different activities to strengthen and improve fine motor skills. You can roll into snakes and pancakes, make thumb prints and squeeze dough in your hand.
- Stretch out some playdough and hide small objects in it then mush it up into a ball. The child should then pull it apart and find them all – just remember to count them first!

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## Top Tip!



Why not make your own playdough. This is a recipe SBH Scotland use.

### Playdough Ingredients:

- 1 cup flour
- 1/2 cup salt (optional)
- 2 teaspoons cream of tartar
- 1 cup water
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 1 teaspoon food colouring (optional)

### Method:

- Combine 1 cup flour, 1/2 cup salt (optional) and 2 teaspoons cream of tartar in a large saucepan.
- Gradually stir in 1 cup water mixed with 2 tablespoons oil and 1 teaspoon food colouring.
- Cook over medium to high heat, stirring constantly until a ball forms
- Remove from heat, cool and knead until smooth.
- Once cool, use or place in a sealed tub.



## Health Visitor Assessments

Your Health Visitor will carry out regular assessments on the development of your child's fine motor skills and may refer you to an Occupational Therapist for further help and advice. You can also contact the SBH Scotland Direct Services Team on 03455 211 300 if you have any concerns or would like advice.



If you have questions or would like further information, please call the **SBH Scotland Helpline** on **03455 211 300** or email **support@sbhscotland.org.uk**  
For general enquiries call **03455 211 811** or visit **www.sbhscotland.org.uk**

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